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SOUTH AFRICA'S POST-APARTHEID FOREIGN POLICY

DECISION-MAKING ON AFRICAN CRISES

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management,
University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2006

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

_____

Anthoni van Nieuwkerk
18 April 2006

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AMIB	African Union Mission in Burundi
ANC	African National Congress
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCP	Basutoland Congress Party
BDF	Botswana Defence Force
BLNS	Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland
BNP	Basotho National Party
CEF	Central Energy Fund
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CJOPS	Command Joint Operations
CMAG	Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group
Cosatu	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DG	Director General
DOD	Department of Defence
DP	Democratic Party
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ESAP	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Programme
EU	European Union
EU-ACP	European Union – African, Caribbean and Pacific
FGD	Foundation for Global Dialogue
FOSAD	Forum of Directors General
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
G77	Group of 77
G8	Group of Eight
GCIS	Government Communication and Information System
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme
GNP	Gross National Product
GNU	Government of National Unity
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human-immune virus
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOR-ARC	Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation
IPA	Independent Political Authority
IR	International Relations
IRPS	International Relations, Peace and Security
LCD	Lesotho Congress for Democracy
LDC	Least Developed Countries

LDF	Lesotho Defence Force
MAP	Millennium African Plan
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MINURCA	UN Mission in the Central African Republic
MISAB	Mission to monitor the implementation of the Bangui agreements
MONUC	UN Mission in the DRC
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NCACC	National Conventional Arms Control Committee
NEC	National Executive Council
Nepad	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NICOC	National Intelligence Coordination Committee
NP	National Party
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSC	National Security Council
NWC	National Working Committee
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PCAS	Policy Coordination and Advisory Services
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organisation
PRC	People's Republic of China
RAM	Rational Actor Model
RDP	Redistribution and Growth Programme
ROC	Republic of China
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACOB	South African Chamber of Business
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADR	Saharawi Democratic Republic
SAIIA	South African Institute of International Affairs
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SANDSG	South Africa – Nigeria Democracy Support Group
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SATUCC	Southern African Trade Union Confederation
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPLM/A	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army
TEC	Transitional Executive Council
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMIR	UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNAMSIL	UN Mission in Sierra Leone
Unctad	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
Unicef	UN Children's Fund

Unita	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNMEE	UN Mission in Ethiopia/Eritrea
UNOMIL	UN Observer Mission in Liberia
UNOSOM	UN Operation in Somalia
USA	United States of America
USSR	United Soviet Socialist Republic
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation
Zanu-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

ABSTRACT

This study examines foreign policy decision-making processes of the South African government relating to African crises in the period 1994 to 2002. It takes as its point of departure the question of who makes foreign policy, how, and to what effect.

The theory relating to foreign policy and public policy gives rise to a variety of models to explain policy formation and in particular decision making in government. From the survey, three models developed by Graham Allison – the rational actor, organisational behaviour, and governmental politics models – are selected to analyse and better understand South African foreign policy decision-making.

Foreign policy decision making relating to crises in Nigeria (1995), Lesotho (1998) and Zimbabwe (2000-2002) are examined. The question in each case is which model best helps to enlighten our understanding of the South African foreign policy response to the perceived crisis.

Case study materials were gathered by means of primary and secondary literature as well as open, semi-structured interviews with key individuals involved in relevant policy formation processes. Prior to the analysis of decision making the study constructs a view of the institutional settings of post-apartheid foreign policy making, in particular identifying actors and process, and provides a short contextualisation of the crises in Nigeria, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

The study concludes that public policy making ought to be seen as a political problem solving activity in the face of complexity rather than a logical process involving well-informed calculations by rational actors who seek to maximise economic utility, political power, or organisational effectives. It supports the view that reliance on the dominant rational actor model is inadequate to explain a foreign policy decision or event. Although of limited use it nevertheless acts to clarify issues, such as broad objectives (actions to achieve peace and stability in Africa as well as the promotion of national interests). Little

evidence emerges to suggest that foreign policy decisions can be understood as outputs of large organisations functioning according to regular patterns of behaviour (such as the Presidency or department of foreign affairs). To the contrary, in the years immediately following 1994, senior governmental decision makers were faced with inadequate, inappropriate or malfunctioning organisational settings and procedures, leading to choices being made by a small circle. The governmental politics model assists in identifying, in all three cases, the lack of an 'action channel' – that is, a process to allow for the aggregation of competing perceptions and preferences for making decisions and taking action. Whether institutional overhaul (integrated governance, the cluster system, policy frameworks and a National Security Council) improved matters in later years could not be fully determined. The study found that the governmental politics model was difficult to operationalise because certain data relating to decision making processes remain confidential. The study concludes with recommendations regarding the application of Allison's models in the South African setting.

Chapter One

Introduction and Contextualisation

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALISATION

South Africa cannot escape its African destiny
Nelson Mandela, 1993

South Africa has made the African Renaissance the cornerstone of its interactions with the world, especially within our continent. Our national interest is underpinned by this vision
Vusi Mavimbela, Presidential advisor, 1998

South Africa's foreign relations, understood as a function of statehood, has its origins in the colonial period of the 17th century, whereby first the Dutch, and then the British, took control of the Cape Colony. The imposition of white rule also impacted heavily on political authority of African societies, leading over time to the establishment, under British colonial dominance, of the South African state of 1910. Although, as Davenport notes, the constitution of 1910 united South Africa under a single government but did not make it in all respects a sovereign independent state: 'Above all this was the case with reference to external affairs, for South Africa was bound by the decisions of the King …on questions of war and peace' (1977: 174). Afrikaner politicians took control of the state in 1948 and by 1961 declared it a Republic. Under colonial rule, the aim was to exploit the southern African region for economic and political gain; under apartheid, both economic and security interests weighed prominently. The overriding aim of South African governments between 1948 and 1988 '…was the preservation of a white controlled state' (Barber and Barratt, 1990: 1) or as Schrire put it, '… the protection of the security of the state' (1978: xxiv). Despite grandiose ideological projects, South Africa's rulers could never achieve political legitimacy for its aims and interests in the region and beyond.

Following the demise of apartheid, the new rulers maintained the South African interest in Africa. This time, however, it was done with legitimate intent. The domestic setting

had changed, too. The democratic government had to formulate and implement its Africa policy under conditions of transformation. The state's new rulers, conscious of these internal demands, nevertheless developed an ambitious orientation towards the continent – a continent still mired in various crises, in part caused by its peripheral setting in the global context, and further weakened by failures of governance. What were the contours of these changes in South Africa?

Writing in 1990, a time of profound change in international affairs, the eminent foreign policy analyst Charles Hermann examined reasons why governments choose to fundamentally redirect foreign policy. In his view, certain identifiable conditions result in 'self-correcting change' (when existing governments change their course in foreign policy); and secondly, many dramatic changes in the course of foreign policy occur as a consequence of regime change, that is '…when new governments with different perceptions of the environment and new agendas come to power' (Hermann, 1990: 4).

South Africa's foreign policy was marked by such a fundamental redirection as a consequence of the transition from apartheid to democracy. During the transition years, 1990 to 1994, foreign policy principles were negotiated and shaped through interaction between the African National Congress (ANC) and other actors (Friedman and Atkinson, 1994). The new direction, by necessity, differed dramatically from the foreign policies of the apartheid government – focused as it were on securing the interests of the ruling white minority (Barber and Barratt, 1990). Two factors shaped the state's new – or redirected – foreign policy. The first relates to the ANC's long-standing aim of liberation, and international strategies adopted to promote and sustain the anti-apartheid struggle (Thomas, 1993). These included, by the early 1980s, '…the international drive to isolate the apartheid regime and win world-wide moral, political and material support for the struggle' (Alden, 1993: 67), diplomatic initiatives to unite Africa behind the liberation struggle, and thirdly, an ideological orientation sympathetic to the Soviet Union and 'Second World' in general. The second factor is that the dynamics that characterised the end of the cold war had major implications for the ANC's political orientation, with an obvious spill-over effect on its international relations. Wide-ranging

debates inside the movement, coupled with the reality of negotiating a power-sharing arrangement with the apartheid regime instead of a revolutionary overthrow of the state, resulted in a reorientation away from internationalism, towards pragmatism. Alden (1993: 77) illustrates this well by quoting a senior member of the ANC's International Department who, in early 1993, summed up the transformation as follows: 'Our future relations with the international community will have to be based on economic and trade considerations rather than ideological considerations'.

As a 'macro-window' for policy innovation opened, far-reaching domestic and foreign policy renewal became a key consideration for the newly elected ANC government (Booysen, 2001: 126). By 1994, the broad contours of the new government's foreign policy were set and put to the test very quickly. Shortly before being appointed South Africa's first post-apartheid president, Mr Mandela famously declared 'South Africa cannot escape its African destiny. If we do not devote our energies to this continent, we too could fall victim to the forces that have brought ruin to its various parts.' He also stated that 'We are inextricably part of southern Africa and our destiny is linked to that of the region…' (Mandela, 1993: 88). Viewed in practice, the new regime's foreign policy orientation could be described as an (uneasy) blend of pragmatism and aspirations towards African and global South leadership status. This focus remained unchanged after Mr Mandela's handover to his successor, Mr Mbeki. If anything, the latter opted to increase the foreign policy emphasis on Africa. Simultaneously, at policy formation levels, foreign policy processes underwent significant adjustment and refinement (Booysen, 2001; Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2002).

Many analysts have written about these post-1994 developments. In general, the literature consists mostly of descriptive accounts of new policy directions and -outcomes under the new regime. A wide range of researchers applied a 'telling it like it is' approach, covering 'the ANC's evolving foreign policy', the government's 'pragmatic foreign policy', and annual reports on bilateral trade and diplomacy (for an overview and critical discussion see Williams, 2000; Taylor, 2000, Van Nieuwkerk, 1999). Theoretically vigorous academic accounts of the new regime's foreign policy making are

few and far between. With the exception of some (Schoeman and Alden, 2003, Nel et al, 2001, Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2002, Jacobs and Calland, 2003 and especially Hughes, 2004) the literature is silent on the South African government's post-1994 experience with foreign policy decision making. The questions therefore remain: who makes foreign policy? And more deeply, how? A fundamental, but mainly unanswered question is how to explain important (that is, non-routine, such as crisis-induced) foreign policy decisions of the new South African government, particularly those in the African context.

Filling this silence - telling the other half of the story – is what motivated the present study. It examines South Africa's foreign policy – settings, actors and processes – in the context of its government's declared interest in, and commitment to Africa. The period for this research project was set to include activities between 1994 (the year the ANC took power) and 2002 (the cut-off date to enable processing of fieldwork and interviews). Of course, the Africa focus is not the government's sole orientation. The main foreign policy themes were identified as securing national interests, promoting democracy and human rights, addressing the perceived unbalanced instruments and rules of global governance, and an engagement with the issues of concern to the South (Selebi, 1998). However, for the South African government all of these goals had to be seen in the context of Africa's weak and marginal position in the global order. Promoting Africa's revival therefore became a leitmotiv in South Africa's foreign policy orientation and behaviour (Chikane, 2001: 32). As a senior official in Mbeki's office explained,

> South Africa has made the African Renaissance the cornerstone of its interactions with the world, especially within our continent. Our national interest is underpinned by this vision. Any talk of the renewal of our country, region and continent can be predicated only on a stable and peaceful Africa… (FGD, 1998: 40).

But African realities also meant that the South African government had to formulate and implement policy in a continent characterised by instability and weak governance, a

'rough neighbourhood' indeed. Such an unstable setting is fertile ground for foreign policy dilemmas, if not outright miscalculations and failures. It did not take long for the South African government to recognise this reality. In 1997 Mbeki was optimistic about Africa's recovery:

> Africa's time has come. We should no longer allow the situation where the world records growth and development and Africa communicates a message of regression and further underdevelopment. The new century must be an African century (FGD, 1998:35).

Barely two years later, he observed wryly that 'the one spot (in the world) where things seem to be regressing is the African continent' (Anglin, 1999: 46). African crises, it turned out, provided more challenges than the South African government had bargained – or prepared – for. To say that during the 1990s most of Africa was in crisis is not to exaggerate. As South Africans were queuing up to participate in the country's first-ever democratic elections, approximately one million people were being massacred in Rwanda (Melvern, 2000). The world's media attention was focused elsewhere – Yugoslavia, South Africa – not the genocide. In 1996 armed conflicts in Africa accounted for more than half of all war-related deaths world-wide and resulting in eight million refugees and displaced persons. The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) 'under five mortality rate' indicator shows that nine of the ten countries worst-off in terms of child mortality were in Africa. 33 of the 48 least developed countries (LDCs) are located in Africa. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) similarly reported that nine of the ten LDCs worst hit by economic and social regress (defined as countries which have suffered a chronic decline or precipitous collapse in socio-economic conditions) were from Africa (with the DRC topping the list). And the UNDP reported in 1998 that Africa dominated the lowest category of its Human Development Index, which essentially measures quality of life. Indeed, 34 of the 45 'low' HDI entries were from Africa (FGD, 1998: 40).

As our survey of African crises between 1994 and 2002 shows (addendum one), since the

ANC took power, the African continent was traumatised by more than 30 crises. Most of these appear to be a reflection of ruling elites' military, territorial or resource ambitions; many other crises, such as the ruthless war in Angola, speak of the unfortunate consequences of external influences. After 1994, South Africa found itself responding to increasing numbers of calls for intervention to help assist in the resolution of these conflicts. For example, in the mid-1990s president Mandela became briefly involved in peace talks between the Sudanese government and its opposition. The proponents of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (the disputed Western Sahara territory under the control of Morocco) also called for assistance in their 'struggle for independence'. But no crisis was seen to be of greater magnitude and impact than that triggered by the Nigerian military in 1995, when yet another democratic transition – the most promising so far – was cruelly subverted by the military. It was President Mandela's courageous – but as it turned out, ineffectual – call for the isolation of the Abacha regime that presented the South African government with its first real African foreign policy dilemma. The manner in which the government developed its responses provides this enquiry with its first case study. The other case studies are the South African government's response to the crisis in Lesotho in 1998 and the crisis in Zimbabwe in 2000 (see section 4.3 in the chapter on methodology, p. 58, for the discussion of case study selection).

Summary of the Chapters

The study is organised into the following sections: Chapter one provides the reader with an introduction and contextualisation of the problem under investigation. Chapter two focuses on theory. It explores two clusters of theory: the interdisciplinary approach called public policy and foreign policy analysis (FPA), a field of inquiry which forms part of the discipline of International Relations (IR). The theoretical contributions to the study of foreign policy making that shaped the FPA research agenda for over two decades are used to anchor the theoretical structure of the study. The chapter seeks to identify and synthesise relevant FPA insights with public policy analysis. In doing so, it introduces three models of foreign policy making, based on an in-depth study of Allison's classic

1971 study (and an updated 1999 version by Allison and Zelikow) of the Cuban missile crisis. Chapter three explores the methodology to test these three models. It focuses therefore on case study construction, applying the models to the cases at hand, data gathering and data interpretation and analysis. Chapter four provides the necessary institutional backdrop to foreign policy making in South Africa. It focuses on the post-1994 policy settings, actors, structures and procedures. Chapter five provides an overview of the Nigerian, Lesotho and Zimbabwean crises. Chapter six examines the findings and chapter seven closes with a summary and conclusions. The final section contains references.

Chapter Two

Literature Survey

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE SURVEY

> *Decision-making falls between policy-formulation and implementation … they are closely interwoven, with decisions affecting implementations and initial implementations affecting later stages of decision-making…Decision-making is hence not to be viewed as a passive process…decisions are processes and early decisions are often only vague directional signals for later specifications and revisions*
>
> Etzioni quoted by Parsons (1995: 245)

2.1 Introduction

The rigorous analyst of public policy would be prudent to recognise the value of knowledge generated by the theoretical and conceptual developments in the related fields of political studies, sociology, psychology, history and related disciplines. Yet, as Dunn points out, despite progress in the development of the policy sciences, as yet there is no comprehensive body of knowledge directing analysts

> …when to use formal models and when to rely on intuitive judgments, how to approach decision-makers and how to coax them from their true problems, which methods to use and when to trust their results…Such knowledge as does exist regarding these topics is largely anecdotal. It is acquired by trial and error in the field… (Fischhoff, quoted by Dunn, 1994: 5).

However it is also necessary to state that there is a substantial body of knowledge on the strengths and limitations of policy-analytic methods. In order to examine a country's foreign policy decision making processes – whose outputs are traditionally regarded as 'high politics', but where the decision making arena is often shrouded in secrecy – the analyst would be wise to adopt Dunn's recommended '…systematic methodology for problem solving in the face of complexity' (1994: 5,6). In his view, this is in opposition

to misguided notions that policy making involves well-informed calculations by "rational" actors who seek to maximise economic utility, political power, or organisational effectiveness. This methodology involves 'critical multiplism' or the better known concept of triangulation, which involves the employment of multiple perspectives, methods and data sources.

Having recognised public policy analysis as informed by the realities of the practitioners' world, it is now necessary to locate the study of foreign policy – a specific version of governmental behaviour – in the theoretical and conceptual terrain identified above. Two such areas inform the study. The first deals with public policy and specifically policy process; the second with the study of foreign policy as a subfield of international relations, with a specific focus on foreign policy decision-making processes. Both clusters are important because foreign policy, seen as the actions and plans of a national government towards its external environment, is part of public policy processes. This study focuses on the South African government's Africa policy and in particular its responses to various African crises. In order to deepen our understanding of foreign policy decision-making in this specific context, the study makes use of the models of decision-making as developed by Allison and Zelikow. These models are applied to a selection of case studies, hopefully leading us to make further conclusions about the nature of decision making processes of foreign policymakers.

The theoretical challenge for this study is to review these clusters, arrive at a synthesis and identify the relevant aspects for application to the South African case study.

At the outset it is necessary to clarify the meaning of the words 'concept', 'model', 'theory' and 'paradigm' as employed throughout the study. A **concept** is an abstract, universal idea, notion, or entity that serves to designate a category or class of entities, events, or relations. Concepts are abstract in that they omit the differences of the things in their extension, treating them as if they were identical. They are universal in that they apply equally to every thing in their extension. Concepts are also the basic elements of propositions, much the same way a word is the basic semantic element of a sentence.

Concepts are bearers of meaning, as opposed to agents of meaning. Parsons says of **models**:

> The world is a complex place, and in order to understand this complexity we need to simplify. When we simplify in order to comprehend the multiplicity of factors and forces which shape problems and social processes, we construct models, maps, or think in terms of a metaphor. These constitute frameworks within which and through which we can think and explain (1995: 57).

Parsons distinguishes between explanatory, 'ideal-type' and normative frameworks, and this study draws on his description of the first category, whereby models are viewed as frameworks which may be used to explore. Dye brings the idea of concept and model together and argues that conceptual models can be used, amongst others, to simplify and clarify our thinking about politics and policy, identify important aspects of policy problems, and suggest explanations for public policy and predict its outcomes (Dye, 1992: 18). In his discussion of how to evaluate a model or theory, Parsons (1995: 66-67) argues in favour of the criteria of plausibility (such as coherence, congruence and cogency) whereby a model might be evaluated in terms of the quality of its arguments. This approach to evaluation is rather more like the way one judges a case or evidence submitted in a court of law than to a test done in a laboratory. Parsons adds that one might ask of a model:

- Does it make sense?
- Does it hold together?
- Is it consistent with available evidence?
- How much does it explain?
- Does it convince us?
- Does it add to our understanding?
- Does it say anything different to any other existing theory? (1995: 67).

In short, models help us understand political life, and this study uses models to help explain certain types of foreign policy behaviour. However, the selection of certain models is often done in a theoretical context. Theory has many different meanings and needs a short discussion. In the positivist understanding of science, a body of descriptions of knowledge is usually only called a **theory** once it has a firm empirical

basis, i.e., it is consistent with pre-existing theory to the extent that the pre-existing theory was experimentally verified, is supported by many strands of evidence rather than a single foundation, ensuring that it probably is a good approximation if not totally correct, has survived many critical real world tests that could have proven it false, makes predictions that might someday be used to disprove the theory, is tentative, correctable and dynamic, in allowing for changes to be made as new data is discovered, rather than asserting certainty, and is the most parsimonious explanation, sparing in proposed entities or explanations (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/theory). Although some writers argue that theory constitutes the highest level of knowledge (Timasheff and Theodorson, 1976: 10), in the social sciences this is hard to achieve (or perhaps unachievable). As will become evident in the discussion below, both in the policy sciences and International Relations (and its sub-set, Foreign Policy Analysis) there exists no set of propositions commonly held by all analysts. Instead of a general theory analysts tend to work within frameworks. Sometimes a dominant area of research emerges and is called a **paradigm**, which includes key assumptions about the world and the best way to go about understanding it (Kuhn, 1971). Allison's particular use of paradigm is as follows: 'A systematic statement of the basic assumptions, concepts, and propositions employed by a school of analysis' (1971: 32). Various classifications of these frameworks exist, and tend to include realism (viewed by many as the dominant paradigm), pluralism, globalism, structuralism and postmodernism (Groom and Light, 1994). For many years a sterile inter-paradigm debate raged amongst scholars (Hoffman, 1987), but currently there is a great deal of research based on partial or middle-range theories – more modest attempts to explain or predict, such as crisis decision making (Viotti and Kauppi, 1993: 4).

2.2 Public policy

Inspired by Anderson (2000), public policy is taken to mean a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by the state in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. This modified definition – whereby 'the state' replaces Anderson's 'actor or set of actors', allows us to focus on what is actually done instead of what is only proposed or intended, and it differentiates a policy from a decision, which is essentially a specific

choice among alternatives. Public policy making is understood here as the process whereby authoritative plans or courses of actions are devised on public issues (Dye, 1992). The word 'authoritative' suggests the involvement of government and the state, whereby the former is understood to be the decision making arm of the state, and the latter as an organised political community occupying a definite territory, having an organised government, and possessing internal and external sovereignty. Writers on the state emphasise a key characteristic of the state, namely that its government claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical coercion over its population (Opello and Rosow, 2004: 3). Policy analysis, in turn, is seen as 'a set of techniques with which to evaluate public policy options…' (Parsons, 1997: 46), and the primary task is to understand how problems and processes may be conceptualised. Policy analysis can also be seen as comprising a range of activity on a spectrum of knowledge in the policy process:

Table One: Variety of policy analysis

Analysis of policy			**Analysis for policy**	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Analysis of policy determination	Analysis of policy content	Policy monitoring and evaluation	Information for policy	Policy advocacy

Source: Parsons, 1997: 55

Analysis of policy includes:

1. *Policy determination*, which is policy analysis concerned with how policy is made, why, when and for whom;
2. *policy content*, which may involve a description of a particular policy and how it developed in relation to earlier policies, or it may be informed by a theoretical/value framework which seeks to offer a critique of policy;
3. *policy monitoring and evaluation*, which examines how policies have performed against policy goals and what impact a policy have had on a given problem.

Analysis for policy encompasses:

4. *policy advocacy*, which involves research and arguments intended to influence the policy agenda inside and/or outside government;
5. *information for policy*, which is intended to feed into policy-making activities.

After examining the kinds of analysis across the policy process, the study focuses on the analysis of policy determination (how policy is made, why, when and for whom). Parsons (1997) furthermore distinguishes between old and new models of the policy process (see figure three below). This is useful for our enquiry, in particular the 'new' models of the policy process, because much of the literature on foreign policy making indicates that our understanding of policy outcomes is enhanced by applying insights from policy networks/communities, a focus on the impact of institutions on policy, and the critical theory and constructivist approach (Allison and Zelikowski, 1999; Booysen, 2001; Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2002). The latter approaches will be explored in more detail in the following chapters.

Table Two Old and new models of the policy process

Old:	**New:**
• Bureaucratic pyramidical hierarchies • The 'iron triangle' concept of policy making in modern societies (describing relations between Government/administration, the legislature, and interest groups) • A focus on the Eastonian black box concept • Informed by the paradigms of positivism, neo-positivism, and therefore rational decision-making • The 'stageist' model or policy cycle approach	• Policy networks and communities • The new institutionalism: ways in which institutions shape policy making and outcomes • Informed by the paradigms of critical theory and constructivism

The distinction Parsons draws between various *levels of analysis* is useful to orient our inquiry. He starts with *meta-analysis* which according to him is employed to consider the methods and approaches used in the study of public policy, and the discourse and

language it uses. Secondly, he identifies *meso-analysis* as '… the way in which issues and problems are defined and policy agendas set'. This is a level of analysis which cuts through the various phases of the policy process by exploring approaches which link the input side of the policy making process with the policy/decision making and output process. In other words, it is concerned with models and theories that seek to explain what is going on when problems are defined and agendas are being set. Thirdly, Parsons identifies *decision analysis* that refers to the analysis of how decisions are taken and policies are made (and how analysis is used within the decision making process). In short, this level of analysis looks at the design of policies and their adoption. Parsons' fourth level of analysis focuses on *'delivery analysis'* that is a study of the 'output' side of public policy. As such it concentrates on implementation, delivery systems, evaluation and so on.

Which level/s of analysis would be relevant for this study? Would it be important to start from the level of meso- or meta-analysis? As the selection of the case studies already suggests, the study is not primarily concerned with understanding how problems are framed, or how they become – or do not become – items or issues on the policy agenda. This is where models of policy making in an industrial society, such as networks, streams, advocacy coalitions and punctuated equilibrium are used (one of these – Kingdon's 1984 'streams in the policy process' – was examined in order to explore its relevance to the present study. It appears that this approach might be too 'Northern-centred' for purposes of analysing foreign policy decision making in a transitional setting). More to the point, the focus on foreign policy suggests those issues or problems are often given rather than selected; governments are typically confronted with external dynamics (the international setting) to which it must develop policy responses – in many cases, a rapid response as well. This is a fundamental point: governments often do not have the 'luxury' of choosing to recognise or avoid a foreign policy issue or crisis. The question this study tries to answer is how decision-makers manage such situations perceived as crises.

The study therefore focuses on another level of analysis, which is decision analysis. Analyses of decision-making are accounts that claim to explain or describe how a decision, or series of decisions, came to be made (always keeping in mind that the state remains the locus of public decision making). If decision-making is defined as a process in which choices are made or a preferred option is selected (Parsons, 1995: 245) then the notion of decision involves a series of points in time and space (meaning different arenas and levels) when decision makers allocate values. As Anderson explains, a policy decision involves action by some official or body to adopt, modify or reject a preferred policy alternative, and is usually the culmination of many decisions, some routine and some not so routine, made during the policy process (2000: 127). This level appears to be appropriate for purposes of analysing the management of South Africa's foreign policy. Guiding the overall approach of this study in terms of its public policy focus is the following framework (figure four below) which was developed using the insights of Anderson (1994; 2000), Dunn (1994) and Parsons (1995).

In summary, then, this study is located at the following levels: in terms of Parsons' variety of policy analysis, the study focuses on 'analysis of policy determination' (that is, analysis concerned with how policy is made, why, when and for whom). It focuses to a lesser extent on the 'analysis of policy content' (that is, description of a particular policy). It prefers to draw on the insights offered by the 'new' models of the policy process, and finally, it works from both the 'meso' level (that is, linking input with decision making and output) and 'decision' level (that is, explaining or describing how a decision came to be made).

As should hopefully be evident by now, within this broad context the focus of this study will be on the policy formation stage. Table three (below) situates this focus.

Table Three The public policy process

Policy terminology	Phases in the policy process				
	Pre-decision stage		Decision stage		
		The policy formation stage			
	One: **Policy Agenda**	**Two:** **Policy Formulation**	**Three:** **Policy** Decision	**Four:** **Policy** ***Implementation***	**Five:** **Policy Evaluation**
Definition	Those problems or issues that receive attention of public officials	Development of proposed courses of action for dealing with a public issue or problem	Action by some official body or person to adopt, modify or reject a preferred policy option	Application (administration) of the policy by the state	Attempts to measure and indicate the success of policy measures
Common sense	Getting the govern-ment to consider action	What is proposed to be done (about the problem)	Getting government to accept a particular solution (to the problem)	Applying government's policy (to the problem)	Did the policy work?
General	1 *The policy makers and their environment* (including structures and institutions) need to be superimposed upon this model in order to make the picture more complete 2 Phases one and two are known as *the pre-decision stage*. Stages three, four and five are known as *the decision stage.* 3 *Policy formation* takes place during phases 2, 3 and 4 and differs from *policy formulation*, because it includes the creation, adoption and implementation of policy 4 Sources: Anderson, 2000; Dunn, 1994; Parsons, 1995				

Table three (above) shows phases two, three and four as *the decision stage*, where *policy formation* takes place. This is different from policy formulation, because it includes the creation, adoption and implementation of policy. How can the policy formation or decision stage be analysed? An examination of the literature on public policy shows a wide variety of potentially relevant concepts, models and approaches. Typical models to

explain this process include the institutional, process, group, elite, rational, incremental, game theory, public choice and systems models (see Anderson, 2000, De Coning, 1995, Dunn, 1994, Dye, 1992, Hogwood, and Gunn, 1984, Parsons, 1995). In recognition of increasingly complex policy environments, analysts and writers have introduced additional models and concepts (or metaphors) such as networks, communities, streams, garbage can, advocacy coalitions, and complex adaptive systems, often drawing on the post-modern theoretical concepts of chaos and complexity (Capra, 2004; De Coning and Cloete, 2000; Parsons, 1995).

Most of the mainstream policy models were developed in the context of industrialised states as well as from a behavioural and positivist perspective (game theory is so abstract as to make its application almost theoretical; systems theory is based on Easton's 1965 work). However, one should recognise the enduring value of some of these models. For example, in terms of foreign policy analysis, Graham Allison (1971) developed three conceptual models of the policy-making process, namely the rational actor model, the organisational process model, and the bureaucratic politics model. These, in his view, could be used to explain what happens when policy makers in a government meet, deliberate and recommend options. Allison's models overlap to a considerable extent with what is found in the public policy literature – with the key proviso, of course, that analyses of foreign policies must factor in the dynamics of the external environment. Allison's models were used at least twice to explain aspects of South Africa's foreign policy (Chaplog, 1997; Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 1999). Despite discussion of these and other models, very little research has been done regarding their applicability to the South African – or African – cases (see Geldenhuys, 1984).

Before examining these models for analysing the decision-making process, it seems necessary to clarify a number of additional points of departure. The first point is that decision-making extends throughout the policy cycle, in different arenas and at a variety of levels. This 'reality' might create a problem for the study because of the wide field in which decision-making occurs; surely it would be necessary to narrow it down to a manageable level? To compound the problem, as the arguments of 'network'

frameworks suggest, modern government must increasingly be seen as a complex multi-layered, or multi-sphere activity in which a policy is composed of numerous decision points. The discussion below will return to suggested ways of managing this insight.

The second point connects with the first. Frameworks that are employed to explain the decision process tend to be equally multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary. Parsons (1995: 246) uses the same example of Allison's 1971 study of the Cuban missile crisis to argue that '…the decisions surrounding this episode may be viewed through a variety of 'lenses', each of which constructs a different story of what 'actually' took place.' Parsons refers to Allison's models as lenses. Welch (1992: 115) notes that Allison freely employs a variety of synonyms for the word 'paradigm', such as 'model', 'approach', 'perspective', 'frame of reference', 'framework', 'conceptual lens' and 'conceptual scheme', and adds that these are useful synonyms for the less familiar term 'metatheory'.

So which models are appropriate to study policy making? In analysing the decision-making process the public policy literature identifies five major perspectives, namely power, rationality, public choice, institutional and psychological, from which a variety of theories and models were developed (Parsons, 1995). These are briefly discussed below.

From the perspective of **power,** decision-making is viewed as something that is shaped and determined by the structures of power: class, wealth, bureaucratic and political arrangements, pressure groups, and technical knowledge or professionals. This perspective exhibits a range of variants. For example, (neo) elitism and pluralism focuses on the way power is concentrated and distributed, (neo) Marxism focuses on class conflict and economic power, and corporatism focuses on the power of organised interests (Ham and Hill, 1984).

The rational actor and its critics. From this perspective, models were developed from two sources: the idea of economic rationality as it developed in economic theory, and the idea of bureaucratic rationality as formulated by sociologists such as Weber (1930). Models of decision-making that focus on rationality argue that in order to understand the real world of decision, one must consider the extent to which a decision has been the

outcome of rational processes. However, as analysts recognised the severe limitations of this model (rational decision making relies on comprehensive knowledge of all aspects relating to the problem to be solved, for example) research were undertaken to develop a better understanding of the dynamics of decision making. Developments in this field (which tends to overlap with models developed from the focus on personality in decision making) include the ideas of bounded rationality (Simon, 1983) and decision-making as muddling through, incrementalism and satisficing (Lindblom, 1959). Interesting progress has been made with this latter theme of sub optimal decision-making, to the point where March and Olsen (1976), and Cyert and March (1992) developed the idea of the garbage can model of decision-making which is deduced from the assumptions that values are complex, knowledge is uncertain, rules are complex, and that decision-making involves much that is symbolic. The decision-making process is therefore far less rational than traditional economic and organisational theories of decision-making suppose.

Public choice perspectives shift the focus to bureaucratic power, inefficiencies and expansionism. A key assumption is that bureaucrats are interested in maximising their own self-interest (through bigger budgets) rather than the public interest (Downs, 1967 and Niskanen, 1971). As Parsons (1995: 311) points out, on the face of it this thesis is attractive, but from a methodological point of view, it is difficult to test or falsify.

There is a new awareness of the importance of placing public policy in the context of **institutions**, says Parsons, and it flows from three very different sources: sociological, economic and political (Parsons, 1995: 323). Together, these perspectives provide different windows or insights into how institutions shape the way in which decision-making takes place. Selznick's structural-functionalist theory, for example, argues that organisations are far more complex, 'living' and 'organic' systems that adapt to their external environment in order to maintain their existence as institutions, rather than the goals and purposes for which they were established. Flowing from his 1949 Tennessee Valley Authority study, he found that "…in carrying out policy, agencies are also involved in remaking and redefining policy" (Selznick, 1957: 251). More recently,

March and Olsen (1976) argued that institutions provide the important parameters within which the formulation of problems and decisions take place. To explain a given policy, they say, "…requires that we first analyse the structure, historical development, personal networks and decisions over time of the institutions involved in finding a solution to a 'problem'" (quoted by Parsons, 1995: 224). The value of this perspective and its application by Kiser and Ostrom (1982), Kingdon (1984) and others is that it alerts analysts of the policy process that agenda-setting and problem construction is bounded by constitutions, rules, resources and institutions which shape the conduct of politics and which set out the rules of the game. This focus has been broadened by the 'state-centred' perspectives of political theorists such as Skocpol (1985) and Hall (1977) who look at the relationships of institutions to society and state, rather than single organisations or the mechanisms of individual rational choice.

The role of **personality** in decision-making has been extensively researched and Parsons identifies two main approaches to the study of human decision-making that derive from psychological and informational theories. The first, informed by the work of amongst others Lasswell (in his famous 1958 book titled "Politics: who gets what, when and how") and Janis (in her equally famous 1972 book titled "Victims of groupthink"), analyses the impact of personality on politics and therefore focuses on factors such as human emotions, personality, motivations, group behaviour, and interpersonal relationships. The second (flowing largely from the recognition that rational decision making behaviour cannot be assumed) is concerned with issues such as how human beings recognise problems, use information, make choices, perceive reality and communicate. For example, Herbert Simon (1983) developed the idea of 'bounded rationality' and researched the way in which human beings 'solve problems' within certain cognitive limits. Generally, the study of 'below the surface' levels of power and politics have serious methodological implications; how does one study 'values', 'beliefs', 'assumptions' and the 'subconscious' aspects of public policy-making? (Parsons, 1995: 379). One way around the problem is to focus narrowly on a political personality in a powerful decision-making position, and to employ content analysis methods: the author

applied this methodology to analyse the 'operational code' (worldview) of then president PW Botha (Van Nieuwkerk and Van Wyk, 1989).

Although these perspectives are discussed rather briefly, it becomes obvious that many of them have valuable insights to offer. Therefore, selecting one perspective to underpin this study will be difficult and indeed unreasonable, given that different accounts of one issue often produces deeper insights. It is difficult to imagine that foreign – or any other public – policy can be adequately explained by utilising one theory or model. Recent studies of (post-1994) South African foreign policy decision making indicate that individual models do not adequately explain decisions. The following publications are illustrative. Chaplog (1997) and Van Nieuwkerk and Le Pere (1999) examined South Africa's decision to recognise the PRC by applying Allison's three models of decision making. Bertelsmann-Scott (1999), Adelzadeh (1996) and Muller (2000) looked at the making of foreign economic policy, with the former examining the dynamics of the SA-EU free trade deal. Van Wyk (1999), Fabricius (1999), Suttner (1996) and Van Nieuwkerk (1999) all examined institutional dimensions of foreign policy making in South Africa. Lodge (1999) examined policy processes within the ruling African National Congress. Is it possible to analyse foreign policy behaviour from a variety of models? A survey of the appropriate foreign policy theoretical literature allows us to find such as a combination of models to assist our analysis.

2.3 Foreign policy decision making

The major contours of the theoretical development of the International Relations (IR) discipline is examined below, in order to provide the broader setting for a discussion of foreign policy analysis.

2.3.1 The discipline of International Relations (IR)

A brief explanatory note is required to distinguish the concepts 'international relations' and 'International Relations'. The first refers to relations between nations that one

observes or assumes and tries to describe and analyse. The second refers to the theory and methods researchers employ in that analysis: the discipline of IR.

IR theory is relevant and important because it impacts on the way analysts employ concepts, models and paradigms to explain and understand the world and its social dynamics. This is also true for foreign policy analysis (see section 2.2 below). Different theoretical perspectives lead to different research foci, understandings and interpretations. Analysts influenced by the work of prominent realists such as Ken Waltz (1979) or Henry Kissinger (1994) assume that foreign policy refers to action driven by states, and furthermore, that these states behave as rational actors. They will be very interested in states' constant search for security, and might want to explore 'post-September 11' US foreign policy actions from this perspective. For analysts influenced by pluralists such as Susan Strange (1998), the focus shifts from states to the 'mixed actor' system. Such analysts might want to examine the complex dynamics and global influence of the World Trade Organisation. For analysts influenced by structuralists such as Wallerstein (1979), the real actors are classes, and would assume the location of the state within the global network of capitalism to be crucial. They might want to develop a critique of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) by examining Africa's structural position of marginalisation in the global economy. More broadly, it is possible to distinguish between the following key IR theoretical approaches to decision making.

- **Classical realism**

The predominant theoretical perspective in analysing international affairs has been the realist school of thought, which became prominent after World War II. It is based on two basic assumptions: one, unitary states are the key actors in international affairs; and two, states act rationally. Realists also assume that the international environment is a 'jungle' (order and justice are exceptions, not the rule); and the dominant goals states pursue in political life are security and power. Influential writers in this tradition include Bull, Carr, Hobbes, Kissinger, Machiavelli, Morgenthau, Rousseau and Thucydides (Viotti and Kauppi, 1993: 84-186).

- **Neorealism (or structural realism)**

Members of this theoretical school have sought to distinguish themselves from earlier realists in two dimensions: first in the aspiration to be 'scientific' and second in the stress they place on system-level variables. The leading proponent of neorealism is Kenneth Waltz, whose Theory of International Politics (1979) is an attempt to produce a more rigorous, systematic theory of international politics. In his theory, states are indistinguishable billiard balls except in one attribute. Differences in the relative aggregate power of states (measured objectively in terms of GNP, military capabilities, etc) are the decisive variable. From the general condition of anarchy, Waltz predicts a strong tendency towards balance in the system. The expectation is not that balance, once achieved, will be maintained, but that balance, once disrupted, will be restored in one way or the other. When confronting a more powerful state or group of states, what would a state do as predicted by Waltz's theory? First, it would do everything it can to build up its own capabilities. Second, it would join a counterbalancing alliance with several other states in order to restore a balance of power. Neorealist colleagues share a cluster of core assumptions with Waltz, including that of a unitary state as principal rational actor; the importance of system variables; and survival as the most important objective sought by states (leading to selfish and domineering behaviour). Most neorealists have found Waltz' parsimonious theory inadequate; thus they have explicitly 'thickened' both the international conditions in which states find themselves, and the disposition of states. For example, Stephen Walt (1985) insists that analysis must take account of the behaviour of states, not simply their aggregate power, in explaining who allies with whom. He argues that alliances form not in response to power imbalances, as Waltz maintains, but in response to imbalances of threat. Indeed, other scholars, such as Jervis (1986), insist that it is necessary to take account of the perceptions and beliefs of states and their leaders in order to explain and predict interaction.

- **International Institutionalism**

International institutionalists go beyond neorealism to focus on system-wide institutions and interactions as major causal factors, especially in explaining cooperation among states. They focus on the dramatically increased number and importance of international

institutions (IMF, WTO, etc) as well as the growing salience of economic and other transnational interactions. Scholars such as Keohane and Nye (1977), Keohane (1984) and others have sought to demonstrate how and why these institutions and processes matter. In their explanations, they share key rational theory assumptions such as a unified state actor that is rationally value-maximising, and acknowledge the importance of structural factors employed by neorealists. They then add a further layer of system-level factors, namely international institutions, to explain state action. The simple analytics of the institutionalists's argument are well illustrated in the following quotation from an article by Axelrod and Keohane: 'In an anarchic international environment with no superior authority to enforce agreements, when will rational, value-maximizing states nonetheless cooperate?' (quoted from Allison and Zelikow, 2001: 35).

- **Liberalism**

As a theory of foreign policy, the central proposition of liberalism is simply that state structures matter. The structure of their domestic governments and the values and views of their citizens affect their behaviour in international affairs. The liberal school then gives priority to the institutions and processes of domestic governance. In the view of one theorist, 'societal ideas, interests, and institutions influence state behaviour by shaping state preferences, that is, the fundamental social purposes underlying the strategic calculations of governments' (Allison and Zelikow, 2001: 40). State preferences become the basis for the rational, value-maximising calculations of the leaderships of governments and thus the actions of governments in international affairs. This school claims to have discovered a rare empirical law in international relations, namely that democracies never (or very rarely) go to war against other democracies. This proposition – also called the democratic peace hypothesis – is the focus of much debate and analysis.

- **Strategy, war and rational choice**

Schelling's 1960 *Strategy of Conflict* is widely recognised as the finest formulation of the principles of contemporary strategic theory. According to him, strategy analyses and explains the maze of national actions and reactions as more or less advantageous moves

in a game of interdependent conflict. Nations act in situations of tempered antagonism and precarious partnership. Each nation's best choice depends on what it expects the other to do. Strategic choice assumes a model, and the foundation for Schelling is the assumption of rational behaviour – not just of intelligent behaviour, but of behaviour motivated by a conscious calculation of advantages, a calculation that in turn is based on an explicit and internally consistent value system. It is clear that game theorists aspire to use core rational theory assumptions to produce findings. However, in the view of Allison and Zelikow, the more sophisticated practitioners of strategic choice recognise the critique that much of the real work of their explanations and predictions is in fact done by auxiliary assumptions extraneous to the model. Also, when formal game theory approaches more real-world issues where information is incomplete, the games are not zero-sum, the interactions involve more multiple actors, and the theories yield few determinate conclusions.

From the late 1990s other alternative approaches emerged, in particular, post-positivism and post-modernism (Lapid, 1989, Hollis and Smith, 1991, Groom and Light, 1994). Instead of being concerned with the traditional question in IR of how bounded communities interact with one another, analysts in this broad category would be interested in the issue of how boundedness is constituted in the first place. Boundaries, in this sense, refer to identities of a multiplicity of actors. Insights from social constructivism – that behaviour, interests and relationships are socially constructed, and can therefore change; and that the environments in which actors are embedded are in important part cultural and institutional, rather than just material – makes it possible, for example, to assist with the (re)orientation of security towards human needs. What is constructivism's impact on foreign policy? Both neorealist and liberal theorising have been criticised by constructivists for neglecting 'ideational' variables such as political culture, identity, norms and values (Ruggie, 1998). Though constructivists have broadened the concept of structure to include common norms and culture, they have not abandoned the notion that state behaviour is heavily influenced by structures, be they international or domestic. For example, Finnemore (1996) demonstrates how the decisions of states to intervene militarily abroad are shaped by changing international

norms 'governing' legitimate and appropriate behaviour in that area. In an interesting study on post-unification German foreign policy Wagner et al (2001) suggest that its orientation of multilateralism, non-military means and restraint has been influenced by international structures (such as the European integration project) and domestic ones (such as an anti-militarist culture). Constructivist approaches point to the impact of the agent and structure upon each other. Germany influences and shapes the EU project as much as it shapes and influences German foreign policy.

2.3.2 Foreign policy analysis (FPA)

Foreign policy analysis (FPA) flows mainly from the realist understanding and positivist analysis of international relations, and initially focused exclusively on state behaviour in the international context (although, as pointed out below, this approach has broadened in later years). As Fukuyama (1992) commented, realism has provided 'the dominant framework for understanding international relations, and shapes the thinking of virtually every foreign policy professional today in the United States and much of the rest of the world' (Little, 1995: 71. See also Light, 1994: 93). It is therefore instructive to revisit the key components of the general set of realist beliefs. First, human nature is universal and driven by a universal *animus dominandi*, a lust to dominate. Second, the important unit of social life is the collectivity and in international relations the only important collectivity is the state, which recognises no authority above it. Third, power and its pursuit by individuals and states are both ubiquitous and inescapable. Conflicts of power constitute the essence of international politics. Fourth, it follows that the real issues of international politics can be understood in terms of the rational analysis of competing interests defined as power (Rengger, 2000: 41). This is not to imply that realism as a field of study is limited to these four assumptions. Realism has been considerably enriched by the contributions of Kenneth Waltz (1979), whose emphasis on the balance of power has led to neo-realist theorising, and revisionists such as Barry Buzan and colleagues (1993), whose focus on anarchy led to structural realism.

Definitions of the term foreign policy were also shaped by the realist tradition. Consider for example Clarke and White's (1989: 1) definition of the study of foreign policy, namely '…that area of governmental activity which is concerned with relationships between the state and other actors, particularly other states, in the international system'. The doyen of foreign policy analysis, James Rosenau, wrote in 1986 that '...the field does have a central focus – the plans and actions of national governments oriented toward the external world' (1987: 4). He also comments, in the same chapter, that the study of foreign policy has benefited greatly from the insights of neo-realism and neo-liberalism (the 'growing interdependence' thesis). Therefore, like biochemistry and social psychology, for him foreign policy analysis is a bridging discipline. It takes as its focus of study the bridges that nation-states build to link themselves and their subsystems to the international systems of which they are a part.

Indeed, most US-based foreign policy analysts still take as their point of departure the positivist orientation (e.g. fact/value distinctions, objectification of human action, empirical commitments, methodological unity of science, etc) which results in the adoption of a 'building block' view of science. This assumes that successive layers of empirical findings (that is, tests of hypotheses) would lead through an inductive process to ever more general theories of foreign policy behaviour and hence to a growing body of verifiable knowledge.

Hermann and Peacock (1987: 21) tried to illustrate their optimistic comment – 'growth in knowledge occurs as the empirical content of theories increase' – by identifying six such building blocks in the theoretical accumulation enterprise. As an example of cutting edge foreign policy research, it is useful to list the key theoretical efforts.

The first approach developed out of the 1954 decision-making framework of Snyder, Bruck and Sapin (1962), and attempted to answer the fundamental question of why foreign policy officials make the choices they do.

The second approach flowed from Rosenau's (1966) 'pre-theories' essay. He proposed a manageable typology for differentiating among nations. He contended that the variables that would be most important in accounting for a country's foreign policy would depend on its nation type. Rosenau can be said to have framed the question thus: Which kinds of explanatory variables are most potent in accounting for decision makers' choices?

The third 'building block' came from the Sprouts (1965) and Brecher (1975) who focused on the relationship between the environment and the decision makers' perception of that environment or what Brecher called the operational environment (external influences) and the psychological environment (the interpretation of those influences by decision makers). They can be interpreted as asking: how do decision makers interpret and integrate the various potential sources of outside influence? As Hermann and Peacock (1987: 25) commented, '…if we can understand those dynamics, decision making can serve as the integrating mechanism for multi-source explanations of foreign policy.'

The other 'building blocks' are examples of applying the scientific approach to various kinds of sophisticated statistical modelling projects with the aim of prediction ('probability estimates'). Examples include the Programmed International Computer Environment (PRINCE) project, Interstate Behaviour Analysis (IBA), and the Comparative Research on the Events of Nations (CREON) project.

To summarise, the literature indicates that from the inception of foreign policy analysis (a post-world war two phenomenon) it has involved the examination of how foreign policy decisions are made and has assumed that the source of much behaviour and most change in international politics is human beings, acting individually or in collectives. By unpacking the 'black box' of decision making, foreign policy analysis essentially takes a foreign policy decision making approach to the study of IR. With this approach, it achieves the following: it breaks apart the monolithic view of states as unitary actors; it does not assume that decision makers will act in a classically rational fashion, rather, it sees human rationality as bounded – people satisfice rather than optimise. Unpacking the

black box of foreign policy decision making therefore adds much detail to the analysis of IR. An updated definition of foreign policy analysis therefore reads as follows: 'As a distinct branch of international politics, FPA focuses on the processes by which specific international actors (primarily state governments and leaders) make choices' (Foyle, 2003: 164). This focus has led to an enormous literature on how leaders, groups, and coalitions of actors can affect the way foreign policy problems are framed (defined), the options that are selected, the choices that are made, and what gets implemented (Foyle, 2003: 164).

Writing in a recent overview of the state of foreign policy analysis, Garrison concludes that 'It is now broadly accepted that different levels of analysis – individual factors, inputs into the decision process, and institutional as well as cultural and societal factors – converge to shape foreign policy outputs' (Garrison, 2003a: 155). In her view, the contributions of Snyder, Rosenau, George, Allison and Janis amongst others have suggested the relevance of learning about the stories behind foreign policy decisions and have encouraged recent generations to create a new set of 'lenses' that bring some focus to the complex picture (Garrison, 2003a: 155). One such lens is the foreign policy analysis literature that focuses on the linkage between social structures and calculating agents. For Kaarbo (in the same reflective overview), bureaucratic politics seems almost a paradigmatic example of social constructivism. In her view, 'FPA looks at the interface between institutions, agents, and rules with the aim of showing how these led to the foreign policy choices made by the collective agents known as states' (2003: 162).

The postpositivist era has certainly had its impact on the foreign policy field. Consider the recent approach from Vale and Mphaisha (1999: 89) who argue that foreign policy '…is the sum total of all activities by which international actors act, react and interact with the environment beyond their national borders'. Indeed, although the literature mostly speaks of the foreign policy of states, states are definitely not the only significant actors in international relations. At the same time, though, the state needs special attention because of the tremendous implications that the foreign policy decisions of states have on our lives. It is furthermore wrong to suggest that the foreign policy of a

country is something that is made only by the central administrative institution called 'the state'. One should be aware of the many actors inside and outside a country that can contribute to the making of the foreign policy of that particular country, and in this context, writers have developed the notion of 'distinct environments' within which the making of foreign policy occurs. These include the domestic, international, psychological, and bureaucratic or organisational environments (Vale and Mphaisha, 1999: 90-98).

The focus has therefore shifted from 'elegant' and 'parsimonious' theories portrayed by mathematical and statistical functions (Hudson and Vore, 1995: 211) to the building of middle-level theory, as Hudson and Vore's description of the field of current foreign policy analysis shows. This conclusion is shared by Neack, Hey and Haney, who claim that the second generation of foreign policy analysis (and analysts), although rejecting a paradigmatic core and central methodology, still pay attention to '… using qualitative methods in rigorous, systematic ways with the goal of theory building in mind' (1995: 11). It needs to be pointed out that with the exception of a few studies (Aluko, 1977; Engel, 1993; Korany, 1986; Reinalda and Verbeek, 2003; 't Hart, 1994; Valenta, 1979 and Vertzberger, 1984) FPA's new foci remain firmly on the developed or industrialised countries of the North. In this sense, the present study – located firmly in the African context – hopes to make a contribution to the reinvigoration of FPA.

Indeed, to what extent has foreign policy analysis been applied to South Africa? Overwhelmingly, studies of South Africa's foreign policy and relations have relied on the realist and positivist paradigms. Generally, studies tend to avoid methodological sophistication. The classic example of a descriptive overview of the pre-1994 foreign policies of the South African state is Barber and Barratt's 1990 'South Africa's Foreign Policy: The search for status and security'. As Vale (1989) commented, with a few exceptions, 'theoretical concerns have not engaged South African scholars'. Taylor, writing from a critical perspective, concurred when he recently suggested that

> …at the level of theory building, there has been little progress within the South African academy beyond neo-realist ontologies and objectivist epistemologies.

> What studies that break from this (be they Critical Theory, neo-Gramscian, feminism, social constructivism, or post-modernism) largely remain at an embryonic stage of development (Taylor, 2000: 2).

He advocates an alternative, more sophisticated approach to the study of South Africa's foreign policy and international relations. In his words, 'By advancing the analysis of South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy beyond purely examining state behaviour within a supposedly never-changing global order, and by examining the constraints that remain invisible in ahistorical explanatory frameworks, a more sophisticated understanding of Pretoria's foreign policy can be attempted which critically interrogates the relationship between state and society'.

2.3.3 Crisis Studies

Can the 1994 genocide in Rwanda be regarded as a crisis? What is a crisis? If it was regarded as a crisis, how did the South African government respond, if at all? Clarifying what we mean by 'crisis' therefore becomes important, given our focus on foreign policy responses of South Africa to crises in Africa.

Charles Hermann (1989) distinguishes three broad approaches to the study of crisis within the field of international relations, each focusing on a different level of analysis: the systemic, actor confrontation, and decision-making approaches. In systemic crisis studies the focus is on the stability of the international order. Actor-confrontation studies examine two or more actors engaged in conflictual communication and crisis bargaining. Research on decision making during crisis focuses on the predicament of those acting in the name of the state in a critical situation (as defined below). Given the focus of the present study, and following Stern (2003: 186-189) we will examine the decision making mode more closely. The referents of such crises are the policymakers who take responsibility for coping with a given problem. According to Hermann, this mode "…examines the task of reaching and implementing choice within a single government or other policymaking unit. The members of a government perceive, not always correctly,

the emergence of an acute situation that can cause them, or their policy, harm. The individual and organisational means of coping with the crisis problem become the object of study" (quoted by Stern, 2003: 186). Hermann's conceptualisation derives from the subjective perceptions of the policymakers who are involved in recognising and dealing with the problem. **The analyst's task is to "interpret the situation as it is perceived by the decision makers"** (Stern, 2003: 186).

The definition of a crisis has received thorough attention in the literature, with substantial contributions by Brecher (1993), Holsti (1989), Hermann (1989), Richardson (1988) and others. According to Brecher (1993) the indicators for a crisis are threat to basic values, action demonstrating resolve, and overt hostility. With these conditions present, a situation can be described as a crisis. Brecher defines an international crisis as

> …an increase in intensity of disruptive interactions between two or more states (such as a hostile act or disruptive event), with a heightened probability of military hostilities, that in turn destabilises their relationship and challenges the structure of the international system (1993: 16).

For Brecher, there is a close relationship between crisis and conflict. Every crisis reflects a state of conflict between adversaries, but not every conflict is reflected in crisis. Crises occur within, as well as outside, protracted conflicts. Many crises, too, occur without violence, and others are accompanied by war.

Others define crisis as 'marked by a severe threat to important values; time for coping with the threat is finite' (Holsti, 1989: 12). Hermann (quoted by Brecher, 1993: 18) specified the defining conditions of a crisis as the perception of a severe threat to the basic values of the political system; relatively short time; and an increased expectation that hostilities will sharply escalate.

Brecher argues that an international crisis begins with an external or foreign policy crisis for one or more states. The trigger to a foreign policy crisis is perceptual. For example,

perception of threat is generated by a hostile act, disruptive event or change in the environment. In sum, a foreign policy crisis arises from the highest-level political decision-makers' image of pressure(s) to cope with externally-focused stress. It also marks the beginning of an international crisis.

In sum, we adopt the following definition provided by Stern and Sundelius:

> A decision-making crisis is a situation, deriving from a change in the external or internal environment of a collectivity, characterised by three necessary and sufficient perceptions on the part of the responsible decision makers: a threat to basic values; urgency; uncertainty (2002: 72).

In FPA, studies of decision making crises have focused heavily on military-security issues. The term "military-security crisis" embraces those situations that threaten basic values through perceptions of a heightened risk of military violence (Stern, 2003: 188). Other scholars have argued that economic crises also involve short term and rapidly emerging threats to material and political values. Such crises might include resource shortages and dramatic price hikes or collapse such as the currency fluctuations of the 1990s or the oil shocks of the 1970s. A feature of environmental decision-making crises often involves perceptions of acute threat to biological values, such as immediate threats to human health (Aids, SARS and Ebola). Finally, new kinds of actors and new kinds of security threats have emerged as the subject of much scholarly interest: the various institutions of the European Union and its capacity to cope with crisis, Al Qaeda's 2001 attack on America, the outbreak of the SARS in 2003, or the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. We might expand the list to include the question of how the newly-formed African Union plans to cope with crises such as genocide, war, or terrorism.

2.3.4 The Allison and Zelikow models of foreign policy decision making

This section starts with a few introductory remarks about models and the reason for focusing on Allison and Zelikow (1999). As has become clear in the preceding

discussion of foreign policy analysis, there is no agreed theory of foreign policy. The purpose of theory is to explain and predict. The field of foreign policy is seen as containing (as yet) too many unrelated variables to specify relations among them with certainty. What we have instead are so-called middle-range theoretical approaches and models for understanding foreign policy. What is the difference between approach and model? An approach is often used to suggest hypotheses which can then be tested (Isaak, 1981: 192). Models (or as some would have it, conceptual schemes) provide questions, pointers and directions for inquiry which might, if pursued, lead to a better understanding of the domain under investigation. They simplify and systematise the domain under investigation by virtue of positing certain assumptions about the structure or functional nature of the phenomena under discussion. They also provide a universe of discourse or way of talking about certain structural and behavioural aspects of the object or phenomena under investigation. Models are more important for their suggestiveness than their explanatory power (Isaak, 1981: 183). For example, in his analysis of decision-making, Sullivan refers to a model as

> …a very general picture of how decisions are made; it will be concerned with overall processes of decision-making. Each model possesses quite different assumptions about those processes, and therefore each paints a different picture of how individuals make decisions resulting in foreign policy (1976: 67).

In the foreign policy literature, models are being used to probe decisions and events. Various models have been developed that focus on rational and organisational processes, bureaucratic behaviour, and governmental politics. Not all models, however, are believed to have similar heuristic value. Based on a thorough review of Allison's original 1971 publication on the Cuban missile crisis, and strengthened by the availability of fresh new evidence (declassified documents, transcripts of secret White House tapes and new insights into the Soviet elite's decision making), Allison and Zelikow's key conclusion is that **reliance on the so-called rational actor model alone is not enough if one wants to explain a foreign policy decision or event** (1999: 379). In their view, multiple, overlapping, competing conceptual models are the best that the current understanding of

foreign policy provides. This conclusion is supported by recent research findings by a group of influential foreign policy analysts (Hermann, 2001). They argue that scholars tended to discount the need to examine the foreign policymaking process and those involved in making decisions in favour of a focus on international constraints that limit what policymakers can do. Recently however, given the fluid and ambiguous nature of the post-cold war period, there has been renewed interest in the conditions under which people and processes become important in shaping states' policies and activities.

The recent development of constructivist accounts of international relations and foreign policy behaviour has fuelled this interest (see the section on IR above). Their research has produced two key findings: one, international constraints only have policy implications when they are perceived as such by the leaders whose positions count in dealing with a particular problem; and two, to understand how the leaders in a government are likely to respond to a problem, one needs to be able to demarcate which leaders and leadership groups will become more caught up in the flow of events. In the South African case, this approach has been utilised by analysts such as Booysen, who argued that any attempt to understand public policymaking in post-1994 South Africa has to recognise

> …the direct setting of policymaking within the practice of legitimate political power, the exercising of executive power, the function of top political leaders in interpreting electoral mandates, and the political culture that prevails after a prolonged period of racial and economic oppression (2001: 126; see also similar applications by Nel, 2002 and Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2002).

The present study takes these points as valid and in response will develop a nuanced and detailed analysis of the decision making structures and composition of the decision making group as far as South Africa's foreign policy responses to crises in Africa are concerned.

To return to the Allison models: even if the contribution of Model I – the classical rational actor model – is insufficient, what does it provide? In essence, by submerging

the internal complexities of governmental decision making in the simplification of a unified, purposive actor, it allows the analyst to package otherwise confusing and even contradictory details in terms of a single dynamic. Thus, Model I permits one to translate the question 'why did x happen?' into a simpler question, namely, 'why did this state do x?'. This question can also be interpreted to mean: 'what (international) problem was the state solving (and what objective was it pursuing) in choosing x?'. So, by analysing the objective conditions in which a state finds itself, and assuming minimum objectives for the state, Model I offers a convenient and powerful first approximation.

To answer the specific puzzle, though, it is necessary to open the black box and look within the state actor to its disaggregated moving parts. Although models of organisational behaviour and governmental politics entail greater complexity and demand greater information, they provide additional specific expectations for second and third approximations. The following section summarises the general argument.

Models II and III bring the following insights: an appreciation that 1) monoliths ('rational actors') are black boxes covering various levers and gears in a highly differentiated decision making structure and 2) large acts result from innumerable and often conflicting smaller actions by individuals at various levels of organisations in the service of a variety of only partially compatible conceptions of national goals, organisational goals, and political objectives.

Organisational Theory provides the foundation for the second model. According to Model II, what Model I analysts characterise as 'acts' and 'choices' are thought of instead as *outputs* of large organisations functioning according to regular patterns of behaviour. Model II analysts ask: from what organisational context, pressures, and procedures did this decision emerge? They focus on certain concepts: organisational architecture and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for acquiring information, defining options and implementation. Predictions identify trends that reflect existing organisations and their fixed procedures and programmes.

Model III focuses on the politics of a government. According to this, events in foreign affairs are characterised neither as unitary choice nor as organisational outputs. Rather, what happens is understood as a resultant of bargaining games among players in the national government. A Model III analyst frames the puzzle: which results from what kinds of bargaining among which players yielded the critical decisions and actions? The analyst focuses on certain concepts: the players whose interests and actions impact on the issue in question, the factors that shape their perceptions and stands, action channels, and performance. Predictions are generated by identifying the game in which an issue will arise, the relevant players, and their relative power and bargaining skill.

Drawing on Allison and Zelikow (1999) the section below will deal in greater detail with the key features of each of the three models.

Model I The Rational Actor

The attempt to explain international events by recounting the aims and calculations of nations or governments is the trademark of this model. Indeed, most contemporary thought about public policy, especially foreign policy, proceeds within this conceptual model. Although there are differences in emphasis and focus, the similarities are telling: whether Morgenthau's 1978 book titled 'Politics among nations' or Schelling's 1960 book titled 'The strategy of conflict', each assumes that what must be explained is an action, that is, behaviour that reflects purpose or intention. Each assumes that the actor is a national government. Each assumes that the action is chosen as a calculated solution to a strategic problem. Explanation consists of showing what goal the government was pursuing when it acted and how the action was a reasonable choice, given the nation's objective.

Model I is based on the notion of rationality and rational action. Rationality refers to consistent, value-maximising choice within specified constraints. The core concepts of rational action include *goals and objectives*; *alternatives; consequences* and *choice*. In modern decision theory, the rational decision problem is reduced to a simple matter of

selecting among a set of given alternatives, each of which has a given set of consequences: the agent selects the alternative whose consequences are preferred in terms of the agent's utility function which ranks each set of consequences in order of preference. Despite rationality's apparent strength as an explanatory principle, there are further, more specific, assumptions or evidence about the agent's objectives, conceptualisation of the situation, and assessment of costs and benefits that needs to be factored into the conceptual geography of rational behaviour. This has been explored by Herbert Simon (1983) who makes a distinction between 'comprehensive' and 'bounded' rationality. In the former, the actor is assumed to have a utility function that consistently ranks *all* alternatives the actor faces and to choose the alternative that achieves the highest utility. It assumes nothing about the content of the actor's objectives. The latter recognises inescapable limitations of knowledge and computational ability of the agent. It also accepts the values, beliefs, and stereotypes of the decision maker, irrespective of the accuracy of her views. As Simon points out, to understand and predict human behaviour, one has to deal with the realities of human rationality, that is, with bounded rationality. There is nothing obvious about these bounds.

Allison and Zelikow state a general principle which they believe is central to most RAM explanations: the likelihood of any particular action results from a combination of a state's (1) relevant values and objectives; (2) perceived alternative courses of action; (3) estimates of consequences (which will follow from each alternative) and (4) net valuation of each set of consequences. This 'yields' the following proposition: an increase in the perceived costs of an alternative reduces the likelihood of that action being chosen (and vice versa).

Model II Organisational Behaviour

The organisational behaviour model is built on the following assumptions.

Actions in international politics are outputs of organisational processes in three senses. First, actual occurrences are organisational outputs. Decisions of government leaders trigger organisational routines. Government leaders can have a limited influence on this output but most of the behaviour is determined by previously established procedures. Second, existing organisational capacities for employing present physical assets constitute the range of effective choice open to government leaders confronted with a problem. Third, organisational outputs structure the situation within the narrow constraints of which leaders must make their decisions about an issue. As one observer noted, presidents rarely, if ever, make decisions – particularly in foreign affairs – in the sense of writing their conclusions on a clean slate. The basic decisions, which confine their choices, have all too often been previously made (Allison and Zelikow, 1999: 165).

Leaders may try to undertake a new activity, where there is no established organisational capacity or set routines. If they comprehend the effort required to create the preconditions for effective organisational output, they will understand that the payoffs will be for a future crisis rather than the one at hand.

According to Model II, the actor is not a monolithic nation or government but rather a constellation of loosely allied organisations on top of which government leaders sit. This constellation acts only when component organisations perform routines. In fact, for any large organisation, its size prevents any single central authority from making all important decisions or directing all important activities. The multiple facets of foreign affairs require that problems be cut up and parcelled out to various organisations. For example, in the South African government, the Department of Foreign Affairs has primary responsibility for diplomacy, the Department of Defence for military security, the Department of Trade and Industry for economic and trade affairs, and so on.

Allison and Zelikow's analysis of the Cuban missile crisis through the lens of this second model reveals that organisational behaviour leads to many anomalies and inconsistencies. In terms of organisational options, deliberations of leaders in White House meetings produced broad outlines of alternatives. Details of alternatives and blueprints for their implementation had to be specified by the organisation that would be responsible for execution. The **organisations** answered the question: what, specifically, *could* be done? (Allison and Zelikow, 1999: 225). In terms of such a government leader-versus-organisation perspective, activity flows from, and can be described by attempts of the former (leader) to control outputs by the latter (organisation). For example, the authors remark that

> …American intra-national relations in the critical week of the crisis constitute a catalogue of friction and frustration as political leaders attempted to interfere with organisational routines and procedures in the name of flexibility and options (1999: 237).

Model III Governmental Politics

Model II's grasp of government action as organisational output, enlarges the classical model's efforts to understand government behaviour as the choices of a unitary decision maker. But beyond the Model II analysis lies a further, more refined level of investigation. The leaders who sit atop organisations are no monolith. Rather, each individual in this group is, in his and her own right, a player in a central, competitive game. The name of the game is politics: bargaining along regular circuits among players positioned hierarchically within the government.

Government behaviour can thus be understood according to a third conceptual model, not as organisational outputs but as results of bargaining games. Outcomes are formed, and deformed, by the interaction of competing preferences.

In contrast with Model I, the Governmental Politics model sees no unitary actor but many actors as players: players who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intra-national problems as well; players who act in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but rather according to various conceptions of national, organisational, and personal goals; players who make government decisions not by a single, rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics. Intriguingly, this approach is very similar to Booysen's analysis of policy making in post-apartheid South Africa, whereby she employed the concept of a primary, secondary and tertiary cluster of role players. The critical players are found in the primary cluster, and include the president, his office and administrative agency (the Presidency), senior politicians, politically appointed civil servants (such as Directors-General) and senior members of the ruling party (Booysen, 1991). To understand the evolution of a public policy issue from 'problem' to 'policy' requires one to understand the dynamic interplay of the various role players from the perspective of the positions they occupy.

Allison and Zelikow similarly argue that the arena for the intra-national game is complex and consists of political leaders at the top of the apparatus; they are joined by officials who occupy positions on top of major organisations to form a circle of central players – central in relation to the particular decision or outcome the analyst seeks to explain. Participation is not always clear – some participants are mandatory, others are invited or invite themselves. Beyond the central arena, successive, concentric circles encompass lower level officials in the executive branch, the press, non-governmental organisations, and the public.

Ongoing struggles in the outer circles help shape decision situations among players who can affect the government's choice and action in the case in question. So Model III focuses on those who are actually engaged in this interaction. Most players 'represent' a department or agency along with the interests and constituencies their organisation serves. Because their preferences and beliefs are related to the different organisations they represent, their analyses yield conflicting recommendations. The chess pieces are moved not simply for the reasons that support a course of action, nor because of the

routines of organisations, but according to the power and performance of proponents and opponents of the action in question.

Most issues emerge piecemeal over time. Hundreds of issues compete for players' attention every day. Each player is forced to deal with a limited number of them every day before moving on to the next. The character of emerging issues and the pace at which the game is played converge to yield government 'decisions' and 'actions' as *collages*. Choices by one player (e.g., to authorise action by his department, to make a speech, to refrain from acquiring certain information), resultants of minor games (e.g. the wording of a cable), resultants of central games (e.g. decisions, actions, speeches bargained out among key players), and foul-ups (e.g. late choices, misunderstandings) – these pieces, when stuck to the canvas, constitute government behaviour relevant to an issue. To explain why a particular formal governmental decision was made, or why one pattern of governmental behaviour emerged, it is necessary to identify the games and the players, to display the coalitions, bargains, and compromises, and to convey some feel for the confusion.

As Allison and Zelikow admit, this conception of foreign policymaking is uncomfortable. To say that officials are playing politics with national security is a serious charge. Few experts have the time to invest in mastering the confusing welter of details that shape the latest bargains. Some scholars also reject portraits of chaos that deny the overarching significance of major institutions with great inherent power, such as the presidency, parliament, or the Supreme Court.

Taking these criticisms on board, a modified formulation might run like this: Within a framework of broad values and shared interests, government leaders have competitive, not identical operational objectives; priorities and perceptions are shaped by positions; problems are much more varied than straightforward strategic issues; management of piecemeal streams of decisions is more important than steady-state choices; making sure that the government does what is decided is more difficult than selecting the preferred

solution. Coalitions are formed to provide the desired action, and can include relevant outsiders.

Allison and Zelikow (1999) argue that a broad array of causal factors needs to be taken into account in explaining results of group decision making (they identify seven). These are summarised below.

1 Channels, not boxes

This section focuses on the kinds of processes that might lead to better decisions. Here the focus is not on boxes but action channels, that is, the design and management of decision making processes – the way actors in their boxes interact to produce outcomes.

2 The 'agency' problem: principals, agents and players

Complex decision processes feature principals – that is the decision makers – and agents – that is, additional participants appointed or drawn in to assist in making decisions or taking actions. The problems with these specialist agents are that they have interests, information, and expertise that allow them to become active, strategic players. Their interests are not necessarily identical to the principal's.

3 Participants: who plays?

Results of a multi-person process for making a choice cannot be predicted without knowing who participates and in what roles. Generally, high-level decision makers have greater freedom to pursue their own purposes, to do more 'uncommitted thinking'. Experts, on the other hand, are more likely to be influenced by the 'theoretical thinking' characteristic of the community of experts in their domain of knowledge (also known as an 'epistemic community'). Lower-level bureaucrats are most likely to display 'grooved thinking' of the kind portrayed in Model II. Despite this, it is dangerous to assume that all officials from one kind of organisation are alike.

4 Decision rules

The impact of decision rules upon group choice is clearest where that choice is made by a formal vote. In less formal decision processes, where votes are rare or simply formalities that confirm a decision that has already been made, decision rules may still matter but in a more nuanced way. Established, continuing groups behave quite differently from ad hoc groups. Most continuing groups display deference for seniority and also frequently for members' recognised domain of interest or expertise. Small groups, such as interagency committees, tend to be consensus-seeking. There is also the familiar tendency to accept the easiest or vaguest choice, the lowest common denominator.

5 Framing issues and setting agendas

How a group responds to a problem, or indeed, whether it responds at all, often depends on the way that problem is framed and reaches the group's agenda. Kingdon (1984) has developed a compelling framework for explaining how agendas are formed in policymaking.

6 Groupthink

Key policy decisions are often made in small groups - often six to twelve people – in which there is a high degree of cohesion. This cohesion produces a psychological drive for consensus, which tends to suppress both dissent and the consideration of alternatives. At times, conflict emerges due to their different roles in sharing power. To avoid such stress people resort to techniques for 'defensive avoidance', such as exaggerating favourable consequences, downplaying unfavourable consequences, downplaying personal responsibility, and so on. The end result is what Janis calls 'groupthink'. In some small groups, but not all,

> … conformity pressures begin to dominate, the striving for unanimity fosters the pattern of defensive avoidance, with the characteristic reliance on shared rationalisations that bolster the least objectionable alternative (Allison and Zelikow, 1999: 284).

Unfortunately, Janis and his colleagues do not provide guidance about where groupthink is more likely to be dominant.

7 Complexity of joint action

Settings in which separate institutions share power over decisions and actions assure a 'complexity of joint decision and action.' The number of forks in the decision tree increases; independent actors multiply; and the prospect of the results achieving any precise original intent declines. In the USA, for example, problems of joint decision have become more common as Congress has become a more active participant in foreign policy. When the implementation of actions involves not only the concurrent action of branches of one government, but the coordination of actions by several governments in the form of an international organisation or tightly linked coalition, the complexity of joint action grows exponentially.

As has become clear by now, formulating Model III propositions about outcomes is difficult because bureaucratic politics are extraordinary complex. Indeed, information about the details of differences in perceptions and priorities within a government on a particular issue is rarely available within a short time, and can only be reliably unearthed by serious study. Accurate accounts of the bargaining that yielded a resolution of the issue are rarer still. Documents do not often capture this kind of information, since they themselves are often resultants. Much information must be gleaned from the participants themselves. What is required, ideally, is access by an analyst attuned to the players and interested in governmental politics to a large number of the participants in a decision before their memories fade or become too badly discoloured. Much can be done to reconstruct the game that produced the resultant. Once reconstructed, documents can also allow a clearer understanding of who participated, the faces of an issue, how the problem was framed for action, and how the outcomes were understood.

2.4 Concluding comments

Should the analyst really endeavour to achieve 'higher levels of knowledge' as specified by the positivist requirement for theory-building, or, in recognition of the paradigmatic and competing nature of the research enterprise (Kuhn, 1962), agree that big theories exist as multiple versions of reality? Following the impact of post-positivism and post-modernism (Brown, 1994), and influenced by new discoveries in particle physics (Capra, 1985, 2004), one can say that a different view of the use of theory in the social sciences now exists. As Parsons articulates it,

> …there are no fundamental laws or constants in the universe, and everything exists in an interrelated web. No one theory is adequate to explain such complex processes, and thus we have to accept a more pluralistic approach to models and theories (1995: 73).

In this context, to manage the challenge of public policy analysis (for which purpose a wide variety of models had been developed), Parsons suggests 'boot-strapping' – the process in which one holds on to models and theories with which one disagrees as well as those with which one agrees. What is significant to the bootstrapper, says Parsons, is understanding the differences which exist between and within approaches, because the world is too complex to be pressed into one explanatory box. In his view,

> The analysis of public policy therefore involves an appreciation of the network of ideas, concepts and words which form the world of explanation within which policy policy making and analysis takes place (1995: 73).

Allison and Zelikow, working at the level of middle-range foreign policy theory, invite the analyst to do exactly that. *Essence of Decision*, and its expanded second edition, argues that the dominant frame of reference most analysts of international relations use is the rational actor model (Allison's Model I). This model conceives of states as unitary and purposive, making consistent, value-maximising choices. As this chapter demonstrated, the model shares a range of assumptions with the realist paradigm in IR and the decision making perspective in public policy. The value of *Essence of Decision*

is that it constructs two alternative frameworks, the organisational process model (or Model II) and the governmental or bureaucratic politics model (Model III). This allows the analyst a method to explore a government's foreign policy behaviour from multiple perspectives, thereby enriching the descriptive and analytical contribution. In line with the crisis decision making literature reviewed above, these three models offer the following propositions:

Model I (rational actor)

This model postulates that crisis decisions emerge from a careful assessment of risks, costs and benefits of alternative options; that is, they choose the option that has the greatest expected utility (Brecher, 1993: 13).

Model II (organisational behaviour)

This model argues that the constraints imposed by threat, time and surprise lead decision-makers to rely on standard operating procedures (SOPs) of organisations, rather than to engage in a careful search for, and evaluation of, alternatives based on multiple sources of information. These decisions tend to be 'satisficing', not 'optimising' (Allison, 1971, Levy, 1986).

Model III (governmental politics)

This model argues that events in foreign affairs are characterised neither as unitary choice nor as organisational outputs, but a resultant of bargaining games among players in the national government: 'Entrenched bureaucracies, fighting hard to enhance, or at least maintain their policy and budgetary positions, are the norm' (Allison and Zelikow, 1999: 324). In analysing the Cuban missile crisis from this perspective, Allison and Zelikow assumes that choice flows from political process, in which key individuals are critical to outcomes: 'Once it discovered ballistic missiles in Cuba, the American government organised its crisis decision making around an informally selected inner circle of advisors...' (the National Security Council and its Executive Committee)(1999: 325-327).

As could be expected, over the years Allison's (and Zelikow's) research has attracted comment and critique. One commentator was puzzled that Allison's models were limited to US political structures, and noted that investigations of the generalisability of these ideas have, for the most part, not been forthcoming (Kaarbo, 2003: 158). Garrison recently offered a more thorough discussion of Allison's models in the context of a discussion of group dynamics in foreign policymaking. She notes that Allison as well as Janis (of 'groupthink' fame) have faced similar kinds of questions from the international relations community: critics argue that the assumptions of these models are ambiguous and arbitrary, that the propositions based on these assumptions are not rigorously specified, and that the relations among the variables are left obscure (Garrison, 2003b: 178). Specifically, Allison's bureaucratic politics model has been described as an analytical kitchen sink (Bendor and Hammond, 1992; Welch, 1992). Also, a persistent point of critique came from Krasner (1972) who claims that decision making is more than a bargaining process between competing role interests (Allison's governmental politics model) because the president selects individuals who share his values. This comment cuts to the question of who makes foreign policy decisions – particularly in times of crisis or in response to a perceived crisis. In response, one has to acknowledge the role of other ad hoc actors outside the president's inner circle. Hilsman's (1987) analysis of concentric circles of influence around the president demonstrates the need for flexibility when identifying influential players. Garrison points to the work of Stern and Sundelius (1997) that brought some of these themes together. They developed a five-step process to analyse critical contextual and group structural variables that channel group interaction patterns. These steps include investigating the extra-group setting, the intragroup setting, leadership practices of the group, the level of cohesion in the group, and the type and level of conflict in the group. Their analysis points to the need to take both the external context and the internal situation into account.

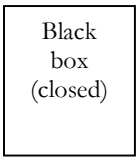
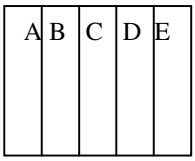
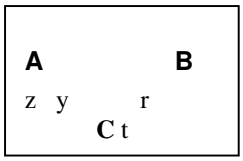
Garrison agrees with many of these points of criticism and adds a number of her own (2003b: 178-9); yet, she also argues that 'These criticisms do not minimize the impact that the ideas regarding bureaucratic politics and groupthink still have on foreign policymaking or the possibilities for using them in future middle-range theorizing. These

models helped scholars move away from the assumption of the state as a unitary rational actor and opened the black box of the government to show how the dynamic character of the decision process can shape foreign policy behaviour' (2003b: 179). Similarly, Welch concludes his review of the impact of Allison's models on the study of international politics by saying that'...Allison's reasons for looking at old problems through new lenses are as valid now as they were more than two decades ago' (1992: 142).

The three conceptual models described above are therefore much more than simple angles of vision or approaches. Each conceptual framework consists of a cluster of assumptions and categories that influence what the analyst finds puzzling, how to formulate the question, where to look for evidence, and what to produce as an answer. What is important for analysts is to clarify the explanandum, that is, whatever is being explained or predicted. Allison and Zelikow advises that instead of prejudging the case by characterising the explanandum as 'choice', 'output' or 'resultant', one ought to begin with a phenomenon: an occurrence or happening that one could imagine capturing in a photographic snapshot or a sequence of frames in a movie. In order to analyse South African foreign policy decision making, this study draws on Allison and Zelikow's models and concepts (Table Four, below). The following chapter identifies in more precise terms how the study proposes to go about doing that.

Table Four Summary outline of Allison and Zelikow's models and concepts

Source: Allison and Zelikow (1999)

The paradigm	Model I	Model II	Model III
	National government  Notional state Generic state	National government  Range of choice Structure of situation	National government  Players (A-D) Interests, stakes (z,y,t,r…)
Basic unit of analysis	Governmental action as choice	Governmental action as organisational output	Governmental action as political resultant
Organising concepts	Unified national actor The problem Action as rational choice	Organisational actors Organisational missions Operational objectives, capacities and culture Central coordination and control Decisions of government leaders Action as organisational output	Players in positions Factors that shape players' perceptions, preferences, stands Power The game Action as political resultant
Dominant interference pattern	Action = value maximising means toward state's ends	Action (short run) = output close to input Action (longer run) = output conditioned by organisation view of tasks, capacities, programmes, repertoires, routines	Governmental action = resultant of bargaining
General propositions	Increased perceived costs = action less likely Decreased perceived costs = action more likely	Existing organised capabilities influence government choice Organisational priorities shape organisational implementation Implementation reflects previously established routines Leaders neglect administrative feasibility at their peril Limited flexibility and incremental change	Political resultants Action and intention Problems and solutions Where you stand depends on where you sit Chiefs and Indians International and intra-national relations Misexpectation, miscommunication, reticence, and styles of play

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

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METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter overview

This chapter on methodology describes the researcher's approach to research and analysis. It starts by reiterating the key aspects of Allison's models and then moves on to the cases. The chapter explores case study design and the identification of criteria guiding the selection of appropriate cases. The selection process is described in detail, followed by a short description of each of the chosen cases. The chapter clarifies the researcher's approach to interviews and the collection and interpretation of data, followed by the description of the interview process and selection of interviewees. The chapter closes with a list of major foreign policy decisions, the core questions relating to Allison's models that guided the interviews, and a chronology of crises in Africa.

3.2 The task

Analyses of public policy decision-making are accounts that claim to explain or describe how a decision, or series of decisions, came to be made (always keeping in mind that the state remains the locus of such decision making). If decision-making is defined as a process in which choices are made or a preferred option is selected then the notion of decision involves a series of points in time and space (meaning different arenas and levels) when decision makers allocate values. This level was chosen for purposes of analysing the South African government's foreign policy decisions against the African crisis setting.

The task at hand is to explain foreign policy decisions by applying three conceptual models of foreign policy decision making. In this manner, the study aims to generate plausible constructions of decision-making processes that surrounded the event, issue or crisis (the three case studies). The resultant 3 x 3 grid (table six below) represents the challenge. For example, **how** can one explain the South African government's decision

in 1995 to call for international sanctions against the Abacha regime in Nigeria, only to reverse course in favour of 'quiet diplomacy' and multilateral action a year later? As we will discuss in a later chapter, analysts were puzzled over the following features of the decision: why the about-turn in such a short period of time; influences on the decision (the role of business interests, partisan politics, and regional and global power relations); the locus of the decision (the foreign ministry, cabinet, or president, or combination thereof, in the decision making process); and its logic (how the decision was justified). It is this, and several other such cases that this study will examine.

Table Five: Cases and Models

South African foreign policy responses to perceived crises in:		**Models of decision making**		
		I	II	III
		Rational Actor	Organisational Behaviour	Governmen-tal Politics
Case 1	Nigeria (1995) (quiet diplomacy/sanctions)			
Case 2	Lesotho (1998) (mediation/military intervention)			
Case 3	Zimbabwe (2000-02) (quiet diplomacy)			

3.3 The models

Conceptual frameworks that are employed to explain the decision process tend to be multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary. Parsons (1995: 246) goes back to Allison's 1971 study of the Cuban missile crisis to argue that '…the decisions surrounding this episode may be viewed through a variety of 'lenses', each of which constructs a different story of what 'actually' took place.' Allison constructed three such 'lenses': the rational actor, bureaucratic politics and organisational process models. Thus, with Parsons, one can argue that the decision-making which took place in a 'crisis' exists at one and the same time as a series of frames, rather than as one episode: the Cuban missile crisis is therefore a kind of envelope of stories, or constructions viewed through different 'lenses'.

For purposes of the present study, the notion of 'lenses' are treated as similar to the concept 'models' – a concept which provides for more accuracy and consistency.

3.4 The cases

3.4.1 Case study design

Case studies generally describe the events that occurred during a particular time. They are basically intensive investigations of the factors that contributed to the characteristics of the case (Mason and Bramble, 1989: 39). Many studies of policymaking take the form of case studies, that is, they focus on particular programs, statutes, or areas of public policy. Preferred studies are those dealing with all the cases in a universe, such as all regulatory commissions or sunset laws, or a meaningful sample thereof. These afford a better basis for generalisations.

Case studies do have a variety of uses. They can be used to test theories, to develop new theories, to provide detailed, contextual analysis of events, to analyse deviant cases that contradict our generalisations, and to help provide an 'intuitive feel' for the subtleties and nuances of the policy process and the practice of politics. As Anderson (2000: 29) argues, there is plenty of room in the study of policy for both case studies and more general and comparative studies.

The case-study approach has certain obvious limitations (Mason and Bramble, 1989: 43; Moser and Kalton, 1973: 241-243). Because a small sample is involved, generalisation of findings to other cases is 'hazardous'. Another problem concerns bias. First, in selecting a case to study, the researcher might bias outcomes by using a case study in which the findings can be fairly dependably predicted. Second, bias can be introduced when the researcher begins to collect and interpret observations. To overcome the first problem, the researcher compiled a comprehensive list of all possible cases studies (tables ten and eleven) from which a shortlist was constructed. Specified criteria assisted with case selection. The second problem is more difficult to manage, given the open-

ended nature of analysis. The methodological requirement of critical multiplism or triangulation was followed as much as possible.

3.4.2 Choice of case study method

Yin (1993: xi) argues that the case study research method is appropriate when investigators desire to (a) define topics broadly and not narrowly, (b) cover contextual conditions and not just the phenomenon of study, and (c) rely on multiple and not singular sources of evidence. He reports on six different types of case studies. Case study research can be based on single- or multiple-case studies. Further, the case study can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory, resulting in a 2x3 typology. In a nutshell, the 2x3 dimensions may be characterised as follows. A single-case study focuses on a single case only. Multiple-case studies, however, include two or more cases within the same study. These multiple cases should be selected so that they are replicating each other – either exact (direct) replications or predictably different (systematic) replications. An exploratory case study (whether based on single or multiple cases) is aimed at defining the questions and hypotheses of a subsequent (not necessarily case) study or at determining the feasibility of the desired research procedures. A descriptive case study presents a complete description of a phenomenon within its context. This appears to be similar to what Eckstein calls the heuristic case studies approach, which is '…deliberately used to stimulate the imagination toward discerning important general problems and possible theoretical solutions' (Eckstein, 1975: 104). An explanatory case study presents data bearing on cause-effect relationships – explaining which causes produced which effects (Yin, 1993: 5).

Following from the above, the current study aims at the explanatory case study. Why? The first approach, exploratory case study, is similar to a pilot study, undertaken to gather data in order to refine a set of research questions and/or hypotheses. The current study has progressed beyond this point and is aiming to use case studies to illustrate and test the assumptions built around Allison's three models.

A case study involves case selection and screening criteria and procedures (Yin, 1993: 8-12). These dimensions are discussed below. Firstly, selecting relevant cases is also known as defining the unit of analysis. In Yin's view, 'no issue is more important than defining the unit of analysis'. Without knowing the tentative answer to the question of what constitutes the case, the researcher will not know how to limit the boundaries of his or her study. Because case studies permit the collection of data from many perspectives, one must clearly define the unit of analysis at the outset of the study. The unit of analysis has another critical significance in doing case studies. The findings of the case study will pertain to specific theoretical propositions about the defined unit of analysis. These propositions will later be the means for generalising the findings of the case study – to similar cases focusing on the same unit of analysis. In the current study the unit of analysis will be decisions.

3.4.3 Selection of cases

How were the cases for this study selected? First of all, it is worth restating that the analytical focus of the study is on the South African government's responses to several African crises between 1994 and 2002. This period was set to include activities between 1994 (the year the ANC took power) and 2002 (the cut-off date to enable processing of fieldwork and interviews). The cut-off date has implications for the selection of cases, as discussed below. Apart from analysing the decision-making process itself, what appears necessary was to identify the universe of South African foreign policy activities, and similarly to generate an overview or chronology of African crises over the same period.

To identify the universe of foreign policy decisions, the South African government's foreign policy behaviour between 1994 and 2002 was scanned in order to identify its major foreign policy activities (see table ten). 'Major foreign policy activities' were defined as policy decisions that signified important policy developments taken by politicians (Cabinet level), and announced by them or senior public officials (Director-General level). The focus also fell on Parliament's role in authorising or approving major foreign policy decisions, such as the ratification of international agreements. According

to chapter 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, the negotiating and signing of all international agreements is the responsibility of the national executive (president and cabinet). An international agreement becomes binding only after it has been approved by parliament (except if it is of an administrative or executive nature). The international relations duties and obligations of the executive are described in clauses 84 ('powers and functions of the president'); 200 & 201 ('Defence Force, Political responsibility').

Foreign policy decisions that were taken on a regular basis – routine decisions and standard operating procedures – were excluded. The scan made extensive use of the annual (and reliable) chronology of South Africa's foreign relations produced by the South African Institute of International Affairs as well as the electronic archives of the Mail and Guardian and the Government Communication and Information Service (GCIS).

Apart from the selection criteria above, three additional criteria were identified. **First**, significant foreign policy decisions have to involve leaders at the highest levels of government. This is because the choices of national leaders binds a country to a specific position and are often seen as having a decisive influence on the course of international relations. **Second**, appropriate (reliable and reputable) information describing both the case itself and the decision-making process related to it must be available in order for applied research and analysis. Extensive case-study materials were gathered for each case, and we relied both on primary sources – official documents (policy documents and departmental and decision makers' statements available on the South African government's website, annual Yearbook and the media) – and secondary sources in the form of academic studies, reports by analysts and commentators, and newspaper articles. The libraries of the Africa Institute of South Africa, the South African Institute of International Affairs, the-then Foundation for Global Dialogue (subsequently renamed Institute for Global Dialogue) and Wits University, as well as the Internet provided most of the secondary information. Interviews complemented this collection of case study material. **Third**, it is necessary to determine the extent to which officials would be

prepared to share information on the case to be explored. For example, in the first years following South Africa's democratic transition few if any researchers judged it worth their while to attempt to unpack the dynamics and decision making regarding the South African government's nuclear weapons programme (ISS, 2004: 124). Similarly, of all the possible cases to be examined (table eleven below) the researcher had to consider political sensitivities that could act to exclude some.

It was furthermore necessary to adopt a principle of delimitation in order to isolate a coherent and manageable database for analysis. Following the experiences regarding case research design by a group of scholars in the crisis management field (Stern and Sundelius, 2002), it was decided to adopt a time frame with the following units: background, the unfolding crisis, the aftermath, and responses to the crisis, both international and South African, and across governmental and non-governmental dimensions. A conceptual clarification of crisis (Section 2.3 in the theory chapter) accompanied the development of a list of African crises between 1994 and 2002. Based on these two chronologies, the following pool of possible case studies emerged (between 1994 and 2002):

Table Six: Pool of possible case studies, 1994 - 2002

Case	**Type of crisis**	**SA response**
Lesotho (1998)	Mutiny	Mediation followed by military intervention
Angola (throughout this period)	Civil war	Diplomatic overtures
Zimbabwe (2000-2002)	Authoritarian rule, economic collapse	Diplomatic overtures
Comoros (1997/8)	Secession	Support to OAU mediation
DRC (war from 1998 onwards)	War	Mediation efforts, Support to multilateral peacemaking efforts
Rwanda (1994 genocide)	Genocide	No action
Burundi (1996 coup)	Civil war	Mediation
Nigeria (1995 hanging of Saro Wiwa)	Military rule	Mediation, condemnation
Morocco (ongoing dispute over Western Sahara / SADR)	Disputed statehood	Limited support to SADR

From this pool, three major cases were selected Lesotho, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. All these cases satisfied the criteria as specified above, and although the latter caused the researcher some anxiety in terms of viability, preliminary investigations demonstrated that enough information existed, and that officials appeared willing to shed light on the decision making process, in order to proceed.

For various reasons the other cases did not meet the criteria for inclusion. In the case of Morocco, the researcher found little evidence of the existence of a clear foreign policy decision. In the pre-1994 period the ANC mostly paid lip service to the cause of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), and it appears *realpolitik*, rather than threat to the South African government's values, determined the new government's rather quiet approach towards the cause of the SADR (Cornish, 2000). In the case of Rwanda, the crisis broke as the South Africans participated in the first-ever democratic elections – the new government was sworn in only after the genocide took its course. Regarding Angola, South Africa refused to become involved in the turmoil and instead offered the example of a government of national unity (meaning for Dos Santos and Savimbi to co-habituate) – an offer that was scorned in favour of all-out war between the two protagonists (Malaquias, 2002). Precious little information could be identified that pointed to a crisis decision making process regarding Angola in the period under review. In the cases of Burundi and the DRC, the South African government became deeply involved in the peace process by offering its highest officials as mediators: Mandela (in both cases) and Zuma (the latter). However, unlike fellow SADC member states Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, its involvement never included the military option; instead, it chose to respond positively to the request for mediation and subsequently, support for the UN and AU missions (in DRC and Burundi respectively). These two countries initially appeared to be attractive case studies, but in reality the sensitivity of the issues (mediation at the highest levels) made it difficult for the researcher to gather accurate and reliable information regarding decision making (criteria number two and three outlined above). Indeed, in 2002 and 2003, at the time of the field work, an initial exploratory mission (attempts to gain information about DRC and Burundi-related decision making from officials close to the action) indicated extreme reluctance to share such required

information, leading to the decision by the researcher to exclude both as case studies. A senior official remarked of these cases, 'the time to write up the story of how and why we became involved in the DRC and Burundi is not now...it needs to be told later, perhaps once we've excited the theatre' (un-attributed interview). In addition, all (formal and informal) attempts to access the views and reflections of arguably the most important source for constructing the story of South Africa's choices regarding these two cases, namely former president Mandela, proved fruitless.

The remaining cases – Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Nigeria – were analysed on the basis of each of the three models that purport to explain policy behaviour.

3.4.3.1 Nigeria

Background: Nigeria, a powerful and influential country in west Africa, has been under military rule since 1966. From the early 1990s, pressure has been increasing on Nigeria's rulers to return to democracy. A presidential election in 1993 was aborted and the undeclared winner imprisoned (Turner, 2001).

The specific issue: In November 1995 the Abacha regime in Nigeria executed a group of political activists led by Ken Saro-Wiwa, prompting a global outcry amongst human rights advocates, and calls on newly democratic South Africa to act against the Nigerian military junta (Van Aardt, 1996).

Decision: Following an apparent ineffectual effort at quiet diplomacy, and confronted by the Saro Wiwa crisis, president Mandela decided to take a firm stand by openly condemning the actions of the Nigerian government, as well as threatening sanctions (Chhabra, 1997).

Outcome: Lack of support from African and European countries forced a foreign policy rethink by the South African government, opting instead for a return to a 'quiet diplomacy' approach.

Significance: This case study illustrates the dilemmas of human rights promotion in foreign policy behaviour – also known as ethical foreign policy behaviour (FGD, 1996;

Frost, 1997). This section will attempt to examine the manner in which policy changes were made and managed.

3.4.3.2 Lesotho

Background: Ongoing political instability in Lesotho (a landlocked country, economically dependent on South Africa) and in particular the crises following the 1993/4 and 1998 elections (Ajulu, 2002; Southall and Petlane, 1995).

The specific issue: Following the 1998 elections a group of opposition politicians and other activists disputed the outcome. The government invited a commission, chaired by a South African judge, to investigate. The commission announced that the election was not rigged, a finding that sparked intensified protest, eventually leading to an attempt to overthrow the government. The Prime Minister of Lesotho then called on South Africa (and SADC) to come to its rescue.

Decision: Multiple, ranging from conducting regional diplomacy in support of democratisation to leading a multinational military intervention in support of a government in crisis (Neethling, 2000; IGD, 1999; Van Nieuwkerk, 1999b).

Significance: The case illustrates the challenges of maintaining cordial and non-threatening relations with a dependent and unstable neighbour. It also examines the processes whereby various policy alternatives were generated, policy choices made, and decisions executed.

3.4.3.3 Zimbabwe

Background: Following independence in 1980, the government of president Mugabe initially made good progress with managing the country's socio-economic problems, but its public and foreign policy choices led to financial instability and consequently political unrest.

The specific issue: Pre-election violence and tension in both 2000 and 2002, exacerbated by the land redistribution process, instability and violence around issues of governance, and economic mismanagement.

Decision: 'Quiet diplomacy'.

Significance: Zimbabwe is significant because of its economic base, its trade relationship with South Africa, and because of its high-level diplomatic and political role in the affairs of the southern African region. It is also significant in a negative sense: president Mugabe's increasingly desperate rule has led to costly political choices and a collapsing economy. This case looks at the dynamics of a relationship with an influential neighbour, and will attempt to explain the complex nature of reconciling conflicting interests and managing foreign policy in an unstable regional setting. It is worth noting that by 2001 the policy of quiet diplomacy was widely criticised for having had little impact; president Mbeki and defence minister Lekota acknowledged as much, but no policy shift had occurred.

3.4.4 Applying the models

The development of plausible explanations of the foreign policy processes and decisions relevant to the three cases drew on multiple sources of information. As will be recalled, the thrust of the research question was: which of the three conceptual models developed by Allison and Zelikow can give a satisfactory account of the decision making process? All three models asked specific questions of the incident or issue under investigation. Allison and Zelikow suggested thirteen such questions (1999: 389-90), of which the core are as follows:

1. Model I (rational actor): 'what (international) problem was the state solving, and what objective was the state pursuing, in choosing policy x?'

2. Model II (organisational behaviour): 'from what organisational context, pressures, and procedures did this decision emerge?'

3. Model III (governmental politics): 'which results from what kinds of bargaining among which players yielded the critical decisions and actions?'

The operational logic of the models can be defined as follows. Model I (rational actor) fixes the broader context, the larger national patterns, and the shared images. Within this context, Model II (organisational behaviour) illuminates the organisational routines that produce the information, options, and action. Model III (governmental politics) focuses in greater detail on the individuals who constitute a government and the politics and procedures by which their competing perceptions and preferences are combined. Each, in effect, serves as a search engine in the larger effort to identify all the significant causal factors that determine an outcome. The best analysts of foreign policy manage to weave strands from each of the three conceptual models into their explanations.

So, seeking responses to these prompts (addendum one, p. 257 contains the core questions) demanded knowledge from a variety of sources. The first was a literature study (desk research of appropriate documentary sources). Documentary sources included policy statements by government, parliamentary speeches by cabinet ministers, policy documents such as white papers, and speeches by the executive (president and members of cabinet). The second source of information was the author's own experience with the process of policy formation (various informal interactions with the ministry of foreign affairs in workshop and closed consultation sessions). The third involved the gathering of personal accounts of key individuals central to the case decisions. The study aimed to interview individuals from the primary, secondary and tertiary clusters in decision making (see tables eight and nine). Interviews allowed one to reconstruct events through the eyes of key participants. From these sources and accounts it was possible to extract and collate the necessary data to assess the decision making process.

Regarding the collection of information from individuals, Moser and Kalton (1973) points out that personal interviewing is the most usual method of collecting data amongst social surveyors (the other methods being observation and mail questionnaires). Interviews can range from the formal – in which set questions are asked and the answers are recorded in standardised form – to the informal (unstructured, flexible or non-directive), in which the interviewer is at liberty to vary the sequence of questions, add

additional ones or even change the wording. Less informal still, one may not have a set questionnaire at all but only a number of key points around which to build the interview.

Flowing from this last statement, it was our belief that the current study would profit most from the less formal interview, because the themes under investigation are complex and at times politically sensitive. In-depth, one-on-one interviews are required rather than formal set questionnaire-type interviews. In fact, the interview situation might be used to explore the method of story telling, based on the non-directive or non-guided interview. The interviewee is encouraged to talk about the subject under investigation and the interviewer mainly guides the course of the interview. There are very few set questions, and usually no pre-determined framework for recording answers. The interviewer confines him/herself to elucidating doubtful points or probing generally. It is an approach recommended by Moser and Kalton (1973: 297) '…when complex attitudes are involved and when one's knowledge of them is still in a vague and unstructured form.' One conclusion is that this method leads to an informal route to constructing the data necessary to make a judgement call on the applicability of the models. This takes the form of recording individuals' stories about the cases, and then constructing one's own story (the 'master' set of data) by examining all the various stories for signs of corroboration. In this way, one re-writes the stories in many ways until it becomes the researcher's own story. It is a role that demands sensitivity of one's own disposition regarding the topic under investigation. The study's qualitative research approach was therefore informed and guided by Ely's notion of qualitative research as a deeply interpretive endeavour (1997: 163-164). These are, in abbreviated form:

1. Analysis is not the last phase in the research process; it is concurrent with data collection
2. The analysis process is systematic and comprehensive, but not rigid,
3. Attending to data influences a reflective activity that results in a set of analytical notes that guide the process,
4. Data are 'segmented', i.e. divided into relevant and meaningful 'units', yet the connection to the whole is maintained,

5. The data segments are categorised according to an organising system that is predominantly derived from the data themselves,
6. The main intellectual tool is comparison,
7. Categories for sorting segments are tentative and preliminary in the beginning; they remain flexible,
8. Manipulating qualitative data during analysis is an eclectic activity; there is no one 'right' way,
9. The procedures are neither 'scientific' nor 'mechanistic'; qualitative analysis is 'intellectual craftsmanship',
10. The result of the analysis is some type of higher-level synthesis.

Scott (1997) writes about the place of the researcher in the construction of meaning. For him, research practices are social and rooted in relationships between researchers and researched. This is in contrast to those working within research traditions which argue that data can be theory-free and independent of the values of the researcher. Why is this important? If one accepts a social relationship between researcher and researched, which brings value-laden interventions to the process (Scheurich radically talks of the 'uncontrollable play of power within the interaction' (1997: 74), then reflexive practices are essential. To be reflexive is to realise one's interpretive baggage. Reflexive practices relate to examination of both the researcher's own conceptual and affective maps, the way those maps mediate and structure reality for the researcher and what is being researched. This study drew on Scott's insightful guide on how to manage the data collection process (including negotiating access, ethical concerns, fieldwork relations, interviewing, observation and contextualisation of these accounts) and the lessons from this exercise are discussed in the concluding chapter.

As discussed earlier, the case studies potentially involved issues of sensitivity. In the Nigeria case, the South African foreign policymakers were faced with a situation where a particular course of action (sanctions against a recalcitrant regime) was ridiculed and rejected by its fellow African governments. In the Lesotho case, the South African National Defence Force was sent across the border into Lesotho under rather chaotic

conditions, resulting in the death of a number of soldiers on both sides. In the Zimbabwe case, president Mbeki's policy of 'quiet diplomacy' has been attacked for being 'too little, too late'. Lee (1995) argues that frequently, research on sensitive topics addresses some of society's most pressing social issues and policy questions, and therefore raises difficult methodological and technical problems. These include problematic access, inhibited conceptualisation of particular topics, and mistrust between researcher and researched. This affects the availability and quality of data with usually adverse consequences for levels of reliability and validity. The threats which research poses to research participants, to the researcher and to others need to be minimised, managed or mitigated. How? In this study care was taken to manage the interview phase in an open and transparent manner. To some extent, access (to private documents, interviewees) was negotiated at the appropriate institutional level. A letter of introduction, clarifying the academic nature and purpose of the interview, and duly signed by the promoter, was used in all cases. All interviews were treated as confidential, and interviewees were able to decline to participate without negative consequences.

3.4.5 Interviewees

Since it was unrealistic to interact with all the individuals involved in the decision making processes across all the cases, the study relied on interviews with individuals with experience of particular cases. If one assumed an average of five persons per case the study ended up with 15 interviewees (based on three cases).

Which individuals were selected? The tempting idea that one 'strikes gold' if granted an interview with the president or his minister of foreign affairs, needs to be demystified. At best, one would receive the 'party line' or 'official view' – senior decision makers can ill afford to deviate from governmental positions. Such interviews would therefore produce a very narrow interpretation of events. On the other hand, if one made a politically insensitive selection, for example loading the list of interviewees with politicians from opposition parties, then the same would apply. In order to achieve a balanced list of interviewees the suggested focus fell on a sample drawn from all relevant actors involved

(or influential) in the policy formation process. This included actors from different levels of seniority and from various state departments and civil society interest. In order to promote reliability and validity in the process the following schedule was proposed.

3.4.5.1 The process of data gathering

Discussions with experienced researchers have revealed that it is advisable to conduct multiple interviews with an identified target group. Analysis and interpretation will also have a multiple character. This process involved the following:

Phase One: Questionnaire design

Flowing from the above description of the preferred case study method, interviews were kept as informal as possible. The core questions in addendum one (end of this chapter) structured the interaction between interviewer and interviewee.

Phase Two: Identification of interviewees

In all cases the intention was to interview as many key policymakers as possible. Table Two (below) displays the list, drawn from descriptions of post-apartheid (foreign) policy making in South Africa (Booysen 2001; Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2002a, 2002b, Le Pere and Vickers, 2001; Mills, 2000; Van Wyk, 1999) and also from personal experience. During the 1990s the author, then based at the Foundation for Global Dialogue (FGD), a foreign policy think tank, actively engaged foreign policy processes and interacted with key players across various levels and issues. It needs to be noted that the list does not pretend to be comprehensive (it attempts to identify key players) and applies largely to the three case studies under investigation.

Phase Three: Recording of individual stories

This involved the recording of individual accounts of the decision making issues around each case (the 'problem', the process, the players, etc). From the pool of twenty-three potential interviewees, the researcher was able to interview twelve individuals directly and three indirectly, giving a total of fifteen. Being based overseas, one interviewee

(based at the Cosatu International Desk in the 1990s) submitted a written response to the questionnaire. Interviews conducted with Ministers Zuma and Pahad at the time the researcher was based at the FGD, were included because of their direct relevance. Several interviews did not materialise, for a variety of reasons. In the case of former President Mandela, the author made many unsuccessful attempts, initially via his personal secretary, and later via a researcher who was assisting Mandela with his memoirs. However, even she struggled with access, given the demands on his time. For similar reasons interviews with Minister Mufamadi, who was intimately involved in the Lesotho crisis of 1998, and a former Director General of the DFA, were unsuccessful. The author concluded that an interview with President Mbeki was going to be equally difficult to achieve, and was perhaps not critical to the research project, given the amount of information available elsewhere, such as numerous interviews to the media on his government's foreign policy and relations. The reluctance by departmental desk officers to speak about personal experiences with policy making was understandable, given delicate political relationships in the hierarchy of the civil service. Requests to interview ANC and SACP International Affairs spokespersons went unanswered. The Cosatu desk officer for International Affairs was not available for an interview (he was appointed as South Africa's High Commissioner to Nigeria at the time of the study) but written correspondence was received from one of his colleagues at the time, Mr Dlamini. Of the interviews that did take place, several stand out. Deputy Minister Pahad agreed to in-depth interviews, and the author took notes at a briefing at the HSRC, during which he spoke at length about the government's approach to the Zimbabwe crisis. On reflection, this access was possible because of his well-known user-friendly approach to academia, and the author's ability to draw on his long-standing association with him. Parliamentarians were user-friendly and interviews were possible with all the Chairs of the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs during the period of the study (1994-2000). Academics were similarly prepared to share insights and analyses and those identified were all available for face-to-face interviews.

Phase Four: Transcription

For reasons of improved reliability and validity the researcher employed the limited

services of an assistant to assist with transcribing the information gathered during phase three. The analysis of the information gained via interviews and from documents was the sole responsibility of the researcher.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter on methodology described the researcher's approach to research and analysis. It explored case study design, the identification of criteria guiding the selection of appropriate cases, and the reasons for selecting Nigeria, Lesotho and Zimbabwe. The chapter also clarified the researcher's approach to interviews and the collection and interpretation of data. The chapter closes with a list of major foreign policy decisions (table nine, p.73) and a chronology of crises in Africa (table ten, p.82).

Table Seven Potential interviewees

Key decision makers and influential players	**Nig**	**Les**	**Zim**
The primary policy cluster:			
President Mandela	x	x	
President Mbeki		x	x
Minister of Foreign Affairs (Zuma)		x	x
Minister for Provincial and Local Government (Mufamadi)		x	
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (Pahad)	x	x	x
Director-General of Foreign Affairs (Evans)	x		
Director-General of Foreign Affairs (Selebi)		x	
Director-General of Foreign Affairs (Pityana)			x
Presidential advisor on international relations (Majola)	x	x	x
Desk officers: Foreign Affairs (Matome)	x	x	x
Desk officers: Foreign Affairs (Genge)	x	x	x
The secondary level of clusters:			
ANC International Desk (Manzini)	x	x	x
Cosatu International Desk (Sifingo)	x	x	x
SACP (Cronin)	x	x	x
SACOB (Parsons)	x	x	x
Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on For. Affairs (Suttner)	x	x	x
Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on For. Affairs (Ibrahim)	x	x	x
Opposition party spokesperson on foreign affairs (Geldenhuys)	x	x	x
The tertiary clusters:			
Prof M Schoeman, UP	x	x	x
Dr E Maloka, AISA	x	x	x
Mr H Boshoff, ISS	x	x	x
Dr R Williams, Wits		x	
Dr Jakkie Cilliers	x	x	x

Table Eight Interviewees

Interviewee	Date of interview
Government	
Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma*	December 1999
Aziz Pahad*	July 1998
Aziz Pahad	Aug 2003
Jackie Selebi*	December 1998
Thembi Majola	July 2001
Pandelane Matoma	June 2003
Manelisi Genge	May 2003
Parliamentarians	
Boy Geldenhuys	January 2003
Raymond Suttner	January 2003
Ibrahim Ibrahim	January 2003
Civil society	
Henry Boshoff, ISS	September 2003
Mxolisi Dlamini, Cosatu	November 2002
Raymond Parsons, Wits University	November 2002
Maxi Schoeman, University of Pretoria	December 2002
Eddy Maloka, AISA	December 2002
Rocky Williams, Wits University	January 2003
* These interviews were done by Garth le Pere and Anthoni van Nieuwkerk and published in Global Dialogue	

Table Nine The foreign policy decision output universe

Notes: Entries in bold indicate a foreign policy decision. The information was gathered from a variety of sources, including the South African government website and annual yearbook and the annual yearbook of the South African Institute of International Affairs and covers the period 1994 to 2002.

Year	Major South African foreign policy decisions and events, 1994-2002	
1994	May	Following the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as South Africa's new head of state, most states in the world normalise and upgrade diplomatic relations with South Africa. **South Africa also rejoins the Commonwealth, and joins the OAU and NAM**
	23 June	South Africa's international isolation officially ends when Foreign Minister **Nzo resumes South Africa's seat in the UN General Assembly**
	7 Jul	Mandela hosts Dos Santos, Chissano and Sese Seko in talks over Angola. He says the **instability in Angola was of concern but South Africa did not want to appear to be taking over initiatives which had been started by other countries especially in Africa**
	14 Jul	First consignment of South African humanitarian aid to refugees of the Rwandan genocide arrive in Mwanza
	9 Aug	Mandela says he will consult his cabinet with regard to the writing off of Namibian debt of R800 mn to South Africa
	11 Aug	Public Enterprises Minister Sigcau says South Africa needed the help of foreign companies to implement the RDP. Privatisation of public enterprises was inevitable, she says.
	18 Aug	Foreign Minister Nzo says **South Africa will not intervene in the conflict in Lesotho. It would rather engage constructively in discussions to defuse the tension**
	25 Aug	Speaking during the Foreign Affairs Appropriation Bill in the National Assembly, Mr Nzo said South Africa does not have adequate resources to be involved in all laudable initiatives in the international arena. Government's areas of priority were the following: 1 Peaceful co-existence and the promotion of economic development in the Southern African region; 2 Constructive interaction with Africa, especially to finding mechanisms to resolve conflict; 3 Interaction with the international community at large, in multilateral organisations; 4 Further improvement of relations with the G7 nations, as well as South Africa's other major trading partners; and 5 The continuation of traditional friendships and the promotion of new partnerships in the rest of the world.
	29 Aug	**South Africa joins the Southern African Development Community.**
	7 Sept	**Cabinet approves appointment of the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC)** to oversee policy and set control mechanisms for the South African arms trade

	22 Sep	Nzo says **South Africa was committed to a nuclear-free zone in Africa and for this reason it voluntarily rolled back its nuclear weapons programme. SA will sign a convention on nuclear non-proliferation next year**, he announced.
	3 Nov	Minister of Trade and Industry **Manuel says SACU is to be renegotiated,** and SA is re-examining its 30-year old trade agreement with Zimbabwe
	1 Dec	**South Africa would use its ability and resources to help Africa secure its rightful place in the international political and economic system, Mandela said** when opening the 30th Heads of State Summit of the OAU

Year	Foreign policy statement / action	
1995	9 Jan	On a visit to Germany DP Mbeki emphasise that SA had a special role in realising the aims of promoting peace, prosperity and democracy beyond its borders
	26 Jan	Dep. Finance Minister says SA will not accept foreign aid on terms not beneficial to local labour and supply
	1 Feb	**Foreign Minister Nzo says that although SA recognises mainland China there is no reason to sever relations with Taiwan**
	2 Feb	**SA to oversee the co-ordination of economic reform, financial and monetary policies of SADC**
	21 July	MD of the CEF says SA and Iran will trade oil in a joint venture between the two
	18 Aug	Mandela says he will refuse to allow US pressure to jeopardise the improved SA-Iranian trade relations
	22 Aug	In response to US concerns, Nzo denies that SA was passing on nuclear secrets to Iran
	16 Sep	Nzo visits PLO HQ in Arab East Jerusalem following the establishment of diplomatic relations between SA and the PLO
	21 Nov	SA trade and industry minister and Indian commerce minister jointly announce cooperation to form an IOR trading bloc
	Nov	Mandela publicly condemns Nigeria's poor human rights record at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Auckland, New Zealand.
Year	Foreign policy statement / action	
1996	2 Feb	**SA agrees to participate in UN peacekeeping activities in return for the cancellation of SA's debt to the UN**
	4 Feb	Nzo says he wants to mediate in the dispute over the Western Sahara as it was a cause of tension
	11 Feb	**SA declines unilateral intervention in the Sudan crisis; instead recommends multilateral initiative**
	27 Feb	**Mandela says Pretoria will not cancel relations with Taiwan 'unless the country has done something which requires…cancellation of diplomatic relations. The SA government wants to maintain friendly relations with both countries'**
	18 Apr	Nzo tells his Libyan counterpart that SA backed Libya in its row with the West over the Lockerbie incident and wanted UN sanctions on the country lifted
	27 Apr	South Africa elected to head up Unctad for the next four years
	3 May	DTI minister Erwin announces that SA and PRC established MFN status

1996	17 May	**Nzo declares that SA is pursuing its policy on Nigeria in concert with the SADC, OAU, UN and Commonwealth MAG**
	5 Jun	**Nzo announces that SA was forced to back down on its call for sanctions against Nigeria because other countries, particularly those in Africa, did not support the policy**
	10 Jun	Nzo issues a statement condemning an underground nuclear test conducted by China
	12 Jun	Pahad said on his return from Latin America that SA should follow the radical restructuring and privatisation programmes pursued by Latin American countries to achieve economic growth
	21 Jun	Mandela re-affirms SA's close ties with Cuba; responds to US disapproval by saying he hopes the US will sort out its differences with Cuba peacefully
	30 Jun	Mandela says he rejected a UN approach to SA to provide troops for a multinational peacekeeping force to Burundi
	19 Jul	Pahad said he would study requests for troops in multinational peace missions
	26 Jul	**SA condemns the military coup in Burundi and says it will not recognise any new government which comes to power through force of arms**
	8 Aug	A government official announces that SA favours a regional trade agreement rather than individual pacts with neighbours
	8 Aug	The SA cabinet decides to uphold sanctions against the military government of Burundi
	11 Sep	Mandela states that SA will not establish diplomatic ties the PRC at the expense of Taiwan
	1 Oct	Finance Minister Manuel is elected as an alternative member to the interim committee of the IMF, meaning SA can take part in the most important IMF policy-making discussions
	2 Oct	SA attempts to gain membership to the Lome Convention and is backed by the joint EU-ACP assembly
	5 Oct	**SA suspends its arms deal with Rwanda** as a result of allegations that Rwandan troops are conducting cross-border raids into Zaire
	21 Oct	Mandela pledges to support the peace process in the Middle East following his meeting with former Israeli PM Peres
	2 Nov	Nzo urges the international community to help restore peace in central Africa
	5 Nov	SA advises the Nigerian government to involve all political forces, incl. the opposition, in its transition to democracy
	5 Nov	DFA DG Evans says **SA will lend only technical assistance to the international peace initiative in the Great Lakes region (Zaire)**
	11 Nov	**Mandela says he is prepared to send SA troops to central Africa as part of an international force**
	19 Nov	DP Mbeki calls for a non-aggression pact for central Africa and pledge that SA will play an active part in it
	22 Nov	**Mandela calls on the people of the Great Lakes region to stop violence and rather resolve conflict through dialogue**
	28 Nov	**Mandela announces that SA has decided to cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan and establish full diplomatic relations with the PRC within 12 months**

1997	16 Jan	Am. Niehaus says that 1997 is the launch year for government to use its missions to sell confidence in the country, in return for real investment
	20 Jan	**DP Mbeki announces government will no longer follow the previous government's policy of an alliance with Israel and hostility to its Arab neighbours**
	2 Feb	Pahad says government believes peacekeeping in Africa is the responsibility of African leaders and nations, under the auspices of the UN
	14 Feb	Pahad says SA was prepared to play a more forceful role in peacekeeping in Africa
	28 Feb	**SA decides to ban the use, development, production and stockpiling of landmines** (it signed the Ottawa Convention on 3 December)
	April	**Mandela and other African heads of state initiate peace talks in South Africa between Mobuto Sese Seko and opposition leader Kabila**
	25 Apr	Pahad maintains that the advancement of human rights and the promotion of democracy remain the pillars supporting South Africa's foreign policy
	29 Apr	SA offers its Navy supply ship as a venue for 'peace talks' between Sese Seko and Kabila in international waters off the coast of Zaire
	18 May	**DP Mbeki meets Kabila in an effort to win support for a South African plan to democratise Zaire**
	2 Sept	**SA decides to sell arms worth more than $2 bn to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia**
	21 Oct	On the eve of Mandela's visit to Libya, Nzo calls for the lifting of UN sanctions against Libya
	2 Dec	Nzo says that among the most dramatic changes which the government has achieved were those in the field of international relations: Chair of SADC, NAM, Unctad; 96 foreign embassies in South Africa and it maintained relations with 171 countries.
1998	22 Jan	**SA announces it supports sanctions against Unita**
	29 Jan	**DFA says it is in the process of implementing sanctions against the military junta in Sierra Leone**
	10 Fe	**SA formally endorses the charter of the IOR-ARC**
	Jan	Algeria signs R100 mn aircraft deal with SA arms firm
	Mar	SA decides to sell arms worth R173 mn to Algeria
	Mar	Tourism ministers from SA, Swaziland and Mozambique jointly promote investment in the Lubombo corridor
	Mar	SA aim to generate a capital account deficit in relation to neighbours by encouraging cross-border investment, says DFA ambassador
	30 Mar	Ministerial negotiations on trade issues between SA and the PRC begin in earnest
	11 Ap	Dep. Pres. Mbeki pays a four-day visit to PRC
	14 Apr	Nzo visits Xanana Gusmao in Jakarta prison
	6 Jun	**SA and Mozambique inaugurates the Maputo Corridor**

	8 Jun	Mandela tells the OAU summit in Ouagadougou that African governments should not stand by while people on the continent were being slaughtered in the name of tyranny
	30 Jun	Permanent secretaries from the SA and BLNS meet to revive talks on SACU renewal
	Aug	SA grants North Korea diplomatic recognition
	23 Aug	Pretoria hosts an emergency summit of SADC leaders; meeting mandates Mandela to organise a ceasefire in the DRC, in consultation with the OAU
	2 Sep	Mandela assumes chairmanship of the NAM
	3 Sep	Mandela announces that SADC supports the military intervention by its members states in the DRC
	21/22 Sep	**SA and Botswana military forces intervene in Lesotho crisis**
	3 Nov	DP Mbeki visits Saudi Arabia; the two countries jointly announce plan to develop a strategic partnership and to boost trade and investment links
	9Nov	DFA said SA is not considering sending troops to the DRC
	9 Dec	Mandela tells a summit in the UAE that because of growing relations SA and the Gulf region are now strategic trading partners
	11 Dec	SA heads an OAU team to the Grand Comores to investigate a rebellion on Anjouan
	28 Dec	South Africa establishes diplomatic relations with the PRC and derecognises Taiwan

Year	Foreign policy statement / action	
1999	3 Jan	**The SA government denies claims that it is stalling efforts to end fighting in the DRC. DFA says the government will not do anything to encourage the forces of conflict.**
	15 Apr	Finance Minister Manual says SADC countries are likely to align their incentives to attract investment. More effort is needed to minimise conflict between SADC countries competing for the same investments, and that care has to be taken to minimise market distortions. 'Wars in Angola and the DRC are hampering policy implementation within the SADC'
	6 Apr	President Mandela and Yeltsin signs a declaration that aims to improve political and trade contacts between Russian and South Africa. **They jointly say that they are committed to strengthening the UN role in global affairs, and are in support of existing nuclear non-proliferation agreements as well as other arms control pacts.**
	10 Jul	**Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement signed by the six states party to the conflict in the DRC. Rebel leaders sign in August.**
	2 Nov	South Africa calls on the developed world to undertake structural reforms that will see rich nations moving out of economic sectors where they have lost the competitive edge, says the DTI
	2 Sep	Cabinet members Maduna and Pahad pledge their commitment at a one-day meeting of the Conference on Security, Development and Co-operation in Africa in Abuja, Nigeria. **South Africa welcomes the strengthening of this initiative and says it will actively participate in its work in order to promote the African Renaissance.**
	8 Sep	The SA government 'salutes and congratulates' the East Timorese who turned out in numbers recently to vote for their independence from Indonesia. 'The UN will have South Africa's full support as they continue to play a substantive role in East Timor in the post-ballot period'.
	1 Oct	NAM has the potential to influence the decision-making process of multilateralism and thereby determine the new global agenda, Mbeki says during the NAM's ministerial meeting.
	7 Oct	The deputy presidents of South Africa and Nigeria herald the inauguration of a joint commission as a new partnership for Africa.
	13 Oct	**SA and the EU sign the Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement in Pretoria**.
	28 Oct	Following the Commonwealth's suspension of Pakistan, Cabinet, on the advice of the NCACC decides that export permits of military material to Pakistan will not be processed until further notice
	27 Oct	A new system of Cabinet Committees, in line with the priorities of the new Cabinet, is adopted in principle by the Cabinet. The system is aimed at facilitating greater integration in the operation of departments. They are: Social Sector, Economic Sector, Investment and Employment, International Relations, Crime Prevention and Integrated Justice Sector, and Governance and Administration
	4 Nov	**Foreign Affairs Minister Zuma says South Africa is faced with daunting challenges of economic upliftment and inequalities and its foreign policy priorities must be determined by its domestic needs**

Year	Foreign policy statement / action	
2000	24 Jan	**SA DFA rejects reports that South Africa is arming some rebel groups in the DRC. DFA reiterates South Africa's impartial role in resolving the conflict**
	7 Feb	South Africa and the UK agree on key bilateral and foreign policy issues
	8 Feb	**Foreign minister Zuma says that a political solution alone can solve the conflict in Angola**
	15 Mar	Foreign minister Zuma says that establishing co-operation with the various emerging trade blocks is one of South Africa's central foreign policy objectives
	24-26 Apr	President Jian Zemin of the People's Republic of China visits South Africa to sign the establishment of a high-level Bi-National Commission
	26 Apr	**Nigerian Vice-President Abubakar attends the second South Africa-Nigeria Bi-National Commission in Pretoria**
	May	President Mbeki attends the third meeting of the South Africa-UK bilateral forum
	6 June	**Foreign Affairs Director-General Pityana announces South Africa has engaged several world leaders, asking to fund the Zimbabwe land resettlement programme urgently**
	13 June	Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad announces that South Africa is embarking on an international marketing drive to improve the country's image abroad
	July	DFA announces that South Africa plans to fulfil the requirements of the newly-signed US Africa Growth and Opportunity Act
		The Constitutive Act of the AU is adopted in Lome, Togo
	25 July	Commonwealth Chair Mbeki starts a review of the Commonwealth
	27 June	South Africa-Algeria Bi-National Commission is established
	4 Aug	President Mbeki and cabinet ministers visit Zimbabwe
	23 Aug	South African society members donates humanitarian aid to Angola
	24 Aug	South Africa and Iran agrees to strengthen bilateral relations
	Sept	**President Mbeki attends the UN Millennium Summit and discusses Zimbabwe with Annan and presidents from Zimbabwe, Namibia and Malawi**
	Oct	Foreign Minister Zuma and Trade and Industry Minister Erwin attend the China-Africa Co-operation Forum in Beijing
	17 Oct	President Mbeki visits Rwanda – the first official visit by a South African head of state
	Nov	South African parliament hosts a meeting of experts and parliamentarians on the construction of the African Parliament
	Dec	**Two South African military officers join the OAU Liaison Mission in Ethiopia/Eritrea**
	12 Dec	South African military personnel are being trained to improve the country's capacity in Peacekeeping operations, says SANDF Chief Nyanda

Year	Foreign policy statement / action	
2001	19 Jan	**In response to the news of Kabila's assassination, South Africa calls for all conflictual parties in the DRC to adhere to the principles set out in the Lusaka Peace Agreement**
	27 Feb	**SANDF and other non-military humanitarian aid workers arrive in Mozambique to assist flood victims**
	2 Apr	South Africa-Tunisia Joint Bilateral Commission established in Pretoria
	19 Apr	Pres Mbeki on an official visit to Lesotho
	July	The African Union is established
	30 Aug	World Conference against Racism starts in Durban, attended by Annan and 15 heads of state
	11 Sept	Terror attacks in New York, Pentagon
	Oct	South Africa deploys a VIP protection force of 700 troops in Burundi following the brokering of peace by former president Mandela
	1 Nov	Foreign Affairs Director-General Pityana condemns the 9/11 terror attacks and says governments must ensure that the fight against terrorism does not relegate the world's development challenges
	8 Nov	Foreign minister Zuma says racism affected the world in different ways, citing the 9/11 attacks as ample proof that intolerance, bigotry and fanaticism were on the increase
	28 Nov	Foreign minister Zuma leads a South African delegation to participate in the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (Ticad)
	10 Dec	President Mbeki visits China – the first South African head of state to do so
	20 Dec	**Foreign minister Zuma and colleagues from SADC visit Comoros as part of a peacemaking effort**

Year	Foreign policy statement / action	
2002	10 Jan	Foreign Affairs Director-General Pityana resigns
	21 Jan	German president Rau visits South Africa for bilateral talks with president Mbeki
	21 Jan	South Africa sends humanitarian aid to the DRC following a volcanic eruption in Goma
	Feb-Apr	South Africa hosts the Inter-Congolese Dialogue at Sun City
	12 Feb	South African election observer team of 40 government and NGO members departs for the Zimbabwean presidential election
	24 Feb	South Africa is officially informed of Unita leader Savimbi's death – in response, it urges all Angolans to implement the Lusaka Protocol
	24 Feb	President Mbeki says that a free and fair election will take place in Zimbabwe despite the prevailing violence
	July	South Africa hosts the inaugural summit of the African Union President Mbeki, Deputy president Zuma and other cabinet ministers are involved in facilitating talks and peace agreements in Burundi, DRC and Rwanda.
	29 Jul	As chair of the AU, South Africa welcomes steps taken by the government of Sudan and SPLM/A to promote peace
	29 Jul	President Mbeki oversees the signing of the peace accord between Rwanda and the DRC in Pretoria
	14 Aug	**Deputy foreign minister Pahad states that although the South African government was increasingly concerned by the deteriorating economic and political environment in Zimbabwe, it was not in the business of changing governments whether violently or non-violently**
	24 Sept	**Commonwealth troika – Mbeki, Obasanjo and Howard – meets in Abuja, fails to agree on new sanctions on suspended Zimbabwe**
	10 Oct	**Foreign Affairs Zuma visits her counterpart in Harare as decided by the SADC Summit in Luanda in October**
	22 Oct	**Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad states that the core focus of South Africa's foreign policy continues to be Africa's socio-economic development as well as its peace and stability**
	23 Oct	Mbeki signs a new customs agreement with its SACU neighbours.
	5 Nov	President Mbeki explains Nepad to the ASEAN Summit
	2 Dec	Mbeki as AU chair says the AU will work with Kenyan authorities and the international community to bring to book terrorists who blew up an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa last week
	31 Dec	President Mbeki and Foreign Minister Zuma attend the inauguration of Brazilian president da Silva. Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad defines the post-1994 relationship with Brazil as 'strategic'.

Table Ten A chronology of Crises in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1994 – 2002

The incidents or crises recorded below are consistent with the modified definition of an international crisis.

For purposes of ordering extensive amounts of material, Douglas Anglin's concept of 'conflict systems' (Anglin, 1999) were combined with the AU's division of the continent into major sub-regions. As an ordering device, Africa is normally 'divided' into five regions: Southern Africa, West Africa, East Africa and the Horn, and Central Africa. Anglin identifies three regional conflict systems with an epicentre which constitutes the principal source of regional destabilisation: the Great Lakes area (epicentre – Rwanda); Horn of Africa (epicentre – Sudan, Eritrea) and West Africa (epicentre – Liberia). Over the period 1994 to 2002 we identified the following 24 African crises (Banks & Muller, 1998; SIPRI, 1994-2000; Lea, 2001):

African Crises, 1994 – 2002				
Country	**Year**	**Type of crisis**	**Actor/s**	**Actions and/or Outcomes**
Southern Africa				
Lesotho	17.08.1994	Suspension of democratic rule, civil unrest	Monarchy, government, opposition	Successful SADC mediation to restore democratic rule
	22.09.1998	Violent uprising over contested election outcome	Lesotho government and opposition	SADC military intervention, Maseru agreement, brokered by SADC, on 14.10.1998

Angola	1975 onward	Civil war	Angolan government, UNITA	Several abortive peace agreements (1991, 1994, 1998), latest ceasefire after Savimbi killed in 2002
Zimbab-we	2000 – 2002	Liberalisation and structural adjustment exacerbating political tensions leading to crisis of governance	Government, opposition, 'war veterans', IMF/WB	Government repression; contested presidential election outcome
Namibia	1992-1997	Sedudu boundary dispute	Namibia, Botswana	1994 Zimbabwe mediation (unsuccessful); 1997 ICJ mediation (successful)
	10. 1998	Attempted violent secession by the Caprivi Liberation Movement	Namibia, Zambia, Botswana	Asylum & UNHCR resettlement in Denmark
Comoros	08. 1997	Attempted secession by Anjouan	Government and opposition	'Madagascar agreement' in April 1999
	30.04. 1998	Coup d' etat	Government and opposition	Ongoing turmoil, OAU mediation
Central Africa				
Demo-cratic Republic of the Congo	Oct 1996 to May 1997	Rwanda/Uganda invasion leading to military overthrow of Mobuto Sese Seko	Zaire government, internal opposition, neighbours	Kabila replaced Mobuto Sese Seko; DRC established; ongoing war; regional destabilisation
	Aug 1998	Internal rebellion (according to Rwanda, Uganda) / external aggression (according to DRC government)	DRC government, internal opposition, neighbours	Ongoing conflict (despite ceasefire on 10.07.1999, full MONUC deployment on 02.2000 and start of Inter-Congolese Dialogue)

Rwanda	April 6, 1994	Death of pres. Habyarimana and start of wholesale slaughter by Hutu militants of perceived RPF supporters	Internal parties	Genocide; refugees; regional destabilisation; UNAMIR I & II
Burundi	1993 onwards	Coup in 1996; ongoing ethnic violence	Internal factions	Mandela follows Nyerere as mediator in 2000, Transitional government in 2001, Dep Pres Zuma takes over mediation, Ceasefire in 2002 and AMIB established
Central African Republic	1996 – 97	Rebellion (mutiny)	Government and opposition	Ceasefire; MISAB and MINURCA missions
Republic of the Congo	May 1997	Civil war / insurrection	Government and opposition	UN and OAU mediation; ongoing violence
East Africa / Horn of Africa				
Sudan	1994-2000	Civil war over resources, identity, self-determination	Sudan government, SPLA, neighbours	Ongoing conflict system
Eritrea/ Ethiopia	04.1998	War triggered by boundary dispute	Eritrea and Ethiopia	Ceasefire; UNMEE established in 2000
Eritrea/ Yemen	12.1995	Armed confrontation over boundary dispute	Eritrea and Yemen	International arbitration tribunal
Somalia	1988 onward	Civil war	Internal factions	UNOSOM I and II missions; ongoing instability
	18.05.1991	Secession by the Republic of Somaliland	Somalia government; opposition	De facto acceptance of secession
West Africa				
Guinea Bissau	09.04. 1998	Assassination of president, coup d' etat	Internal factions	Ecowas sent military observer team
	06.05. 1998	Coup d' etat	Internal factions	Tenuous peace

Sierra Leone	1991 – 1997	Civil war, coups d' etat (Jan 1996 and May 1997)	Government and opposition RUF	Ecomog intervention; peace settlement in 1999, UNAMSIL established
Niger	27.10. 1996	Coup d' etat, civil unrest	Government and opposition	Return to democracy in 1996
Nigeria	12.6.1993 17.11.1993 23.6.1994 10.11.1995	Presidential elections Defence Minister Abacha takes over government Presumed winner of elections, Moshood Abiola, jailed Opposition activists, incl Ken Saro Wiwa, executed		International condemnation of military regime; Abacha died in 1996; new transition to democracy announced
Gabon	1994 onward	Civil unrest	Government and opposition	Internationally supervised settlement
Gambia	22.7.19 94	Coup d' etat	Government and opposition	EU & UK sanctions; transition to democracy in 1997
Cote d' Ivoire	1999	Coup d' etat in 1999, ongoing violence since 2001	Government and opposition	Peace agreement in early 2003, MINUC est. in 2003
Liberia	1990 – 1996	Civil war; ECOWAS intervention	Charles Taylor and various other factions	Peace agreement in 2003, UNMIL est. in 2003
North Africa				
Algeria	1995 onwar d	Civil war / insurgency	Government and opposition	Amnesty process in 2000
Morocco	1976 onwar d	International dispute over Western Sahara (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic)	Government and Polisario Front	MINURSO mission since 1991, situation unresolved

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

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THE INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

In the infancy of societies, the chiefs of the state shape its institutions;
later the institutions shape the chiefs of state
De Montesquieu

4.1 Chapter overview

This chapter explores the evolving domestic institutional landscape in which South African public policymaking processes are situated.[1] It also examines the implications for foreign policymaking. The text is arranged in the following parts: it briefly looks at colonial and apartheid policy practices before turning to the transition period of 1990 to 1994. This is followed by an examination of policy processes, and in particular that of foreign policy, in the post-apartheid era. From 1994 to 1999, President Mandela presided over efforts at restructuring and policy innovation. By 1999, when Mr Mbeki took over as president, the focus has shifted from policy formulation to implementation. These shifting foci, and the constraints upon the policy environment, are examined in detail.

4.2 Public policy processes under colonial and apartheid rule

Little research exists that tells the story of how the external affairs of African traditional societies were managed. There is no doubt that powerful rulers had extensive trade and other relations with Arab and later European interests; they practiced sophisticated forms of diplomacy (Thornton, 1998; Parson, 1998). Yet, most studies on Africa's external relations focus on the post-colonial and post-independence eras (for an overview, see Khadiagala and Lyons, 2001). This broader setting, namely foreign policy making in Africa, is a focus to which this study will return in its analysis. For now, we examine the more immediate policy environments.

[1] This chapter draws from an earlier collaborative effort with Garth le Pere. See Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2002b.

White settlement of South Africa started in 1652 when the Dutch established a trading post at the Cape. During the Napoleonic wars, Britain took possession of the Cape; annexed Zululand in 1887; and annexed the Boer republics after the South African war of 1899-1902 (Turner, 2001:1437). By 1910 the Westminster system of government was firmly entrenched. This meant that the country was governed on the principles of the English political system: the ceremonial head of state represented the Queen, while a separate head of government attended to the daily running of the country with the assistance of a Cabinet which he appointed himself. Many senior civil servants were imported from England.

The result was that the South African public service developed as a predominantly white, male, English-oriented bureaucracy – a replica of the English bureaucracy, adapted to provide for separate 'ethnic' agencies to control the administration of the Black population (Cloete, 2000: 86-7). The policy process was slanted in favour of the interests of the white settler community who had a monopoly on political power. In foreign policy terms, South Africa's external affairs were dominated by the relationship with Britain – a major colonial power, leader of the Commonwealth, and the 'imperial factor' in the Union's own history (Barber and Barratt, 1990: 15).

After the National Party won the whites-only elections in 1948 the English political elite was replaced by a white Afrikaner political elite whose objective was to consolidate political and economic power through the implementation of apartheid policies. Consequently, Afrikaner elites – spread throughout the state as well as business and interest groups – became dominant in steering government policy (Schrire, 1978). In the assessment of Cloete, more than in the previous period, policies were adopted mainly for ideological reasons and without consideration of their practical feasibility, leading to 'total failure' (Cloete, 2000: 88). Rigid enforcement of apartheid policy was therefore replaced, in the 1980s, by a technocratic reform process, which also failed because of the violent resistance it generated. This led to various states of emergency and a 'take-over'

of security planners under the leadership of a militarist president, PW Botha. Peter Vale (1992: 426) described this shift well:

> Resolutely anti-communist, the South African Defence Force gathered an impressive sweep of policy in a resolve to defeat 'a total onslaught'. A crude reductionist Marxist antipathy, the policy was primarily geared to defend the apartheid ideology of the National Party. The chief target was the outlawed ANC, the government's only serious political foe.

PW Botha and his close advisors constructed a massive, centralised and authoritarian state structure to pursue 'counter-revolutionary warfare' by means of long-term crisis management (Swilling and Phillips, 1989). Foreign policy, in this context, meant the political elite's response to domestic imperatives and to the officially perceived threat of a 'total onslaught'. Foreign policy became an instrument in the defence of apartheid. This had two effects. As the armed struggle between the regime and its opponents intensified, nearby states were drawn into that conflict and have suffered from its military and economic spill-over (Hanlon, 1986).

Second, foreign policy became a search – futile and often misdirected – for security (Jaster, 1988; Barber and Barratt, 1990). Potential allies and clients ranged from powerful Western states to fellow isolated states and docile and dependent neighbours.

These responses to domestic (and regional) opposition to apartheid proved unsuccessful, too. The state's policymaking weaknesses included a focus on control rather than development; lack policy innovation; a closed, hierarchical and authoritarian mode of decision-making and implementation; continued racist practices; and economic decline (Schrire, 1990; Price, 1991). The resultant stalemate forced the ruling party and elite to abandon apartheid in favour of a 'power-sharing' approach. In reality, this meant the negotiated transfer of political power.

4.3 The transition, 1990-1994

The transition from apartheid to democracy was not a 'miracle', nor inevitable. Neither should one view it as a short-term process. As Marais (2001) argues, the basis for the transition lay in a historic deadlock achieved between the ruling bloc and the democratic opposition in the late 1980s. The 1980s had been characterised by an increasingly aberrant mix of repression and reforms, and, partly because those reforms only marginally addressed the demands of the opposition, they failed to halt the surge of resistance that resulted in waves of popular action. Subsequent state repression dismantled the movement's capacity to capitalise on the 'insurrectionary climate' it claimed prevailed at the time. Indeed, the democratic movement found its path blocked, whilst an ensemble of other local and international factors combined to consolidate the stand-off. These included the thaw in the cold war and its impact on southern Africa (Meyns, 1991; Du Pisani, 1991). This left the opposing forces with a window of opportunity: for the democratic forces, a settlement could usher in a transition that heralded far-reaching adjustments aimed at undoing the patterns for the allocation of power, privilege and opportunities. For the forces of capital, abandonment of apartheid and replacing the ruling NP with a democratic system meant that the ANC would come to lead a new ruling bloc, hopefully not in opposition to the interests of business, but rather in alliance with it. In Marais' view (2001: 4), these processes have advanced to the point

> … where they have matured into a new dominant hegemonic project that answers, in the first instance, to the prerogatives of incumbent and aspirant elites, while at the same time (but to a lesser extent) servicing some of the needs and rights of the impoverished majority.

Against this background, one can read the dynamics of the transition as calculated and strategic moves by opposing political forces to break the stalemate and simultaneously advance forward-looking agendas. The subsequent negotiations process, which Friedman

(1996) calls the *pacted transition* and Bond (2000) *elite transition* (by which he means ANC convergence with business in endorsing capitalism) turned out to be difficult and bloody, marked by compromise and deal-making, but it nevertheless produced an interim constitution and a founding election that secured South Africa's break with apartheid in favour of an evolving democratic order.

The impact on policy processes of the negotiated transfer of state power was far-reaching and dramatic. Until 1990, successive governments followed a largely traditional, Western, industrial world, colonial policy approach, consisting of incremental policy changes controlled by White bureaucratic elites and aimed at preserving as much of the status quo as possible. From 1994, a totally different, representative and legitimate government took power. Policymaking processes changed. The transition saw procedural shifts towards policymaking that was more open and inclusive. The primary rules of policymaking were that there would be a democratic orientation, with sufficient consultation (Booysen, 2001: 128). The new democracy also introduced immediate policy changes. The focus shifted to the needs of the majority and socio-economic needs were targeted through an ambitious policy programme, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Generally, however, policy renewal had to take place under conditions of constraint. In the view of Booysen (2001) the immediate post-apartheid period, up to 1996, saw a large volume of policy initiatives, and with the introduction of the GEAR strategy came an era of policymaking within the parameters of macro-economic delimitation. There were other constraints, including international economic factors, inherited state debt and budget deficits, and weak state capacity. In particular, civil service transformation became an issue. Following an agreement during the negotiations in the early 1990s, public policymaking had to involve new civil servants working next to apartheid-era functionaries. Seven years after political liberation, the quest for institutional transformation of the civil service continued. Indeed, by 2001, some national government departments were transformed only on the senior management levels. As the following text will show, these constraints were to play a significant role in the quest to restructure and transform the foreign policymaking machinery of the new state.

4.4 Post-apartheid foreign policy processes

4.4.1 President Mandela and the foreign policy of transition

South Africa's own transition and nation-building challenges more or less coincided with momentous changes and dramatic upheavals on the international stage. The fall of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War ideological contest and the increasing prominence of the North-South divide were all features of the altered global landscape. This is a landscape that is now increasingly shaped by the world-wide expansion of productive and service activities; the rapid growth of international trade; the diminishing importance of national frontiers; and the intensive exchange of information and knowledge (Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2002).

Within these dramatic systemic changes, South Africa's transition represented more than a mere change of domestic policy or government. In a very profound sense, it meant a fundamental transformation of political values, norms and structures of authority based on democracy, justice and the rule of law. The reconstituted domestic regime would play a pivotal role in re-orienting, revitalising and reformulating the country's foreign policy interests and practices and its relations with a fractured global order.

4.4.2 The foundations of post-apartheid foreign policy

With these challenges in mind, it was not surprising, therefore, that new foreign policy ideals would be based on and reflect the experiences of the ruling party, the ANC, as the central actor in the global anti-apartheid crusade which evolved around a struggle for human rights, democracy and majority rule in South Africa. It is important to note that the rival Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) in exile also played a critical role in international mobilisation and in the global struggle against apartheid.

As a consequence, Nelson Mandela asserted as early as 1993 that "human rights will be the light that guides our foreign affairs" (Mandela, 1993: 88). This and allied principles

were further articulated when the international affairs department of the ANC published a comprehensive foreign policy document in 1993. Declaratory and ideal-driven, the document defined seven cardinal principles that should inform and guide South Africa's foreign relations (*see* Table 11).

Table 11 Principles of SA foreign policy

- A belief in, and preoccupation with, Human Rights which extends beyond the political, embracing the economic, social and environmental;
- A belief that just and lasting solutions to the problems of humankind can only come through promotion of Democracy, worldwide;
- A belief that Justice and International Law should guide the relations between nations;
- A belief that international peace is the goal to which all nations should strive. Where this breaks down, internationally-agreed peaceful mechanisms to solve conflict should be resorted to;
- A belief that our foreign policy should reflect the interests of the continent of Africa;
- A belief that South Africa's economic development depends on growing regional and international economic co-operation in an interdependent world;
- A belief that our foreign relations must mirror our deep commitment to the consolidation of a democratic South Africa.

Source: ANC, 1993

On assuming power as the dominant partner in the coalition government after the historic elections of April, 1994, the ANC faced the formidable task of translating the gains of liberation diplomacy into a pragmatic and principled foreign policy for South Africa and its citizens. The ANC's blueprints concentrated more on ideals and orienting concepts such as human rights than on frameworks for implementation and definitions of strategic vision. Free from its apartheid isolationist moorings, a broad approach of 'universality' represented its intention to pursue a diplomacy of active internationalism which was nevertheless bound by certain ideological inclinations, historic alliances and political preferences.

By 1995, South Africa had established 93 resident missions abroad and indicative of its resolve, has established full diplomatic relations with 46 African countries. In a very short period, by the end of 1994, there were 136 countries with representation in South Africa. And if any more poignant symbolism was necessary, South Africa joined or was re-admitted to 16 multilateral organisations, concluded 86 bilateral treaties and acceded to 21 multilateral treaties and conventions, 15 of which concerned human rights (SA Yearbook, 1998:197-205).

Indeed, since April 1994, South Africa was re-admitted to full membership in the United Nations (UN), Commonwealth**,** Organisation for African Unity (OAU)**,** and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)**.** For differing periods, it has been chair of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), of SADC, of the 1998 54th session of the UN Commission of Human Rights and of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). In 1998, South Africa hosted the 12th NAM summit and in 1999, the Commonwealth heads of government meeting.

Without exaggeration, President Mandela could therefore declare in 1999, "for a country that so many years was the polecat of the world, South Africa has truly undergone a revolution in its relations with the international community" (Mandela, 1999).

4.4.3 Transforming the instruments of foreign policy

As in all other areas of public policy, the incoming Government of National Unity (GNU), led by the ANC was confronted with the daunting challenge of reconstructing foreign relations. The role of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) as the new custodian of foreign policy has been mired in controversy and contestation. Achieving representative racial and gender balances has been a particular source of acrimony and tension. While most of South Africa's career diplomats abroad are now black, by 1997 the total staff complement of missions remained skewed: 40% were black and 60% were

white. The racial composition of the department was further compounded by the antithetical worldviews of its many new and old officials.

One view held that South Africa's foreign policy making elite was divided between 'internationalist' and 'neo-mercantilist' camps. Officials representing the previous government belong to the latter group who '…consistent with the logic of neo-realism, emphasise the importance of trade and self-interest over all else'. The 'internationalists' are mainly those who returned from long years in exile with an orientation towards '…a demonstrably greater degree of solidarity with the collective problems of the developing world' (Van der Westhuizen, 1998: 444).

The department was also perceived to suffer from a lack of strong, robust and assertive leadership, capable of decisive policy and organisational transformation. Its image suffered in particular because the first foreign minister, the late Alfred Nzo, had a retiring and self-effacing nature. Compounding its leadership dilemma, the Director-General, Rusty Evans, was a hold-over from the previous government and in hindsight, was neither particularly suited to the challenges of re-inventing the department nor adept at managing the culture-clash between seasoned 'old order' bureaucrats and inspired but inexperienced liberation cadres.

Although attempts were made to develop conceptual coherence, strategic direction and operational codes (DFA, 1996), cleavages of race, gender, style and ideology still persisted and during the post-transition period at least, this resulted in the DFA being less than the premier custodian of the country's emerging foreign relations (Southall, 1995:39-44).

In the process of eradicating the memory of almost four decades of apartheid international relations, the ANC grossly underestimated the scope and complexity of restructuring the institutional architecture and managing the country's post-1994 foreign policy making machinery. As a consequence, it soon fell victim to that conundrum in foreign policy making: the lack of a co-ordinated vision. It was necessary to move

beyond a set of inspirational principles to strategically manage key dimensions of a complex and global order. Critics thus held, for example, that South Africa's '…foreign relations could be said to be lacking the necessary broad orientation and strategic purpose' (Mills, 1997:19).

4.4.3.1 The role of multiple actors

In democratic settings such as South Africa, there are multiple actors in foreign policy such as parliament, the media, interest groups and a variety of government agencies and departments. It is widely believed that they strengthen and enrich foreign policy and its outcomes (Van Wyk, 1999; Nel and van Nieuwkerk, 1997). However, to be effective their voices have to be taken seriously and their input has to be aggregated and co-ordinated in the policy process (Frankel, 1968: 70- 83). The challenge for post-apartheid South African foreign policy making has been the co-ordination of multiple actors in shaping, determining, and finally, implementing policy. This might not be surprising in a globalising era which stresses, among others, the importance of global financial markets, regional economic blocs, international trade linkages, information technology, transnational crime and new forms of multilateral governance (Mittelman, 1996:1-19).

While the DFA was the supposed primary locus of expertise and implementation, it often found itself at odds if not in opposition with a range of other actors who at times constituted a noisy marketplace. It was precisely this multiplicity of actors with seemingly conflicting interests that encouraged accusations of incoherence, inconstancy and opaqueness in policy formulation (Muller, 1997:69). With no apparent centre of gravity, these included President Nelson Mandela, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, cabinet, parliament, parliamentary committees dealing with foreign affairs and trade and other state departments such as the Departments of Trade and Industry, Defence and Finance. The critical voices of academics and civil society formed another site of debate and scrutiny.

President Harry Truman, US president from 1945-1952, once said "the President makes foreign policy" (cited in Frankel, 1968:21). In the case of President Mandela, given his towering personality, international prestige and stature, this was certainly the case. His command and seeming domination of every major foreign policy decision and issue was so complete so as to almost overshadow the role of DFA, cabinet and parliament. With such a dominant figure, 'it has meant South Africa's image (and its foreign policy) tends largely to be equated with the President's profile. As a result, policy has often followed his public statements, rather than the other way around' (Mills, 1997:24).

As President Mandela's then deputy, Thabo Mbeki had a very influential hand in fashioning and articulating foreign policy concerns. A very skilled diplomat in his own right, during his long years in exile he emerged as the ANC's chief international spokesman and his outlook is distinctly internationalist. As Deputy President, he was the prime architect in re-configuring South Africa's relations with the United States, Europe, developing countries and Africa in particular.

4.4.3.2 The problem of institutional tensions

Of all the government departments, during the early years of South Africa's transition, tensions and strained relations between the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and DFA were most acute. Since 1994, DTI has emerged as the chief steward of South Africa's bilateral and multilateral trade diplomacy. Investment and foreign trade, especially gaining preferential access to developed countries markets, has become an important instrument in South Africa's economic development, its export diversification and industrialisation strategy (Muller, 2000:8-11). The successes of the DTI, for example, in complex trade negotiations on a free trade agreement with the European Union, only served to fuel inter-departmental antagonisms and to deepen personality differences.

As security matters and arms sales and purchases became a more critical feature of South Africa's foreign relations, the role of the Department of Defence (DOD) has become more prominent and contentious. It has taken the lead in such areas as peace and security

where DFA has been relegated to a secondary or support role. Arm sales are now regulated by a four-tier system, including a cabinet committee, the National Conventional Arms Control Committee, established in 1995 (Shelton, 1998:23). Some of the criteria to be considered during the decision-making process are the recipient country's human rights record as well as existing tensions, armed conflicts and the security situation of the recipient country. It is partially the responsibility of the DFA to provide the process with the necessary analysis and information. Despite its well-defined role, the DFA was regularly marginalised or ignored by the DOD's profit imperative and pressure to maintain market share in the global arms bazaar (Shelton, 1998).

Parliament's primary role is to give the public an opportunity to express its viewpoint on foreign policy as well as to serve as a 'watch dog' of the public interest. Despite having 266 members out of 400 in the National Assembly, ANC parliamentarians have often complained about their marginal role in contributing to the substance of policy. The parliamentary portfolio committee on foreign affairs which is multi-party in composition has nevertheless struggled to ensure that the oversight and review function is properly executed (van Wyk, 1999).

Lastly, while South Africa's vigorous and richly textured civil society in the apartheid years was mainly concerned with protest, resistance and challenge, it has had to re-define its role under the new democratic auspices as agents of interest representation, collaboration and opposition. In matters of foreign policy, many NGOs and the academic community responded with enthusiasm and optimism to the new government's expressed commitment that policy formulation would be more transparent, open and participatory. However, their hopes were soon betrayed: the pledge turned out to be more perfunctory than real (Daniel, 1995:32-38). There have been notable instances where civil society actors made important policy contributions. This would include their collective cogent critique of the DFA's 1996 discussion document, their contributions to developing the DOD's peace-keeping framework and their helping to shape the government's approach to both to the international campaign to ban landmines and South Africa's free trade agreement with the EU. However, these are few and far between. If anything, civil

society actors often experience frustration in making their voices heard in the policy corridors. This reflects institutional opaqueness and as some have argued, more continuity of old practices than a decisive break with the past (le Pere and Vickers, 2000).

What emerges from these considerations is that the DFA—on the basis of its history and evolution—was a rather weak and ineffective bureaucratic player, lacking clarity of purpose and a long-term strategic perspective. Its internal fragmentation and inertia, together with the centrifugal effects of competitive networks conspired (in most instances) to make it rather peripheral to shaping and influencing the contours of policy during the Mandela years.

South Africa has a troubling record of failing to take principled stances on human rights violations in cases as diverse as East Timor, Cuba, China, Libya, Nigeria, and Zaire. It has nonetheless gone on to play a crucial part in some key disarmament activities in the late twentieth century. As the only country to unilaterally abandon its nuclear weapons programme, South Africa was instrumental in brokering an indefinite and unconditional extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) during the Review and Extension Conference in New York in May, 1995. Following the conclusion of the conference, South Africa also played a key role in defining the terms for establishing a continental African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. Another leading role was reserved for South Africa in the 'Ottawa Process', aimed at securing a global ban on the production and sale of anti-personnel mines. In 1997, it was one of the first countries in the world to enact a unilateral ban on landmines. Furthermore, in concert with Canada, it played a key role in the negotiation of the Treaty of Rome to establish the International Criminal Court under the aegis of the UN.

4.4.4 President Mbeki and the foreign policy of consolidation

During the Mandela era, the general critiques of his administration converged around the strategic ambiguities and schizoid approaches underpinning foreign policy (Landsberg

and Masiza, 1995). The orientation of the South African government's post-1994 foreign policy can be described as vacillating between 'realist' and 'moral' internationalism. There was a palpable tension between prioritising its perceived commercial, trade and political interests *and* its role as a moral crusader in the promotion of global human rights and democracy. However, following the second post-apartheid election in June, 1999 which saw President Mbeki securing overwhelming political control in the hands of the ANC, with himself and a close circle of colleagues at the helm of policy making, this ambiguity and vacillation was replaced by a stronger sense of purpose and vision.

The driving forces behind the development of official foreign policy were two-fold. Firstly, a new Director-General and seasoned diplomat, Jackie Selebi, led an initiative that reformulated the DFA mission statement in February 1999. This exercise resulted in the promotion of 'security and wealth creation' being the DFA's fundamental purpose. Security would be pursued through compliance with international law and South Africa's active involvement in conflict prevention, resolution and management. Wealth creation would be managed through a balanced and co-ordinated approach to globalisation, the enhancement of South Africa's global image, and the vigorous pursuit of trade and investment (DFA, 1999). Following the introduction, in 2000, of a new senior management team at the DFA, its vision and mission statements were again modified to fit with another, potentially more important policy reform initiative, namely, the introduction of the concept of 'integrated governance' throughout the state and senior executive. This development will be discussed in detail below.

Secondly, President Mbeki articulated a strong commitment to assisting with the revival and renewal of the African continent through the concept of the 'African Renaissance'. This was coupled with championing the cause of developing countries through his government's leadership role in various multilateral institutions.

4.4.4.1 The changing domestic context of foreign policy

These foreign policy drivers should, however, be seen in the context of South Africa's particular domestic landscape. In brief, although South Africa dominates the southern African region economically, in global terms it is a middle-income economy and maintains a medium human development ranking on the UNDP's index, placing it below Cuba and next to the Dominican Republic and Sri Lanka. This is indicative of the troubling nature of its economic and social base. Its income inequality, which significantly divides the country into a rich white minority and a poor black majority, is amongst the highest in the world (Marais, 2001:7-11). Since 1994, it has experienced jobless growth, resulting from trade liberalisation and global competition, financial turmoil in emerging markets, a dearth of human resources and structural deficiencies in its economy (Marais, 2001:100-105). These and other factors have, since 1994, exacerbated a number of negative social trends, such as spiralling crime and corruption as well as serious social disparities—not only between black and white but also between the newly enriched black middle class and a poor, mostly uneducated mass, as well as between urban and rural households.

Straddling the two presidential eras, the South African government's response to these domestic socio-economic challenges was to significantly adjust its earlier Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which focussed on poverty reduction and meeting basic needs. By adopting the neo-liberal macro-economic Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, the focus shifted to structural economic reforms. These included, among others, fiscal reforms, exchange control removals, monetary policy discipline, privatisation, labour market flexibility, tariff reductions and skills development. All these elements were deemed necessary to pursue a growth path that emphasised systemic adaptability and efficiency of the manufacturing sector. The GEAR targets were ambitious: '…it promised to increase annual growth by an average of 4,2 per

cent, create 1,35 million new jobs by the year 2000, boost exports by an average 8,4 per cent per annum through an array of supply side measures, and drastically improve social infrastructure.' Its neo-liberal underpinnings were meant be catalysts for achieving '…growth with job creation and redistribution…' (Marais, 2001: 63).

The emergence of GEAR and the promotion of wealth creation and security thus combined to provide a clearer—albeit arguable—definition of South Africa's foreign policy priorities. While human rights was an important principle of policy under President Mandela, South Africa had learnt through its human rights debacles with Nigeria and East Timor that principled righteousness and idealist leanings were difficult to sustain in a world where *realpolitik* and champions of free markets held sway. There would, therefore, be a gradual retrenchment of human rights concerns under President Mbeki, the preference being that where appropriate, South Africa's advocacy and support for human rights should occur through multilateral institutions and quiet bilateral diplomacy. The new neo-liberal orthodoxy coupled with a greater developmental focus was thus seen to provide a better calculus of South Africa's national interests in a commercially-driven, capitalist global environment (Williams, 2000:80).

4.4.4.2 Reconfiguring foreign policy

With the dissolution of the GNU after the 1999 national election, President Mbeki was in an unassailable position to reshape the contours, institutions and processes of foreign policy.

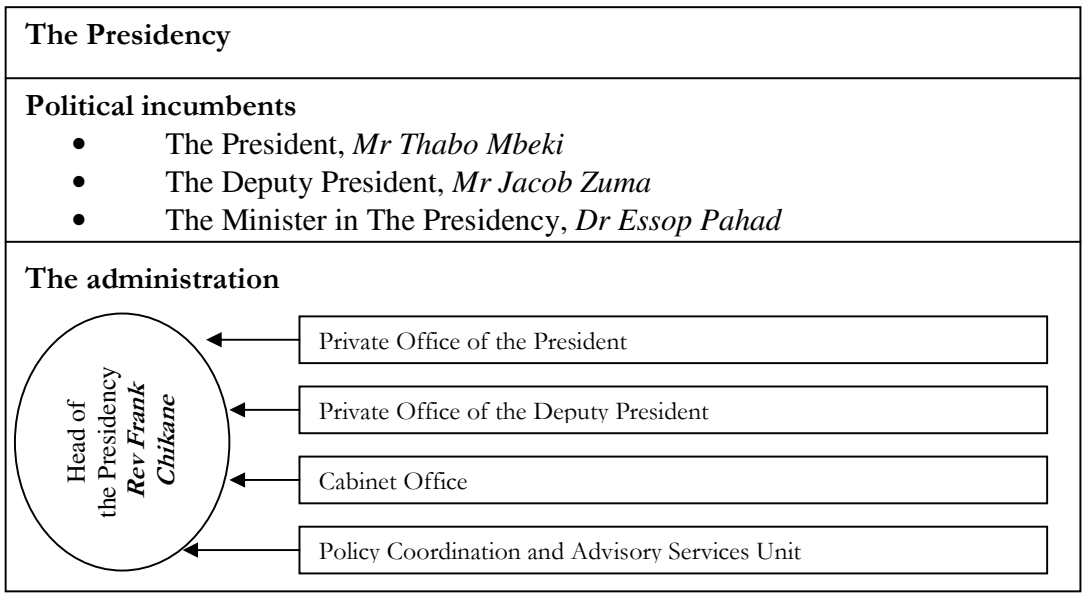
Jackie Selebi became national police commissioner and was succeeded as Director General of the DFA by Sipho Pityana, who previously held the same position in the Department of Labour. The Foreign Minister and her Deputy, the DG and his deputies, all broadly from the same ANC political school, would be strategically linked to the real foreign policy architect, the President himself. Dr Nkosazana Zuma, former Minister of Health, became the new Foreign Minister with Aziz Pahad remaining as her deputy. This was the team that the President entrusted with the delivery and implementation of his

foreign policy vision. Their work would be complemented and supported by three special advisers in the president's office for legal, political and economic affairs.

4.4.4.2.1 New foreign policy decision-making structures: The Presidency as the core and apex of governance in South Africa

Following Mr Mbeki's inauguration in June 1999 as President of the country, several changes were made to the existing national bureaucratic or policy-making machinery, which was believed to be fragmented, costly and inefficient. Key to this was the belief for the need of a restructured Presidency – the locus of foreign policy formulation and decision-making. Careful planning and preparation went into the restructuring process. The recommendations of a Presidential Review Committee, appointed in 1996, together with various analyses by the Office of the then Deputy President were implemented immediately after Mr Mbeki took office, and was effectively concluded by late 1999. The relevant main features of the new Presidency, and by extension, the system of 'integrated governance' are displayed in Figures one and two and discussed in the text below.

Figure One The Presidency, 1999



First of all, its staff of 341 functions as a central secretariat to the Cabinet Office and integrated Presidency, and has as its vision a commitment to 'efficient and effective executive management of government by the president together with the deputy-president and cabinet…' (Chikane, 2001: 7). And *secondly*, in terms of the new integrated structure, three key political figures – President, Deputy President and Minister – belong to the same office with an integrated administrative establishment managed by one Director-General.

4.4.4.2.2 The new system of integrated policy making

4.4.4.2.2.1 Cabinet committee clusters

In the previous system of cabinet committees, some appeared insufficiently focused (committees had too many members) while others were overly dominated by sectoral thinking. This has been revised by clustering ministers in a rationally integrated manner. There are now six sectoral cabinet committees: social sector; economic sector; investment and employment; international relations, peace and security; justice, crime prevention and security; and governance and administration. In the view of the Chikane Report, this streamlined system '…ensures that all relevant ministers attend. Their legal powers are unchanged but the composition of clusters allows for intensive and focused debates on difficult policy choices and the resolution of these issues by the relevant ministers *before* issues are taken to the full cabinet' (Chikane, 2001:17. Emphasis added).

4.4.4.2.2.2 Directors General clusters

To ensure the translation of cabinet decisions into practical policy and legislative measures, the functions of Directors General were also reorganised into clusters. This was done

> …to ensure that the deployment of departmental resources keeps step with the agendas being set by cabinet clusters … *the trend is that DG clusters are expected to process matters which serve in cabinet… to ensure that all technical issues are*

resolved, leaving cabinet with the political and policy choices… (Chikane, 2001:32. Emphasis added).

There are five DG clusters, one less than at cabinet level. This is because the DG economic and investment cluster serves both the 'economic' and 'investment and employment' cabinet committees.

4.4.4.2.2.3 Administrative support structures

The three key political incumbents in the Presidency are backed by a sophisticated administrative structure. Four branches of the Presidency report to the Director-General, namely the Private Office of the President; the Office of the Deputy President; the Cabinet Office and the Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services (PCAS) unit. The latter two branches play an important role in foreign policy decision making. The Cabinet Office (formerly the cabinet secretariat) supports six cabinet committees. As mentioned above, they are clustered in a way that ensures optimal integration and co-ordinated policy development, policy implementation and actions. With the help of the PCAS unit, the cabinet operations chief directorate assesses the content of matters to be tabled with cabinet to ensure the necessary policy synergies and alignment. The PCAS unit advises the President (as well as his two colleagues in the Presidency) on all aspects of policy co-ordination, implementation and monitoring and assists on cross-cutting projects and programmes. Its core function, then, is to facilitate an integrated approach to all policy development and implementation. The unit is made up of the following five chief directorates, which mirror the cabinet and DG clusters:

- *Governance and administration,* which services the DG cluster and Cabinet Committee on governance and administrative policy matters;
- *International Relations, Peace and Security* (IRPS), which deals with all matters related to international relations, trade, international investments, marketing of South Africa, and peace and security;

- *Economic cluster*, which deals with economic, investment, employment and strategies on human resource development issues. It is also responsible for facilitating meetings with business as well as the International Investment Advisory Council;
- *Justice, Crime Prevention and Security*, which deals with policy matters in these areas; and
- *Social Sector*, which deals with policy issues ranging from education to rural development.

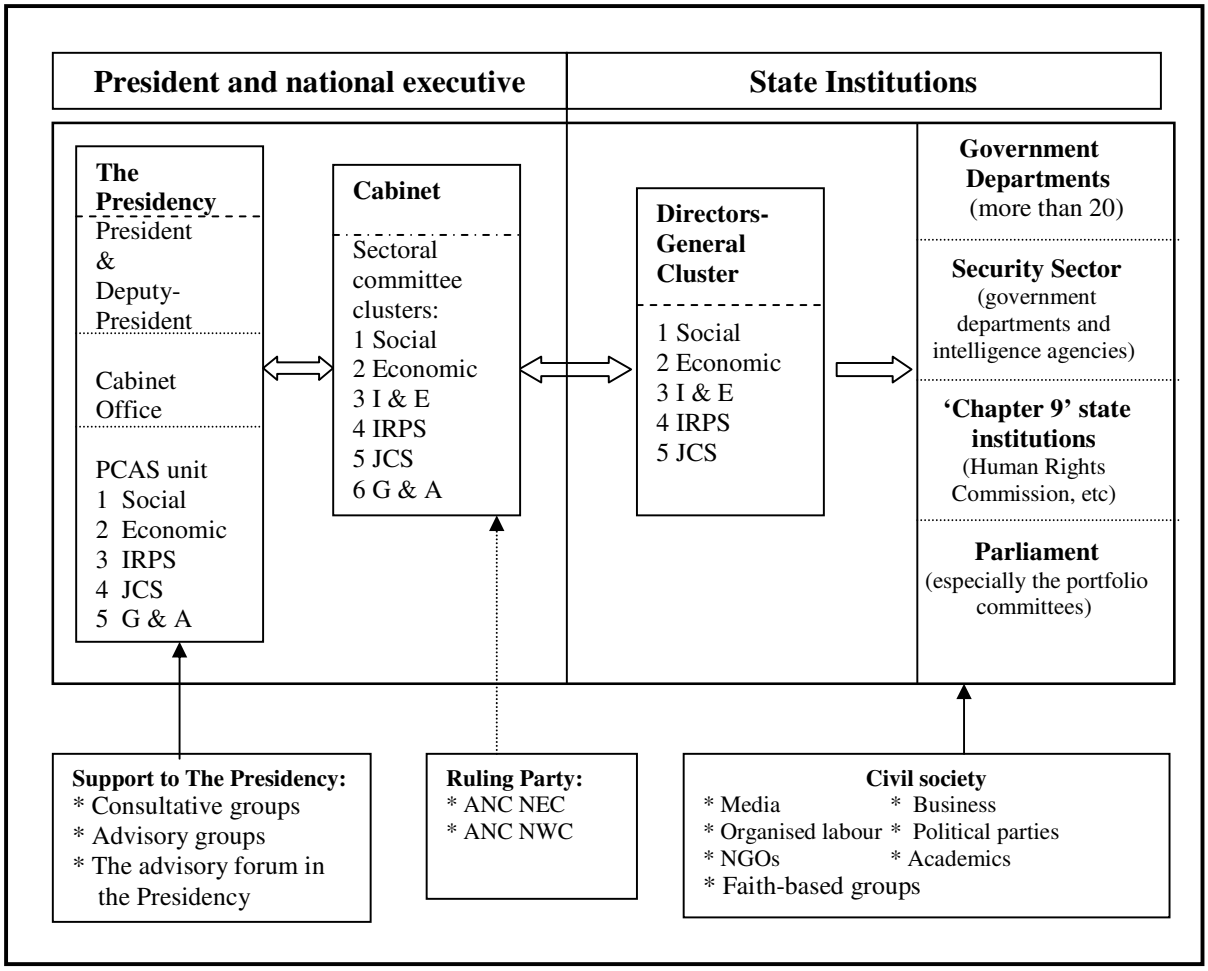
Other structures or relations with the Presidency relevant to foreign policy include –

- The Presidency's *Consultative Groups*, which include non-state sectoral interests such as trade unions, black business, big business and agriculture;
- The Presidency's *Advisory Groups* including the International Investment Advisory Council (consisting of prominent heads of global companies) and an International Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Advisory Council;
- *The Advisory Forum* in the Presidency. All three incumbents have special advisors (such as Prof W Nkuhlu, who advised the President on economic affairs and who was responsible for drafting technical aspects of NEPAD's precursor, the Millennium Africa Recovery Plan). The president and his deputy each have a parliamentary counsellor who assists them in executing their parliamentary responsibilities effectively.

Finally, the construction of Figure 12 is meant to suggest a significant influence of the top structures of the ruling party on senior decision making structures. This is so because similar individuals occupy senior decision making positions in both the executive structures of government (President, Deputy President, most cabinet members and some Directors General) and of the ruling party, particularly the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) and smaller National Working Committee (NWC). The significance of this structural reality was explained in an interview with senior ANC member Ibrahim Ibrahim: in his view,

Policy comes from the ANC, from the resolutions passed at the ANC congress, to the NEC (it has a subcommittee on foreign affairs) which meets every 2 months. It starts with the President's report, which always includes international affairs. Then there is general discussion. It can make recommendations, amendments, and critiques. For example, on the question of Nepad and the Renaissance, which came from the Presidency, it was discussed by the NEC and then endorsed (Ibrahim, 2003).

Figure Two Making foreign policy in South Africa: process and actors



Key:

1 PCAS unit:
The Policy Coordination and Advisory Services unit in The Presidency

2 Social:
The Social Sector (the cabinet committee for the Social Sector is chaired by the Minister of Home Affairs)

3 Economic:
The Economic Sector (the cabinet committee for the Economic Sector is also chaired by the Minister of Home Affairs)

4 I & E:
Investment and Employment cluster (the cabinet committee for I & E is chaired by the President)

5 IRPS:
International relations, Peace and Security cluster (the cabinet committee for IRPS is also chaired by the President)

6 JCS:
Justice, Crime Prevention and Security cluster (the cabinet committee for JCS is chaired by the Deputy-President)
7 G & A:
Governance and Administration cluster (the cabinet committee for JCS is chaired by the Deputy-President)
8 ANC NEC:
African National Congress' National Executive Committee (elected)
9 ANC NWC:
African National Congress' National Working Committee
10 NGOs:
11 Non-governmental organisations

4.4.5 The new system in operation: The Presidency and international relations

How well does the new system actually work in practice, and what is the impact of the new 'integrated governance' approach on foreign policy? The Chikane Report as well as senior politicians in the national executive are extremely upbeat about its performance. Before assessing the system's efficacy, we need to describe the operationalisation of the new system in terms of the government's foreign policy activities.

The formulation, decision-making and implementation phases of foreign policy are rather complex, involving many influential participants from both the state and non-state sectors. Figure 12 identifies and contextualises the key players and processes, and the following text provides some analysis.

Following inputs from various quarters, in early 2001 Cabinet approved a new integrated planning framework to guide the executive. Central to this framework is the identification of strategic priorities via the medium term strategic framework (MTSF), which informs the budgeting process via the medium term expenditure framework (MTEF). In March 2001 the Minister and Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs, during their budget vote in the National Assembly (parliament) spoke about these challenges and revealed that their department had developed a strategic four-year plan '…to ensure that the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy objectives is conducted in a co-ordinated and integrated way' (Pahad, 2001). At an earlier Heads of Mission conference in February 2001, DFA developed the details of an IRPS strategic plan, which featured

four ‘mutually reinforcing’ themes, namely, South Africa’s domestic interests, the objectives of the African Renaissance, promoting the agenda of the South and developing an equitable global system (Malcolmson, 2001: 13). These themes can be read as representing the South African government’s key foreign policy objectives. President Mbeki, who participated in the conference, focused in his presentations on two main issues, namely:

- the role South Africa was expected to play within the region, the continent, the global South and the international community. He focused on OAU and SADC restructuring, the reform of regional and international organisations such as the UN, World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) and Commonwealth, South Africa’s hosting of major international conferences (such as the World Conference against Racism and OAU/African Union (AU) summit) and efforts at promoting peace and security in Africa and the Middle East;
- the potential impact and contribution of South Africa’s bilateral relations on its foreign policy priorities. He focused on South Africa’s relations with the Group of Eight (G-8) and the envisaged ‘G-8 of the South’ (including India, Brazil and South Africa), various African states and South-South co-operation.

In the view of the Chikane Report, since 1999 The Presidency ‘…has moved to consolidate and extend the country’s international role in the interests of all South Africans, as well as the people of the region, the continent and the developing South’ (Chikane, 2001: 44). Secondly, the report makes it clear that the Presidency has a crucial role to play in the interface between local and global. As the report says, it ‘…has a bold promotional role to play …because effective international co-operation directly impacts on political, economic, scientific and technological developments at home’ (Chikane, 2001:41).

The report singles out the issue of globalisation, saying that the Presidency – together with DFA – has sought actively to understand the process and its implications. In the report's analysis, several policy implications flowed from this focus.

Firstly, in *the region*, the (medium term) vision was to extend the integrated approach of domestic policymaking through co-operation with South Africa's neighbours, '…so that we build regional economic competitiveness in a thoughtful and integrated way'. The plan envisaged 'working models for integrated southern African development' such as the Maputo corridor, platinum beneficiation, a range of infrastructure initiatives, and cross-border game parks. In the long run, the Report states, sustainable reconstruction and development in South Africa required the same in southern Africa, and to this end domestic trade and industrial policy was being tightly co-ordinated with foreign policy, '…an integrated effort in which the Presidency plays a leading role as a catalyst'. As evidence of this approach the SADC Trade Protocol was mentioned, which came into effect in September 2000 and which provides for free trade among SADC member states, as well as South Africa's engagement in SADC peace initiatives in Lesotho and the DRC.

In addition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs explained that her government's regional priorities included stability: 'Stability is very important in our region. South Africa welcomes the decision by president Chiluba (of Zambia) not to seek a third term. This will strengthen democracy and we hope everyone will follow that example'. She also added that

> Zimbabwe remains of great concern to us. We have to continue to engage the Zimbabwe government whilst pointing out firmly and frankly where we disagree with them. We have a responsibility to avoid a complete collapse and not to make things worse for ordinary Zimbabweans (Dlamini-Zuma, 2001).

Secondly, in *continental Africa*, the Presidency and DFA were believed to be playing a constructive role, particularly with the deliberations of the OAU/AU, the recent establishment of an early warning centre to ensure it '… is able to make prompt and

decisive contributions in continental crisis management' and the promotion of the African Renaissance, where the President, his Deputy, the Minister and the Director-General in the Presidency, together with the IRPS cabinet committee acted '…as catalyst towards a common understanding with various leaders on the continent and the rest of the world'(Chikane, 2001:46).

Thirdly, in promoting the interests of *the developing South*, the Presidency wanted to introduce 'more equitable' policies and practices in global financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Activities included the promotion of deliberations between the G-8 and NAM and G-77, assistance with developing NEPAD, representing SADC at ACP-group meetings, support for the Burundi peace process and assistance with making the Commonwealth 'more relevant'. In short, the strategic calculus was that of 'enhancing the president's position on the world stage to enable him to represent the interests of the global South in a more effective way' (Chikane, 2001: 46).

It remains to be seen to what extent the new system of 'integrated governance' and the four-year strategic plan will result in co-ordinated policy and the achievement of the country's foreign policy objectives. In such a complex setting, consider the range of domestic and global factors which impacts upon policy and which intervene to produce unintended outcomes, accelerated achievements, or policy failures. Consider the onerous and time-consuming process whereby a policy issue is converted into coherent and implementable policy outputs – projects or programmes (Khosa, 2003; Daniel, Southall and Lutchman, 2005). Often, senior departmental officials lobby or recommend for an issue or problem to be placed on the policy agenda. At times public policy issues are identified and placed on the agenda by the President, or his senior colleagues in Parliament or the ruling party. Lobbying and policy advocacy – shaping the public policy agenda – do not always originate from inside the state. A range of non-state actors, including political parties, the media, organised interest groups and international organisations regularly attempt to influence the public policy agenda. Once an issue or problem is recognised as a policy concern, it has to pass through various phases of the

policy cycle (and survive the journey) before coherent and implementable policy emerges. In terms of the new system of integrated governance, key players in the process are the President and his advisors, the Cabinet, senior officials (heads of department), members of Parliament and to a lesser extent organised societal interests.

Regardless of its point of origin, a policy issue must be considered by one of Cabinet's six committees or 'sectoral clusters'. The work of these committees is supported by the PCAS unit in the Presidency as well as the FOSAD. Once a policy decision has been made by the full Cabinet (on the advice of a committee), a policy statement or policy framework can be said to exist. Those policies in need of enabling legislation then 'travel' to Parliament where it is subjected to rigorous legislative scrutiny and processing. This phase can be quite time-consuming and may result in the contents of policy being significantly modified or altered. When Parliament passes legislation on a specific policy issue, the President signs it into law and the policy is ready for implementation (De Coning, 1995, Majola, 2001).

As the preceding discussion shows, the South African government's foreign policy objectives were very ambitious and at times seemed to represent the approach of much bigger and stronger countries in terms of global politics. Some analysts have argued that South Africa exhibits ambitions of acting as a 'middle-power' in international politics (Nel, Taylor and Van der Westhuizen, 2001:16-18), whilst others categorised it as a 'benevolent regional hegemon' (for an overview of these debates, see Van Nieuwkerk, 2005).

Its ambitions might be thwarted by the interplay of three additional factors. In the first place, to what extent can government draw on the required domestic strengths to allow it to play an activist regional and international role, especially concerning continental peacemaking and peacekeeping, and the reform of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and the UN Security Council? Conditions of continuing and rising poverty, unemployment, slow economic growth and increasing xenophobia amongst its population might act as a deterrent on these ambitions.

Secondly, to what extent can the South African state rely upon the appropriately trained and experienced personnel to manage the intricate cogs and wheels of the sophisticated new decision-making apparatus? Aziz Pahad, in a speech to Parliament, hinted at this potential problem when he said:

> …the DFA lacks sufficient capacity to discharge its continental and global responsibilities. Although substantial progress has been made in transformation there are still shortcomings that need to be addressed. We believe that greater priority must be given to *human resource development and performance management* (Pahad, 2001. Emphasis added).

Indeed, the structural strength of the central decision making circle – Presidency, Cabinet, and ANC NEC – does not automatically translate into strength of policy and policy monitoring. As Booysen (2001) found, cabinet ministers appeared uncertain of whether the President would support new or detailed initiatives. The PCAS unit has not been functioning optimally, and there is limited opportunity for direct policy interaction with the President. Even cabinet meetings are seen as insufficient in fulfilling the need for detailed policy assessment.

Thirdly, what does one need to succeed, beyond a world view driven by ambition and a belief that idealism will bring positive change? It seems therefore that not only does a gap exist between President Mbeki's international ambitions – reform of the institutions of global governance – and the basis from whence he directs his crusade, but also that reformism has limits. The question of whether the international balance of forces – global power relations and the interplay of national interests – will allow him and his government to succeed is pertinent and very real (Nel, Taylor and Van der Westhuizen, 2001).

4.5 Conclusion

How can one characterise foreign policy making in South Africa today? The analysis suggests that the 'black box' of foreign policy making is not always as closed and opaque as the literature tends to portray; also, the machinery of policy-making has been modified or upgraded significantly since President Mbeki took over from President Mandela. One must signal a cautious note, however, about the assumption that bigger (or more sophisticated) is better (or more efficient and effective): the notion of 'integrated governance' does not necessarily leave much room for voices outside government to be heard when it comes to policy making. The closed nature of the process whereby NEPAD's precursor, the Millennium Africa Recovery Plan (MAP) was developed (draft documents were kept secret for a long time) is an illustration of this.

Political transitions from authoritarianism to democracy in the post-Cold War era are not simply about introducing far-reaching structural change in the domestic order. They are also profoundly shaped by and respond to international factors and forces in the global environment. Thus '…all twentieth-century democratic transitions are also inescapably international phenomena… As global consensus on the desirability of liberal democracy has grown, the role of this pressure from without has only become an all the more critical force in any transition dynamic' (Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 2001).

As this chapter has demonstrated, South Africa's own domestic transformation had to confront a range of difficult challenges and sometimes intractable problems in a globalising world, especially as far as its full integration into global affairs was concerned. The instruments, institutions and processes of foreign policy had to be radically altered to meet these challenges and problems. However, while foreign policy making and formulation during the Mandela era was driven by a heady mix of idealist principles, it soon became evident that implementing these would prove to be a difficult task, thereby bringing into stark relief the great limitations which a middle-level country such as South Africa faced in advancing an ambitious foreign policy agenda. A large

dose of pragmatism and moderation was therefore needed if it was to be effective in playing a role commensurate with its size.

It thus fell to President Mbeki to establish a new set of priorities and normative principles more in keeping with both South Africa's interests and capabilities on the global stage. This resulted in a subtle move away from 'universality' to a more carefully calibrated definition of how South Africa would focus its international energies. A broad and embracing framework of 'active multilateralism' now provides the conceptual underpinnings for a strategic focus on southern Africa, Africa and the global South while of course not ignoring important bilateral relationships and collaborative partnerships with particular countries in the South and North.

Equally important, under President Mbeki, the machinery of government and foreign policy has been overhauled to provide for greater coherence and better co-ordination among the multiple state actors. The Presidency as the primary locus of policy now sets goals and is the architect of an overarching vision and foreign policy philosophy. The extent to which this evolving apparatus were able to generate preferred policy outcomes, particularly in the African setting, is the focus of the remaining chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE NIGERIA, LESOTHO AND ZIMBABWE CASES

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5.1 Outline of the chapter

This chapter does not yet focus on decision making. It presents the cases that were selected to examine the South African foreign policy decision-making process. The cases relate to African issues to which the South African government responded: undemocratic rule and human rights abuse in Nigeria in 1995; a contested election outcome in Lesotho in 1998 that led to a coup-in-the-making; and the turmoil in Zimbabwe since 2000. Following the experiences regarding case research design by a group of scholars in the crisis management field (Stern and Sundelius, 2002), the description of the cases follows a time frame with the following units: background, the unfolding crisis, the aftermath, and international responses to the crisis. South African responses, across governmental and non-governmental dimensions, will be explored in chapter six.

5.2 Nigeria: prebendalism and praetorianism

The spirit of brotherliness prevails even where wrongs are recognised … taking measures against a brotherly state is not easy

Mugabe on Nigeria, 9 May 1996

Table 12 Chronology of events: Nigeria in crisis

Date	Event
1960	Independence
1966-79	Military control of the government
1967-70	Biafra civil war
1979-83	Civilian rule under Obasanjo
1983-93	Military control of the government
1993	June 12 Presidential elections annulled, Gen Sani Abacha takes control
1994	Presumed winner of 1993 elections, Chief Abiola, arrested, repression intensified
1995	Nine Ogoni activists (incl Saro Wiwa) executed on 10 November; Nigeria suspended from the Commonwealth; EU suspends development aid
1996	Nigeria on the diplomatic offensive
1997	Nigeria's Commonwealth suspension extended
1998	Abacha and Abiola die, Gen Abubakar takes over, transition to civil rule
1999	Obasanjo wins presidential elections; South Africa normalises relations

5.2.1 Background to the crisis

Nigeria's post-independence political trajectory can be described as the story of dictatorship, ethno regional polarisation and conflict, or as Diamond (1995: 418) calls it, a 'descent into praetorianism'. The 'prebendal' culture in Nigeria, a word coined by Richard Joseph, refers to the systematic abuse of state office and resources for individual and group gain, which is expected and rewarded in the interactions of clients and patrons, politicians and constituencies, even while it is condemned rhetorically in the aggregate and abstract (Diamond, 1995: 473). To this, Diamond adds 'uncivicness' – a lack of trust that leads a national political community to perpetuate and intensify defection, distrust, shirking, exploitation, isolation, disorder, and stagnation. 'Praetorianism' – as it applies

to Nigeria before 1999 – refers not only to the predominance of the military in politics, or the prominence of force as an instrument in the struggle for power, but rather, in the Huntingtonean sense, to the absence of effective political institutions capable of mediating, refining and moderating group political action (Diamond, 1995: 460).

Indeed, since independence in 1960, Nigeria has experienced crises in virtually every dimension of public life. Yet, it has survived as one sovereign nation and has overcome one of Africa's most devastating civil wars of secession (1967-1970). By the late 1990s, it has not succeeded in establishing a stable democratic political order – the seminal events of 1993 (an annulled presidential election and yet another military take-over) served to prove that democratic governance remained a challenge. The near-simultaneous deaths of the winner of the 1993 presidential election, Chief Moshood Abiola, and his oppressor, Gen Sani Abacha, in 1998 opened the possibility of restoring the process of democratisation, through an election held in February 1999. Yet, despite an apparent legitimate election process, which saw a former coup leader, Gen Olusegun Obasanjo, come to power, the longer-term outcome and future prospects remain uncertain. Why? Richard Joseph (1999) identified four tendencies that conspired to give rise to what he calls a 'multilayered hegemony' in Nigeria and that will take much effort to dismantle: the domination of the military over all civilian political actors and groups; the deepening of the primacy of the northern region in Nigerian politics; the increasingly predatory nature of economic life based on access to and control of state power; and the autocratic nature of military presidentialism. Although the latter tendency appears to have been put to bed, other, more troubling, features have come to the forefront: ethnic polarisation and religious intolerance, and a continuing economic crisis, partly fuelled by an inability to control corruption and revive the economy (Inegbedion and Swatuk, 1998; Momoh, 2001).

From the perspective of democratisation studies, Nigeria was the most important instance of a democratic transition ambushed by the military (Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997). Under the control of head of state General Ibrahim Babangida, the Nigerian military

forces undertook in 1986 the most protracted and tightly managed restoration of civilian rule in Africa (Chazan *et al*, 1999; Diamond, 1995). Initially scheduled for 1990, the handover was repeatedly deferred until mid-1993, raising widespread suspicions about the sincerity of military intentions. Babangida (who came to power via a coup in 1985) asserted close personal control over the course and timing of events and over the military apparatus itself. When it became apparent that Chief Abiola had won the 1993 presidential elections, Babangida's National Defence and Security Council declared the results invalid, citing widespread corruption and fraud. As Bratton and Van de Walle (1997: 212) argue, still maintaining the fiction that he intended to surrender power, Babangida installed an interim national government headed by a civilian. This government was never accepted by the pro-democracy movement that persisted with demonstrations and work stoppages aimed at installing Abiola as president (Falana, 1998). In November of 1993, Defence Minister General Sani Abacha effected a 'palace coup' that displaced Babangida and led to the abolition of the full array of elected institutions, replacing them with military administrators. This, in Diamond's assessment, brought Nigeria to new levels of depravity and ruthlessness, of deceit and contempt for constitutionalism (Diamond, 1995: 462). Any doubts about the Abacha government's intentions were dashed with the arrest (and indefinite imprisonment) of Abiola in 1994, and by the harsh repression unleashed on the political and civic campaigns for democracy. Abacha became very much a Babangida-style ruler in terms of mounting abuse and personalisation of power. Abacha manipulated the politicians and a so-called transition process, delaying the transfer of power until 1998, and launched a new purge in 1995 in response to an alleged coup.

5.2.2 The crisis unfolds

It is against this background that Ken Saro-Wiwa and his fellow Ogoni activists were executed in November 1995, prompting international calls for firm action against what Joseph has described as a rogue state that 'refuses to abide by prevailing international ethical and legal norms in the conduct of public affairs' (1999: 370). Saro-Wiwa was not

the only trigger; his death was yet another act of political repression by the Abacha regime, that included the arrest and detention of numerous journalists, trade unionists, human rights and pro-democracy activists, and former leaders such as Obasanjo; and the driving into exile of many prominent citizens including Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka.

The brief background to the Saro-Wiwa case is the mobilisation of the Ogoni people in the south eastern riverine area since 1989 to protest the environmental degradation caused by petroleum production and to demand a greater share by local communities in the wealth generated by this production (Mitee, 1998). This initially localised conflict exploded into a vigorous challenge to the very structure of the Nigerian federation. Although the Ogoni numbered only half a million in a country of more than 100 million citizens, the full force of the military government was brought against Ogoni dissidents in a brutal campaign of repression. In May 1994, during angry mob protests, four Ogoni people died. This, according to the Nigerian authorities, was caused by Saro-Wiwa's Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). Saro Wiwa and eight colleagues were subsequently detained, heard and sentenced to death by a closed military tribunal. On November 10, 1995 the nine MOSOP members were hanged.

5.2.3 International responses

As Schoeman (1998: 20) argues, the response of the United Nations to the Abacha regime's excesses appears, in hindsight, to have been rather lukewarm. In April 1996 the UN Commission of Human Rights adopted a resolution requesting a report on the independence of judges and lawyers and the incidence of extra-judicial, arbitrary executions in Nigeria. The final report had to be delivered to the Commission and an interim report to the UN General Assembly. No agreement could be reached with the Nigerian authority on the terms of reference of the rapporteurs and the mission did not take place. A report was nevertheless compiled from information submitted by various organisations. The UN also sent a fact-finding mission to Nigeria in March 1996 at the specific request of the Nigerian government. In a resolution adopted in November 1997,

the General Assembly's third committee on humanitarian affairs strongly condemned Nigeria's human rights record. In July 1998, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited Nigeria to argue for the release of Abiola (he died in jail). The Security Council has neither passed any mandatory resolutions, nor considered mandatory action against Nigeria. In fact, opposite processes were under way: given Nigeria's oil wealth, the US and UK acted to protect its interests in West Africa, whilst France, Malaysia and China explored new (commercial) relations with Nigeria. Furthermore, the UN Security Council praised the 1998 Nigerian-led regional intervention in Sierra Leone, as did the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth reaction to the Nigerian crisis can be described as the most persistent and focused of all international multilateral responses, partly because Saro-Wiwa's execution took place during the Commonwealth's November 1995 Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in New Zealand. This summit had on its agenda the question of the implementation of the so-called 1991 Harare Declaration that sets out the Commonwealth's commitment to democracy, the rule of law and good governance. The association decided to suspend Nigeria and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) met and made recommendations that were followed by members imposing sanctions on the Nigerian regime after April 1996. They decided not to push for an oil embargo against Nigeria and at the 1997 CHOGM in Scotland, Nigeria's suspension (not expulsion, as Mandela had called for) was extended – based on a CMAG report that concluded that Nigeria was making some progress in the transition to democracy.

The EU has imposed various forms of sanctions against the Nigerian regime, even before November 1995 (Schoeman, 1998). These were strengthened towards the end of that year and early 1996. In November 1996 the European parliament adopted a resolution supporting an international oil embargo against Nigeria, followed by a similar call from the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) – EU Joint Assembly. As Schoeman (1998: 23) argues, because sovereignty is partly pooled within the EU through the powers delegated to the EU Commission and the European parliament, the organisation can impose and implement certain sanctions, such as suspending development aid, without having to rely

on individual members for the actual implementation of sanctions. However, oil sanctions had to be implemented by individual country members and they were extremely reluctant to use this instrument.

Neither the OAU nor SADC took a firm position on Nigeria. There are various reasons for this. The OAU suffered from a long-standing problem of clearly defining the exact meaning of African unity, especially regarding the rest of the world. It also suffered from a lack of capacity and commitment to follow through on its lofty ideals. In terms of realpolitik, Nigeria has been a leading African nation in the affairs of the OAU and wields large influence in West Africa. The human rights organ of the OAU, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, did send a fact-finding mission to Nigeria in March 1997, but its agenda was organised by Nigeria and therefore did not meet with local human rights and pro-democracy groups. Nor did the mission deliver a final report. Within SADC the Nigerian case succeeded in driving a wedge between some of its members, particularly South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The UK and France have used the sanctions instrument against Nigeria in a very selective fashion, avoiding an oil or commercial investment embargo, primarily to protect their own (domestic) interests. The Nigerian regime shrewdly exploited this state of affairs, and before long the Nigerian soccer team was seen participating in the World Cup in France (despite the EU ban on sporting links with Nigeria), and Nigeria participated in the 1996 Francophone summit in Burkina Faso. It also moved the European office of the state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation from London to Paris, in effect, as Schoeman (1998: 24) notes, 'rewarding France for its softer stance'.

The US followed a similar line. Although the Nigerian case remained high on the US foreign policy agenda for a long time, the US government never really took any tough action. President Clinton pointed out in November 1995 that, with oil sanctions already in place against Iraq and Libya, oil sanctions against Nigeria would disrupt markets and put up prices in the US. Finally, oil companies themselves did very little in response to

calls for pressure on the Nigerian regime. There was a short-lived boycott in Europe of Shell petrol stations, but public support to sustain the effort was insufficient. Oil companies also wasted little time in continuing with oil exploration efforts in Nigeria.

5.2.4 The aftermath

When the Abacha regime summarily executed Saro-Wiwa in November 1995, various environmental NGOs and Amnesty International joined Nigerian human rights movements in lobbying Western and African governments to adopt punitive measures against Nigeria. Although governments were reluctant to adopt sanctions, the Abacha administration '…reaped an unexpected windfall of hatred, worldwide condemnation, and ostracism' (Adibe, 2001: 32). Nigeria's pariah status, which lasted until Abacha's unexpected death in June 1998, enhanced the image and standing of human rights groups in Nigeria, and appear to have made the cost of dictatorships much higher – a lesson Abacha's military successors took to heart.

5.3 South Africa's intervention in Lesotho, 1998

Table 13 Chronology of events: Lesotho in crisis

Date	Event
1966	Independence
1970	Unconstitutional seizure of power by BNP
1982	SADF invasion of Lesotho to attack ANC
1986	Military coup by General Lekhanya
1991	Military coup by General Ramaema
1993	Multiparty general elections, BCP emerges as ruling pary
1994	Constitutional coup by Letsie III, the military and BNP
1997	Prime Minister Mokhehle forms breakaway party (LCD), which forms a parliamentary majority and becomes ruling party
May 1998	LCD wins general election and Mosisile becomes prime minister
July	Opposition complains of widespread and systematic election rigging. SADC briefed on the situation
August	Mbeki, Nzo and Modise secure agreement from LCD and opposition to hand over the election dispute to the adjudication of SADC and Lesotho's IEC. Power struggle and mutiny in Lesotho Defence Force (LDF)
28 August	*Interim* Langa Commission report handed over the LDC and opposition parties
12 September	Modise attempts to talk to mutineers, but with no success
13-14 September	SADC Summit in Mauritius. No decision on Lesotho
15 September	Ministers of Defence of South Africa and Botswana, meeting in Gaborone, agree to plan military intervention under SADC auspices.
16 September	Military planning starts
17 September	South Africa hands over much-delayed Langa Commission report to LDC and opposition
16-18 September	Dissident LDF officers assume effective control of the country after having forced 28 senior officers and head of army to resign
19-20 September	Ongoing talks between ruling LCD and opposition break down over 'unacceptable' venue Prime Minister Mosisile asks Acting South African President Buthelezi for assistance and military support with mutiny
21 September	South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Mozambique representatives meet and confirm the SADC mandate that action, including military intervention, will be taken in the event of a military coup in Lesotho
21-22 September	SADC Operation Boleas
2 October	Multi-party talks between belligerent parties in Lesotho resume under the chair of South African Safety and Security Minister, Sydney Mufamadi.

5.3.1 Background to the crisis in Lesotho

> *…the army mutiny of 11 September had created a situation of lawlessness and disorder. The government was paralysed…the mutineers had all but seized power. Negotiations had stalled…*
>
> South African cabinet statement, 23 September 1998

Lesotho is a tiny, mountainous country completely surrounded by South Africa. Only 13% of the country's 30 335 square kilometres is suitable for agriculture. The economy remains essentially remittance and subsistence: over 70% of rural household income is made up of remittances from migrant workers and only 3% are able to sustain themselves on agriculture, thus underpinning the country's dependence on South Africa (Ajulu, 1995). The existence of Lesotho is predicated upon an historical resistance by the Basotho to direct rule by their neighbours, combined with shrewd diplomatic exploitation of differences between outsiders (Southall, 1998; see also Rule, 2000). Conquest by the Boer Republic of the Orange Free State was avoided when Moshoeshoe I secured protection for Basutoland under the British Crown in 1868 (Southall, 1998). Following independence in 1966, successive governments of Lesotho continued to protect their fragile sovereignty by playing external opponents off against each other. It defied the African position on South Africa to seek benefits from a cordial relationship with apartheid South Africa. It was also able to attract aid and support from the international community by posing as a small and weak, but willing opponent of apartheid. Yet, as Southall notes (1998: 23), it was precisely the fragility of Lesotho's separateness from South Africa, combined with impoverishment, that exacerbated internal divisions and produced an internal politics of a peculiar and violent intensity (see Ajulu, 1995 for a detailed overview of the 'intractable crisis' of the state and ruling class from 1970 onwards, including a military coup in 1986). South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994 presented the Basotho with a paradox: whilst they welcomed the demise of apartheid, this came at a cost – the loss of international sympathy and support based on claims for special treatment given its opposition to (and victimisation by) apartheid. A significant international exodus from Maseru marked the immediate post-apartheid era.

This was the context in which Lesotho's political parties competed in their own democratising election in 1993.

5.3.2 The crisis unfolds

The military government was heavily influenced by rapid developments in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Being little more than an extension of Pretoria's authority, it could do little to counter the waves of transformation: the end of the cold war, Western imposition of aid conditionalities favouring democracy and market reforms, and South Africa's own transition from apartheid. The 1993 election thus became Lesotho's 'own second liberation', forced upon the military by powerful external forces and emergent civil society groupings from within. This first free general election to be held in Lesotho since independence produced an astounding 65-0 parliamentary seat victory for the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) and a transfer of power to a civilian authority. As Southall (1995: 18) comments, the scale of its defeat was such as to plunge the Basotho National Party (BNP), which had ruled the country from 1965 until its displacement by the army in 1986, into an immediate crisis. The result registered a massive popular protest against nearly three decades of authoritarian rule. However, the outcome left the BNP and army smarting, and opponents who had little respect for the requirements of democratic governance set the stage for a dramatic contest for power. The first political disturbance took the form of clashes between the newly elected government, the security sector (military and police), and the royal family. The new constitution of Lesotho vested control of the defence force with a defence commission (Rule, 2000: 267). Although chaired *ex officio* by the Prime Minister, the Commission was dominated by senior government security personnel, effectively denying control to the civilian government. This 'structural deficiency' was conducive to exploitation by opposition parties, especially the BNP. The military flexed its muscles and weak responses from the government precipitated the seizing of power by King Letsie III in August 1994 (see Matlosa, 1995 and Petlane, 1995 on the role of the military). Letsie dismissed the BCP and installed an interim government.

Subsequent forceful political intervention (accompanied by military sable-rattling) by South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe persuaded the king to pronounce its re-instatement. He later resigned in favour of his father, Moshoeshoe II, who died in a car accident in 1997. In the meantime, dissension between two rival factions within the ruling BCP became acute. In August 1997, BCP leader Mokhehle took the unprecedented step of resigning from the BCP and forming a new party, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). More than half of his fellow BCP members of parliament joined the new party, which effectively became the government. Consequently, as Southall (1998: 25) commented, 'At one stroke, the BCP was transformed from government to opposition'.

Against this background, the country went to the polls in May 1998. The question was whether a three-way split in the vote between the three major parties – the ruling LCD, the parliamentary BCP and the out-of-parliament BNP – would provide for multi-party representation? In the event, the unexpected happened: the LCD won 60 per cent of the vote and 79 out of the now 80 parliamentary seats.

5.3.3 The crisis

Aggrieved extra-parliamentary opposition parties, the military and the monarchy challenged the authority of the elected parliament and undermined its capacity to govern effectively after the 1998 election (Rule, 2000; Southall, 1998). The defeated opposition called the election a fraud and together they launched a campaign of popular mobilisation. As the weeks went by, their supporters issued calls for a rejection of the election results and the formation of a coalition government of national unity to lead the country to yet another election. Confronted by a developing crisis, Prime Minister Mosisili 'dithered ineffectively' and 'things became worse' (Southall, 1998: 25). The BNP used its connections with the military to gather arms for its youth league, which soon roamed the country in armed bands. Civil servants were prevented from going to work, and general lawlessness set in.

Faced with Lesotho's descent into disorder, SADC persuaded the LCD to accept an independent review of the election. This was not the organisation's first attempt at conflict resolution in the mountain Kingdom – it acted in 1994 to restore order following yet another coup. A SADC Memorandum of Understanding was subsequently signed whereby South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe (known as the SADC troika of guarantors) were tasked to act as 'guarantors of democracy, peace and stability in Lesotho' (Mathoma, 1999). The 1998 Commission, under the chair of Judge Pius Langa from South Africa, started its work in August and offered its findings on 9 September. These were not made public until 17 September – a delay the South African government justified by the need to refer the Report to SADC leaders who were meeting at the same time in Summit in Mauritius. The Commission found some evidence of tampering with ballot boxes, and some logistical errors, but judged that these were not so great as to allow them to declare the results of the election invalid. It urged Lesotho to examine the possibility of introducing an alternative electoral system – a fundamental flaw in the democratic process in Lesotho had been the nature of the majoritarian winner-takes-all electoral system. Nevertheless, the delay in releasing the Report only encouraged speculation that the Commission's conclusion had been 'doctored' to favour the LCD. On 11 September army chief Lt-Genl Motakeng and a group of high-ranking officers were arrested and displaced by junior officers.

Unable to break the physical hold that the opposition alliance had now established over the country, the LCD government called upon the SADC for military assistance, arguing that 'we have a coup on our hands' (Matlosa, 1998: 12). Mathoma points out that in fact Prime Minister Mosisili wrote to the SADC troika of guarantors, including Mozambique in its capacity as deputy chair of SADC, requesting an intervention 'of a military nature' (Mathoma, 1999: 74-5). South Africa and Botswana heeded the call and sent their troops to Lesotho on 22 and 23 September 1998 respectively (Zimbabwe declined participation, citing its involvement in the DRC as reason). What the South African and Botswanan troops found was a general descent into chaos. Armed gangs went about confiscating vehicles, looting shops and burning businesses and private homes. Foreign and especially South African businesses came under attack. Major towns were turned into

no-go areas. As Matlosa (1998: 12) notes, 'Lesotho gravitated toward the brink of civil war for the entire week beginning 22 September'.

5.3.4 The aftermath

The military intervention, which resembled a peace enforcement operation, was meant to neutralise the Lesotho army and force political parties to reach a negotiated settlement. Despite having achieved these objectives, the operation came at a price. South African troops wreaked havoc around Katse Dam in the Thaba-Teska district and then in Maseru (Matlosa, 1998: 12). According to a briefing to the South African Parliament by the SANDF on 2 November 1998 twelve South African soldiers were killed and fourty wounded and about 113 Lesotho civilian and military personnel (29 members of the Lesotho Defence Force) were killed. The impact of the crisis on Lesotho's social fabric and economy has been enormous. 246 businesses were burnt down, costing the country close to R3 billion, and about 3000 workers were laid off.

Politically, the intervention forced the belligerent parties to the negotiation table once again by assuring the governing party of a future in a post-negotiation phase, whilst containing the armed offensive of the opposition elements. South African Minister of Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi, mediated the negotiation process. The key pillars of the settlement included the holding of fresh elections in 15 to 18 months (invariably delayed to 2002), and the establishment of an Interim Political Authority (IPA) (Matlosa, 1998).

5.4 Zimbabwe in turmoil, 2000-2002

Zimbabwe is in a state of free fall. It is embroiled in the worst political and economic crisis of its 20-year history as an independent state.

International Crisis Group, July 2001

Table 14 Chronology of events: Zimbabwe in crisis

Date	Event
1980	Zimbabwean independence
1990/1	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) adopted
April 1007 May 1997	War veterans campaign for compensation, Mugabe pays Z$2.5 billion of unbudgeted money to veterans Emergence of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA)
Sept 1998	Zimbabwean military intervenes in the DRC Donor support conference
Feb 1999 Sept 1999	Constitutional Commission Social Report released IMF and WB suspend loans, EU puts its aid programme 'under review' Formation of the MDC
Feb 2000 March 2000 June 2000 Nov 2000	Referendum on a new constitution, 55.9% of the electorate votes no Violence erupts, farm occupations start Parliamentary elections, Zanu-PF won 62 seats and MDC 57 Government speeds up its fast-track land resettlement programme
2001 Aug 2001 Dec 2001	Widespread government-sponsored violence (the 'third Chimurenga') Crippling drought; cereal production falls by 70%, leading to food shortages; brain drain (emigration of the professional class) accelerates SADC Summit appoints task team to assist with restoring law and order SADC ministerial team visits Harare to foster dialogue between the various parties
January 2002 2002 March 2002	SADC Summit in Malawi, Mugabe pledges to ensure free and fair election Widespread pre- and post-election violence and intimidation Mugabe wins presidential election by 400 000 votes over MDC's Tsvangirai; election observers teams differ sharply over the election's 'free and fairness' Commonwealth suspension

5.4.1 Background to the crisis in Zimbabwe

Many would agree that what is termed the 'Zimbabwean crisis' is a complex situation, with its origins in a number of structural factors flowing from the country's historical

experiences (Kagoro, 2003; Peters-Berries, 2002). These include colonialism and domination that produced the grossly uneven distribution of land and economic resources; a stalled transition to democracy (of both the state and liberation movements), creating space for the politics of patronage and authoritarianism by a corrupt elite; the failure of redistributive economic policies, and subsequent attempts at reform and structural adjustment; and a culture of intolerance and impunity, inherited from the country's colonial past, the armed struggle and perpetuated by current leadership (some identify the crisis with kleptocratic misrule – see Bond and Manyanya, 2002; Ajulo, 2003).

5.4.2 The crisis unfolds

Despite the post-independence government's initial advances in the area of social services such as health and education, it faced an enormous inherited debt, structural economic problems and various exogenous factors which led it to adopt IMF- and World Bank-approved policies soon after independence. The economy continued to stagnate in the 1980s, leading to the adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in 1991. ESAP proved to be unpopular and came at considerable political costs and social unrest: bread riots in Harare in 1995, followed by other strikes in 1996 and 1997.

Three events triggered the economic and political crisis (or *plunge*, in Bond and Manyanya's language). First, in November 1997, in response to a very vocal liberation war veterans campaign, Mugabe granted more than 50 000 of them Z$50 000 each plus a Z$2000 per month pension. The Zimbabwe dollar dropped an immediate 20 per cent against the US dollar and the World Bank suspended balance of payments support. Mugabe secondly announced that government would begin implementing the Land Designation Act, and 1500 mainly white-owned farms were identified for redistribution. And in September 1998, without consulting key stakeholders, such as parliament or his party, Mugabe decided to send thousands of Zimbabwean army troops into the DRC, in

defence of his ally Laurent Kabila. It later transpired that approximately US$1 million a day was going to the war effort (Bond and Manyanya, 2002: 72).

Against this background, two significant political developments unfolded: the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 as an attempt by opposition forces to challenge Mugabe's hold on power, and second, Zanu-PF's loss of the 2000 referendum on constitutional change (Peters-Berries, 2002: 186; Makumbe, 2003: 27-8).

The embattled Mugabe employed various tactics in an effort to regain legitimacy and control. These included a chaotic land redistribution programme and an increasingly authoritarian style of governance, resulting in a crackdown on civil liberties. The land issue, seen by many as central to any explanation of the Zimbabwean crisis, entails many factors: durable colonial/neocolonial relations and deep-rooted racism, a compromise deal struck by the liberation movements with the outgoing Rhodesian regime in 1979, subsequently a failed market-oriented land reform programme, widespread ruling-party corruption in the land acquisition process, bureaucratic bungling, rising costs of agricultural inputs, devastating cycles of speculative credit and land prices, and growing inequality associated with the structural adjustment programme (Bond and Manyanya, 2002: 77, Moyo, 1995). Further complicating the land issue were the gender and generational dimensions and environmental pressures. As Sam Moyo argued, these kinds of problems cannot be resolved by mere judicious state intervention. International intervention in the form of a September 2001 deal worked out in Abuja to provide British and other donor funds for land purchase and resettlement was '…derailed from the start, as it was apparent only a sop to help Mugabe survive a forthcoming Commonwealth Heads of State and Government meeting' (Bond and Manyanya, 2002: 79).

The run-up to the June 2000 parliamentary elections saw a violent campaign against farmers, their workers and supporters of the opposition. With war veterans leading the charge, more than 30 people were killed, scores tortured and raped, and hundreds of farms occupied and looted (Peters-Berries, 2002: 187; ICG, 2001). The message this conveyed to the world was clear: the Zimbabwe government and Mugabe were fighting

to stay in power with little or no regard for the human, social, political or economic cost. Zanu-PF narrowly won the parliamentary elections: more than 50 per cent of the electorate voted against Zanu-PF, but they took 62 parliamentary seats to the MDC's 57 (ICG, 2000: 4). Under the Zimbabwe Constitution, Mugabe appoints an additional twenty members of parliament, together with another ten proposed by the Council of Chiefs. Thus in 2000, in the parliament Zanu-PF had a majority of 92 seats to the MDC's 57.

The subsequent course of events leading up to the presidential election was essentially more of the same. The MDC, apparently unable to take the political initiative, were divided on how to respond to the violent campaign waged against their predominant urban supporters by war veterans, a newly created militant Youth Brigade and even the security forces. The verocity of the intimidation campaign was enough to ensure Mugabe a safe victory in the March 2002 election.

5.4.3 The continuing crisis

In 2002, the cut-off time for the study, the crisis in Zimbabwe was without end. If anything, various developments indicated a deepening of the crisis. First of all, there is not an agreed regional, continental or international assessment of the situation, never mind a common approach to resolving the crisis. Reaction to the outcome of the 2002 presidential election was divided. Zimbabwean civil society organisations were unanimous that the process was neither free nor fair. Regional opinions were mixed: whereas the SADC Parliamentary Forum declared the results to be neither free nor fair, the SADC Council of Ministers, the OAU and individual African governments declared the election to be free and fair (or, in the case of South Africa, 'legitimate'). Beyond Africa, the condemnation was nearly universal. The Commonwealth and most country observer missions said the election was not free or fair. The Commonwealth subsequently suspended Zimbabwe for one year as a result (ICG, 2002). The response by African state leaders indicates a fear of instability that could have unfolded if Zanu-PF had lost, as well as concern about the rising potency of labour-based political movements.

SADC held a series of meetings in 2002 that aimed to encourage Mugabe to restore the rule of law and to press the MDC to compromise. However, very little action resulted from that initiative. The international response to Zimbabwe's deepening crisis has been divided and largely ineffectual. Divisions have widened, not just between Africa and the West, but increasingly within the West. Both the Commonwealth and EU – potentially key mediators in the crisis – were unable to develop united positions on Zimbabwe.

Other factors indicate Zimbabwe's continued and even intensifying economic and political crisis, to the point that state collapse is an increasing prospect. The forces responsible include economic mismanagement (an inflation rate upwards of 400 per cent), a human-made food crisis, accelerating death rates from an HIV/Aids pandemic, and a continuing culture of impunity that has further encouraged abuses. A major wild card is a reported breakdown in patronage networks, particularly in the informal security sector where war veterans, youth militias and members of the army and police compete for control of food distribution networks (ICG: 2003: 1).

CHAPTER SIX

DECISION MAKING

CHAPTER SIX

DECISION MAKING

Outside the Office, the poor world dreams we have a book bound in gold with policy written on the cover…God, if only they knew

John lé Carre, 1968

6.1 Introduction

By applying the three models developed by Allison and Zelikow – rational actor, organisational behaviour, and governmental politics – what can we learn about the South African government's foreign policy decision making as it relates to African crises? What do these models offer that can deepen our understanding of decision making? In chapter three (methodology) we have identified three such crises: Nigeria, Lesotho and Zimbabwe; chapter four contextualised and explored these crises. The focus of each model can be summarised as follows: model I (rational actor) fixes the broader context, the larger national patterns, and the shared images. Model II (organisational behaviour) illuminates the organisational routines that produce information, options, and action. Model III (governmental politics) focuses in greater detail on the individuals who constitute a government and the politics and procedures by which their competing perceptions and preferences are combined.

In the sections that follow, we will examine the South African government's responses to the crises from these three perspectives on the basis of information collected through interviews and the study of relevant documentation. For clarification, the text throughout refers to Pahad as the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

6.2 Nigeria

It will be recalled that the crisis in Nigeria relates to undemocratic rule and human rights abuse in Nigeria in the 1990s. It is against a background that Ken Saro-Wiwa and his fellow Ogoni activists were executed in November 1995, prompting international calls for firm action. Saro-Wiwa's death was followed by unprecedented political repression by the Abacha regime that included the arrest and detention of numerous journalists, trade unionists, human rights and pro-democracy activists, and former leaders such as General Obasanjo, and the driving into exile of many prominent citizens including Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka. In order to understand the South African government's reading of the situation and responses to the crisis, we first turn to an overview of the situation as it unfolded, focusing on the time during which the crisis peaked. We will then turn to an analysis of the South African government's behaviour.

6.2.1 Twelve days in November – the heart of the crisis

Twelve days in early November 1995 – the eighth to the twentieth, to be precise – can be regarded as the days of high drama in the Nigerian crisis. It also shaped South Africa's response, although the policy *denouement* only came much later – June 4, 1996. But to understand South Africa's approach and subsequent dramatic policy reappraisal, it is necessary to track the developments as they happened.

Significantly, the South African government's analysis of the situation in Nigeria in early 1994 turned out to be correct. It read the situation as increasingly unstable, and therefore made a number of quiet yet direct interventions. These included telephone calls by President Mandela to the Nigerian ruler, Gen Abacha, the appointment of Archbishop Tutu as Mandela's special envoy to intercede with the Nigerian government and other parties and the decision to send Deputy President Mbeki as well as Pahad to Nigeria to convey the position of the South African government (ANC, 11.11. 1995). Mandela also

held a number of meetings with various delegations from Nigeria, including the wife of Abiola. On the question of the position of Ken Saro Wiwa, the South African government urged Nigeria to commute the sentences of the nine activists (DFA briefing, 12.09.1997).

On Wednesday 8 November 1995, a few days prior to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, exiled Nigerian poet and human rights activist, Wole Soyinka, and the son of Ken Saro Wiwa addressed a press conference in Auckland. They responded to a recent statement by South African Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo who said quiet diplomacy would remain policy on Nigeria for the time being. Soyinka and Wiwa believed it legitimised the military regime of Abacha and called on South Africa and the Commonwealth to isolate the Nigerian military regime.

As the Commonwealth started its meeting two days later, on Friday the 10th, the Ogoni nine were executed. According to the South African Foreign Ministry, the executions were timed to coincide with the Commonwealth meeting, and this led to 'the major problem in relations (between South Africa and Nigeria)' (DFA, 1997). This action by the Nigerian regime predictably had a dramatic impact on the proceedings of the Commonwealth meeting. The association was still hoping to persuade countries such as Nigeria to abide by the principles of the 1991 Harare Declaration, which called for democracy and good governance. Clearly, Abacha decided to snub the Commonwealth. By executing Saro Wiwa, the association had to reconsider its options. Mandela didn't wait. On Saturday the 11th he called for Nigeria's expulsion. However, on Sunday the 12th, the meeting decided to suspend Nigeria from the Commonwealth for two years, 'pending the return to compliance with the principles of the Harare Commonwealth Declaration' (Sapa, 12.11.1995). By Monday the 13th, a committee of eight members were appointed to pursue the issue (later named the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, or CMAG), and on Tuesday the 14th, South African civil society interests decided to come together in Johannesburg to form a high-level pressure group (the South Africa-Nigeria Democracy Support Group). Remarkably, on the same day Pahad told a media briefing South Africa will *not* take economic steps against Nigeria (Sapa, 14.11.1995).

The official South African policy position, as spelled out the very next day, on Wednesday the 15th by the-then cabinet secretary, Prof Gerwel, was that it condemned the execution of Saro-Wiwa and eight others, and critically, that it was 'committed to supporting all effective and efficient means to help restore democracy in Nigeria, including the imposition of appropriate sanctions' (Sapa, 15.11.1995). Gerwel added that South Africa would seek to initiate measures to increase pressure on the Nigerian regime within international forums, including the Commonwealth, SADC, the OAU, the NAM and the UN.

On the same day – still in Auckland – Mandela gave a press briefing to clarify his position. He first defended his government's initial attempts to influence Abacha with dialogue, saying 'In my view it was absolutely correct, especially for us in the ANC. We don't forget the role Nigeria played in our struggle. It was difficult for me just to start with drastic actions. But once they took this action (the executions), it was a slap in the face for the Commonwealth. Everything has been done to get this fellow (Abacha) to respond to quiet diplomacy'. He said South Africa's earlier policy of quiet diplomacy to push Nigeria towards democracy had clearly not been successful. The executions have clearly angered him: 'I was almost out of control…it may have been because I felt slighted' (Sapa, 14.11.1995). Mandela said Abacha's plan to restore democratic civilian rule in Nigeria over three years was not acceptable to South Africa. He added 'We can see we are dealing with a very irresponsible fellow. To a hardened man like Abacha…he will not be moved unless some sanctions which can hurt Nigeria's economy are applied' (Sapa, 14.11.1995).

Mandela's new approach included a call for Nigeria to be expelled from the Commonwealth (it got suspended instead). He also announced South Africa would appeal to Britain and the United States to apply oil sanctions against Nigeria to push it towards restoring democracy, and followed this up on the same day – Wednesday the 15th – by attempting to phone the Prime Minister of the UK and president of the USA (Mandela later explained Clinton was tied up in budget matters and 'unavailable' and

Major gave no undertakings, 'saying he will go into the matter and come back to me' (Sapa, 16.11.1995). Two days later, on Friday the 17th, Archbishop Tutu repeated the call for sanctions against Abacha at a demonstration outside the Nigerian consulate in Johannesburg. On Monday the 20th, the ANC announced that Mandela had urged Shell's South African managers to persuade the company to put pressure on Nigeria's military rulers (however, its response was 'deeply disappointing', according to the ANC). ANC secretary-general Ramaphosa, had visited Major in the same week and reported that the latter had not ruled out an oil embargo, but said that Britain wanted to look at other options and wanted to act in consent with other countries.

In December 1995, the Commonwealth committee of eight met in London for its first meeting, and came to the conclusion that its strategy would be one of high-level dialogue with the Nigerian government, failing which, other, more severe steps, might be considered. By February the next year, it became clear the committee was not going to make much headway. Nigerian Foreign Minister Ikimi announced that his government rejected the 'infamous decision' by the Commonwealth to suspend his country, and added 'when we see a committee we can trust, perhaps we will see them' (Sapa, 20.02.1996).

The Abacha regime's response to South Africa's new approach was varied but robust. It firstly accused it of interference in its internal affairs:

> …for a country to seek to impose its own legal system on another smacks of undue interference and until the death sentence is removed from Nigeria's statute book, the confirmation passed by the tribunal is in order and well deserved (Sapa, 18.11.1995).

In February of the next year, it further accused the South African government of support for Nigerian pro-democracy groups in order to destabilise the country – an allegation

strenuously denied by Foreign Minister Nzo and the South African High Commissioner to Nigeria, George Nene (Sapa, 14.02.1996). However, these denials hid a growing tension between government and civil society regarding the 'correct' approach to the Nigerian crisis. The SANDSG was quite activist in its approach, and increased its networking activities with Nigerian exiled movements and individuals. Making matters difficult was the fact that many senior members of the ANC Alliance (including the SACP and Cosatu) lent their individual moral support to the Group. At some point the government saw it necessary to call the organisers of the SANDSG in for a scrubbing. No doubt well informed of these developments, the Abacha regime attacked the person of Mandela, infamously calling him the black president of a white country. In February 1996, it launched a further diplomatic offensive, sending its Foreign Minister, Ikimi, on an African tour to counter the Commonwealth and South African strategy and drum up support for its own position. He met with success in Namibia, where President Nujoma declared Nigeria to be 'a friendly country', and moved on to Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Zaire. Emboldened by Nujoma's 'understanding', Ikimi stated that 'If administrations such as South Africa's become more aware of the real facts of the Saro-Wiwa saga, they will modify their views against Nigeria' (Sapa, 14.02.1996). Ikimi found even more understanding in the form of the Zimbabwean president. After Nigeria's refusal to meet with the Commonwealth committee in April, it recommended tougher measures on Nigeria designed to speed up the country's return to democracy. However, soon after, Mugabe clarified his government's position. He ruled out the possibility of Nigeria's suspension from the Organisation of African Unity at its forthcoming summit in Cameroon. In Mugabe's view,

> The spirit of brotherliness prevails even where wrongs are recognised and taking measures against a brotherly state is not easy. African states have a problem that we are not strong enough to criticise ourselves, so Nigeria will not be punished by the OAU unless some sanctions become UN-imposed (Sapa, 09.05.1996).

In the meantime Mandela persisted with his new strategy. In December 1995 he had talks with US Deputy President Al Gore, Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Anyaoka, OAU Secretary Salim, and even a meeting with Abacha. Whether any of these strategies advanced the South African government's policy objectives remained unclear. Salim told Mandela he was 'confident' that he would be able to move the Abacha regime towards normalisation. Worse, the only concession Mandela could extract from Abacha regarding the demand that Abiola and Obasanjo be released, was a 'might be' (Sapa, 11.12.1995). On the 11th, he briefed an extraordinary session of SADC Heads of State on his activities, urging the organisation to adopt a strong stance against Nigeria. Surprisingly to some, SADC referred the issue to the Commonwealth's committee of eight for consideration. The SADC chair, Botswana President Masire, explained that 'we have refrained from taking any new initiatives as we are aware that the international community is considering steps against Nigeria. We all unanimously agreed that we should go along with it' (Sapa, 11.12.1995). Mandela, rather subdued, concurred, saying 'It is not up to us as individuals to make policy statements on Nigeria' (Sapa, 11.12.1995).

In February 1996 the South African Foreign Ministry announced Nene's return to Lagos, having been recalled in late 1995 as a form of a strong diplomatic protest. In its announcement it expressed the government's concern with the continuous detention of Obasanjo and Abiola, and appealed for the release of all political prisoners. It also noted that the South African government 'will remain supportive of Nigerians' quest for a democratically elected government' and undertook to 'listen and consult with all parties representative of the Nigerian political spectrum' (Sapa, 14.02.1996). The absence of any references to sanctions of any kind was noticeable, except that the DFA expressed its 'regret' at the absence of the Nigerian football team from that year's African Cup tournament (leaving out the fact that its non-participation was self-imposed). This rather apologetic statement by the DFA indicated the changing approach of the South African government. The changes were mainly in the form of recognition that South Africa had little choice but to formulate its position on Nigeria in consultation with other key players in the crisis – the Commonwealth, the OAU, and others.

By mid 1996 the game of brinkmanship came to a head. Both South Africa and Nigeria were lobbying African states to take sides in the affair. Nigeria's tough diplomacy overwhelmed South Africa's inexperienced efforts at human rights promotion. Mandela and his foreign policy advisors backed down. The arena at which the drama played itself out was the OAU – with SADC as a dress rehearsal. It was not difficult to decipher the plot: South Africa had to choose brotherhood or become a principled outcast African nation. In June, Nzo explained the policy failure to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs. In his view, African countries accused South Africa of acting against African norms and standards, because it had been the only African country to demand penalties against Abacha's government, as it had been the only OAU country to withdraw its High Commissioner in Lagos. Without the backing of its African allies, South Africa ran the risk of the situation being regarded as a conflict between it and Nigeria. Pressure from OAU allies were mounting. Delegations from West Africa told Nzo that should South Africa persist in calling for economic sanctions it would destroy Nigeria, and 'South Africa will destroy all the West African nations'. Therefore, pressure from African countries '…necessitated a rethink on South Africa's policy towards Nigeria'. He said he had been 'forced to make a statement' in the OAU that South Africa was committed to African solidarity and that it would remain in the fold. After the briefing he told the media that it was important 'for us to go along with other countries', but that in principle South Africa had not retreated from its call for Nigeria to embark on a democratic transition (Sapa, 04.06.1996).

What remained for South Africa to do? Throughout 1997, the Commonwealth committee continued with its rather ineffectual meetings, as did the SANDSG. However, the political terrain had shifted. The South African government believed it had to normalise its relationship with Nigeria, which by July 1998 had experienced the death of both Abacha and Abiola. There was a new game in town, and it was called transition. In this South Africa had a great amount of experience, and saw the opportunity to regain face. It did not waste time to offer its services to Abacha's successor, Gen Abdulsalam

Abubakar, who promised an accelerated process of democratisation. Consequently, it encouraged the transition process and in July, Mbeki visited Nigeria. The South African government also actively encouraged and supported the local civil society sector to similarly 'normalise' relations. In 1999, Mbeki – now President of South Africa – announced the establishment of a South Africa-Nigeria Bi-National Commission (BNC) – a sure sign of normalised relations.

In late May 1999, Nigeria's transition to civilian rule culminated in a peaceful election that brought the People's Democratic Party and Gen Obasanjo to power. It was a successful process in that it largely removed the military from politics – but whether its new-found democracy would be sustainable, given Nigeria's multiple fault lines, was another question. Nevertheless, the relationship between the governments of South Africa and Nigeria entered a new dimension. It was to be the era of the African Renaissance, and who better to lead it, than these two great countries?

6.2.2 Analysis

What can we learn from the rational actor model (Model I)? Recall that this model prompts the analyst to ask 'what problem was the state solving, and what objectives were the state pursuing, in choosing policy x'? Model I questions are contained in Addendum One, Chapter Three (page 74). In a nutshell, the South African government's rather ambitious approach was to seek to stabilise Nigeria and return it to democracy, in order for the two countries to pursue Africa's interests as strategic partners. It sought to do that by applying, first, quiet diplomacy, and failing that, a more forceful stand by appealing to the continent and international community to act against Abacha. Such action could include sanctions and political isolation.

This reading of government's intent is based on public statements of senior government officials around the time of the crisis. Pahad stated before the execution of Saro Wiwa that South Africa's objectives were to prevent the execution of the alleged coup plotters,

to secure Abiola's release, and to ensure the democratisation process in Nigeria (Mail and Guardian, 10.11.1995). Following the execution in November, Pahad explained that

> We are very concerned about Nigeria. It is clear that if Nigeria moves into another period of instability, all of us will bear the dire consequences because of that country's role in Africa and its geographic situation (Sapa, 14.11.1995).

Nene, South Africa's representative in Nigeria similarly noted that Nigeria played a strategic role in West Africa and that it ought to act as a role model for its neighbours (Sapa, 14.02.1996). In early 1996, Nzo explained that

> …South Africa's policy has been to promote democracy … we have never intended to humiliate or destabilise that country. We are continuing with our efforts through various multilateral forums … to discuss a possible way forward in Nigeria (Nzo, 1996).

Two years later, as the Nigeria crisis slowly moved towards resolution, Nene emphasised that a democratic Nigeria would be a big asset to the on-going African Renaissance: 'Nigeria is a very powerful country and its absence in the affairs of the continent will rob Africa of a very powerful rebirth' (Sapa, 26.04.1998). The Office of the President issued a similar comment later in the year (Sapa, 08.07.1998) and in August 1999, during Mbeki's announcement of the setting up of a joint Nigerian-South African BNC, he noted that 'As the biggest economies on the continent, South Africa and Nigeria would have to address the huge problems the African continent was facing' (Sapa, 26.08.1999).

The new South African government, informed by its foreign policy principles which included the promotion of human rights and democracy and a particular focus on Africa, therefore viewed the unfolding Nigerian crisis as a serious problem worthy of its utmost attention. An unstable Nigeria was perceived as a threat to Africa's stability and position in the world. It believed that it, and particularly Mandela, had the stature and influence in Africa as well as globally to intervene in the crisis in order to defuse it and put Nigeria on

the road to democracy. It believed it had various options to pursue these objectives. It could use diplomatic influence – bilaterally as well as through intergovernmental institutions – to make a difference and failing that, call for more extreme measures to effect change. The thinking behind this was that the two most powerful countries in sub-Saharan Africa - South Africa and Nigeria – would be able to work together to promote Africa's interests, including stability and development. To play that role it had to ensure that Nigeria met the requirements of good governance: democracy and respect for human rights. In terms of Africa's interests, the 'no action' option by the South African government was believed to be worse than some action, even if it was unclear what outcomes it could expect from intervention. It believed it had the moral duty to step in and influence the situation. This seemingly rational approach informed the government's choices and decisions. But as the crisis unfolded, it became clear that the government's objectives were not going to be met. The Nigeria crisis was not mentioned by the President in his State of the Nation address in February 1996 – perhaps an indication of a problematic turn of events and government's preference to manage the affair quietly – issues to be explored under models II and III. Also recall Nzo's terse statement at a parliamentary briefing in early 1996: 'we have never intended to humiliate or destabilise that country.' This sounds like a serious admission of a policy failure. How can one explain these and subsequent decisions? Or, as Mills asked: why was it that President Mandela could not or did not translate his enormous advantages as international superstar into foreign policy successes? (Mills, 2000: 255).

In examining government's responses to the Nigerian crisis, it becomes clear that the pursuit of such rational objectives was undermined by a number of complications, including institutional weaknesses at home, difficulties with interpreting the domestic, continental and international political terrain, and the role of individuals. This will become apparent with our exploration of the two other models below.

Model II (organisational behaviour) asks: "from what organisational context, pressures, and procedures did this decision emerge?" Model II questions are contained in Addendum One (page 257). This model focuses our attention on the structures that allow

or constrain decision makers to pursue a certain course of action. In the Nigeria case, the government's objectives included the promotion of stability via democratisation in order to pursue a broader goal, that of a partnership in Africa's interest (as it later turned out, the implementing agents of the African Renaissance and its Nepad programme). But back home, the reality was that the government had just been inaugurated and Mandela was on one of his very first visits abroad (the 1995 Commonwealth meeting in New Zealand). As chapter four detailed, the civil service was caught in a turbulent period of transition and in particular, the DFA faced severe tensions between old guard and newcomers. Making matters worse was the state's lack of resources to produce analysis and information regarding international conditions, threats, and opportunities. Until 1994, the DFA's main purpose was to promote (or protect) the interests of the ruling minority. The same could be said for the intelligence services. The apartheid state and its bureaucrats had little interest in understanding the world from the perspective of a democratic South Africa. This reality also meant that the state had little experience of conducting relations with the outside world on an equal and respectable footing (Du Pisani, 1991; Swilling and Philips, 1989). Consequently, as the new government focused its energies to effect transformation in the security sector (Cilliers and Reichardt, 1995), it had little choice but to rely upon the ANC's own abilities and experiences in analysing and interpreting events such as crises in Africa. These structural weaknesses limited the government's ability to comprehend the full menu of options as well as implementation possibilities.

In light of this, one can conclude that a government eager to pursue ambitious foreign policy objectives (peacemaker, stabiliser, protector, developer) but constrained by organisational weaknesses at home, has little choice but to rely on charismatic leadership. If there is no credible or strong leadership then the government will inevitably have to scale down its foreign policy ambitions. But in cases where strong leaders dominate structures of government, what then matters, as Model III demonstrates, is an understanding of the views and values of the key decision makers, their relationships, and the channels they utilised to make decisions and take action. The dangers ought to be apparent. No single individual – not even a president – is able to easily manage the

international affairs of state on the basis of his or her own analysis, or rely exclusively on friends and colleagues to manage what has become a complex terrain of activity. A new government dominated by a liberation movement but facing analytically weak (or weakened) foreign policy and intelligence structures, will therefore suffer from a narrow definition of the situation, weak comprehension of all avenues of state action open to it, and the obvious dangers of weak or non-existent coordination by the supporting bureaucratic structures.

These dynamics are illustrated by the manner in which Mandela and his close colleagues as well as the DFA acted in shaping the South African government's response to the Nigerian crisis. In times of crisis, decision making is concentrated at the top of the political leadership structures. As Suttner notes, 'In cases of crisis, decisions are centralised in the Presidency and DFA' (Suttner, 2003). He also adds that 'The Presidential Support Unit is critical in advising the president on foreign policy issues, particularly African issues' (Suttner, 2003). Another former chair of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, Ibrahim Ibrahim, adds that the president takes personal charge of foreign policy issues under conditions of perceived crisis:

> Nelson Mandela decided to deal with East Timor on his own. On Nigeria, he was using his personal influence to push people to democracy [referring to Abubakar, who took over from Abacha, and president Suharto of Indonesia]. On Western Sahara, Nelson Mandela said I'm finished with the Polisario Front because they refused to attend a meeting I proposed. But on Libya, he unlocked the Lockerbie stand-off (Ibrahim, 2003).

In the meantime, South African non-state actors publicly called for action against the Abacha regime. South African NGOs and organised labour added their voices to the Nigerian pro-democracy movement. Their actions were partly in response to the South African government's perceived inaction on the issue. The government's 'quiet diplomacy' on Nigeria was criticised and one commentator noted '…there is still not clarity whether South Africa should be the lone campaigner of human rights on the

continent, or whether African consensus should be sought…' (Global Dialogue, 1996:1). By early 1996 a coalition of like-minded interests was formed, involving the Congress of South African Writers, the Freedom of Expression Institute, Earthlife Africa, the Legal Resources Centre, the Foundation for Global Dialogue, and the local chapter of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People. The coalition, named the South Africa Nigeria Democracy Support Group (SANDSG) sought to influence the South African government to take a stronger position on the Nigerian crisis. Various actions were undertaken, including conscientising the South African public by way of interviews, press statements and the hosting of meetings and workshops. The Support Group initially maintained a high profile, not least by a decision to call for a boycott of Shell products in the country. It also maintained regular contact with the South African Foreign Ministry. At some point Support Group meetings were held, ironically, in Shell House, the headquarters of the ruling party. The group enjoyed high-profile participation from members of the ANC, the SACP and Cosatu, and its activism initially attracted moderate media attention.

Following the death of Abacha in 1998, the South African and Nigerian governments (the latter under Abubakar) initiated a rapprochement. The South African government requested the FGD to facilitate a series of high-level dialogues between South Africans and Nigerians on the question of democratic transition in Nigeria (Le Pere and van Nieuwkerk, 1998: 17). Meetings took place in Lagos (February 1999) and Johannesburg (August 1999), with participation from a wide range of interests (including president Mbeki, Foreign Minister Zuma, Trade and Industry Minister Erwin, several prominent members of the ruling party and business community, and several members of the Nigerian pro-democracy movement, some of whom were destined to play key roles in the democratically-elected government of Gen Obasanjo). Both meetings came up with specific recommendations to the governments and civil societies of Nigeria and South Africa.

How did the activities of non-state actors impact on the foreign policy behaviour of the South African government? Were they able to influence policy? Put in different terms,

were they able to participate in any of the action channels related to decision making? One would assume that those actors politically close to the ruling party would be able to do so. In the Nigeria case, there were several such players, including the FGD, parliamentarians, and senior ANC and SACP members. However, the available evidence suggests a limited influence, and then under very specific conditions. Essentially, the government welcomed these voices as long as they were credible and coincided with its own. At most, they were seen to be giving 'moral support' for government's policy positions – nothing more. This was true for some of the positions civil society activists took (especially those aligned to the SANDSG), particularly relating to the call for Nigeria's isolation and sanctions. However, as the crisis unfolded, the positions of these two actors diverged. The South African government moved away from the 'isolate and sanction' position it shared with the activists, to 'constructive engagement' – a policy option that came in for severe criticism from civil society quarters. The SANDSG position was increasingly informed by the contacts it developed with Nigerian opposition forces inside the country and those in exile. Following a number of embarrassing incidents (such as an allegation that the South African government was channelling financial support to Nigerian activists in South Africa to oppose or even overthrow the Abacha regime (Sapa, 30.01.1996)) the close relationship between the government and the SANDSG became frosty. From the perspective of the government then, civil society groups could be useful in the conduct of its foreign policy, as long as they were politically aligned with the government and there was implicit agreement on objectives and strategy. Otherwise, civil society groups were seen as irritants or, at worst, interfering agents with dubious agendas. Academic perspectives are not very different (Le Pere and Vickers, 2001). For example, in Schoeman's analysis,

> NGOs impact on foreign policy in the sense that they interact with middle management in DFA, who reads and listens to academic and analytical inputs when they have to formulate policy options. DFA chooses who to involve from the non-state sector – not the other way around! The influence of civil society actors is bigger on non-controversial issues. The real hard issues are determined elsewhere' (Schoeman, 2002).

On the basis of the Nigerian experience many non-state foreign policy actors (academics, activists, NGOs, organised labour and so on) came to the conclusion that the democratic space for participation in foreign policy processes became restricted – a conclusion many believe was vindicated by subsequent events relating to the Lesotho and Zimbabwe crises. As hinted at, political forces closely allied to the ruling ANC similarly experienced a sense of limited policy influence. In 1994, Cosatu criticised the Abacha regime for undemocratic behaviour and stated that it was in touch with the international trade union movement to mobilise a co-ordinated solidarity campaign in defence of democracy in Nigeria. It said that it would support the demand for the total boycott of all Nigerian oil, and that it would 'communicate this position to comrade Nzo and request the South African government to adopt a similar approach' (Sapa, 22.08.1994). A member of the Cosatu International Desk who was actively involved in the Nigeria crisis at the time noted 'I do not think that Cosatu actions had much impact on the South African policy towards Nigeria' (Dlamini, 2002). Parliamentarians tell the same story.

6.2.3 Assessment

The focus provided by Model I shows that the South African government interpreted the crisis in Nigeria as constituting a threat to Africa, and by extension, South Africa. Melt-down in Nigeria would prevent South Africa from playing its new-found role as continental leader (and developer). Hence the rational choice to take action. Intervention first took the form of so-called quiet diplomacy, and when that strategy showed little effect, more forceful calls were made for the isolation of the Nigerian rulers. Mandela's spokesperson explained that in the lead-up to the crisis, he 'attempted to promote peace in Nigeria' (unnoticed by the media, he added), and at the time when the crisis broke (Saro Wiwa's hanging) Gerwel announced that the government was busy implementing 'a clear programme of action' (Sapa, 15.11.1995). Mandela's spokesperson added: 'It may not be as dramatic as you would want it to be, but the fact of the matter is that we are doing something at the moment. At present there is no other country which has such an elaborate programme' (Sapa. 15.11.1995). According to Gerwel, the programme

consisted of attempts to initiate measures to increase pressure on the Nigerian regime. Pahad also explained that South Africa had recalled its ambassador in Lagos – a strong diplomatic step – and calculated that given South Africa's relatively weak trade relationship with Nigeria, it was hesitant to take the lead on an international oil embargo, preferring 'the powers that have the economic clout to lead the campaign' (Sapa, 14.11.1995). Its approach, therefore, focused on diplomatic measures: 'South Africa would rather continue to exploit its political position as far as possible to press Nigeria's military regime into restoring democracy' (Sapa, 14.11.1995).

However, as we discovered, not all went according to plan. Far from it, the South African government had its initiatives blocked or countered in the region, the continent, the developing world in general, and the west in particular. It was forced into a public and rather humiliating acknowledgement of its policy failure and acceptance of an alternative course of action. In 1999, reflecting on the situation, Nzo remarked:

> I often think that our successful domestic transition has created perceptions that we are capable of miraculous interventions which would instantly solve the many conflicts in our region and beyond. The reality is more complex and demands more painstaking commitment rather than instant quick-fix solutions (Nzo, 1999).

The ruling ANC similarly reflected:

> One of the very first test cases for us in the area of promoting democracy and human rights – Nigeria – highlighted the potential limits of our influence if we act as an individual country. This further highlighted the importance and need to act in concert with others and to forge strategic alliances in pursuit of foreign policy objectives (quoted by Mills, 2000: 264).

The focus of Model I assist us in understanding the dilemma. Looking at the Nigeria crisis, the South African government leaders saw few influential actors beyond governments. Van Aardt makes the point that one reason for the policy failure related to the ANC government's assumption of foreign relations as a relationship between states (similar to the assumptions upon which the realist paradigm is constructed). South Africa's policy was therefore very much conducted at state level, and as Van Aardt argues, 'Appeals from non-government actors to Mandela, such as those made by Soyinka, did not elicit any official public response from the South African government' (1996: 112). Generally, the South African government had initially made little contact with opposition leaders in Nigeria (Van Aardt, 1996: 112) – although it must be said that the fractious nature of Nigeria's opposition made any attempt to build a relationship rather difficult. This focus on the state level produced a number of problems, such as reliance upon diplomacy as the instrument of action, resulting in the targeting of a limited number of actors to be influenced (such as Abacha and his close advisors). Abacha probably relished this challenge and led the South African government up the garden path. In October 1995 he made a number of promises (to return to democratic rule in a certain time period, and to commute the death sentences of Saro Wiwa and colleagues to life imprisonment). Abacha's brinkmanship was exposed when Mbeki realised that despite his personal attempts to contact Abacha, the latter was not going to attend the Commonwealth meeting in Auckland (Ikimi was sent instead) and the executions themselves, carried out on the 10th of November.

Models II and III alert us to the underlying tensions and stresses that produce such a result. In particular, lack of state capacity to produce information about the Nigerian situation, coupled with poor communication infrastructure, resulted in contradictory policy statements from senior decision makers. Former ambassador and Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs chair Raymond Suttner noted that 'analytical capacity in the Department of Foreign Affairs is thin, new diplomats are not always well trained, and so data is not presented to facilitate decision making' (Suttner, 2003). He also noted that Parliament's role was limited: 'it is difficult for decision makers to accept advice from a committee. That is why committees are briefed after decisions are taken.'

The role of ambassadors in policy formation 'is very limited, even for the guys in the 'five' (meaning the diplomatic offices in the USA, Britain, France, Germany and the UN) (Suttner, 2003).

This assessment is complemented by the view of a senior government official who was close to the decision makers at the time. In mid-1998, Thembi Majola, the international affairs advisor in the Office of the then-Deputy President, gave a rare presentation at an FGD seminar on the topic of the government's approach towards Nigeria. Her presentation was subsequently transcribed and included in a publication on South Africa-Nigeria relations (Lambrechts, 1998). According to Majola, the new South African government had *no clear policy guidelines on Nigeria*, but nevertheless became involved in the Nigerian crisis. This, she said, was for two reasons: the belief (or perception) of a threat of a political refugee spill over into South Africa, and outside pressure. In her words, '… the US and UK pressured South Africa to criticise and even sanction the Nigerian military regime' (1998: 51). This happened, she said, whilst the US had no intention itself to impose sanctions against the Abacha regime. She noted that Mandela called for sanctions at the Commonwealth summit in 1995 and failed to get 'any support' for his appeal. In her explanation, Mbeki then realised that sanctions would have little, if any, impact on the situation. According to her, 'The South African government also learned that no country could call for sanctions successfully without the backing of a coalition. The government therefore started engaging in low-level or quiet diplomacy with the Abacha regime' (Majola, 1998: 51).

Above all, as Model III reminds us, the role of Mandela as the country's president became a critical factor. His views and values overwhelmingly shaped choices and action, and in the absence of a clearly developed 'action channel' – an established process for aggregating competing perceptions, preferences and stands of players in making decisions – his personal views on the matter became official policy. Pahad, in responding to our question of how the president arrived at the decision to replace quiet diplomacy with a call for isolation and sanctions, explains:

> On Nigeria we were very involved, even with Abacha. The deputy president understood Nigeria very well. So we believed we should interact, ask can we help. We genuinely believed that before you isolate them you must try to get the problem solved. We were in touch with Abiola. The decision to go to sanctions was very odd…Madiba is Madiba…he says what he wants. We were going there [the Commonwealth meeting] with a common position which was, let's not get into isolation mode, let's use the collective strength to move in the direction of resolution. As Madiba was arguing for that process then comes the hanging [of Saro Wiwa] (Pahad, 2003).

It is at that point when Mandela acknowledged that he almost lost control and decided on a harsher course of action.

Whether the South African government under Mandela thought to refine foreign policy decision making processes and practices remains unclear. At about the same time it was faced with the so-called 'Two-Chinas' dilemma. The government's management of that situation took a similar path: in the absence of a clear 'action channel' and standard operating procedures, a small number of influential individuals dominated the decision making process (SAIIA Research Group, 1995; Le Pere and Van Nieuwkerk, 1999). Given the strong economic presence of Taiwan in South Africa and its close relations with the apartheid government, the decision to shift diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China (PRC) was a controversial policy option and various interests in South Africa – and beyond – lobbied for and against it. The ANC, its Alliance partners and government departments increasingly came to believe that the normalisation of relations with the PRC was the only viable decision. However, ably assisted by the-then Director General of DFA, an old order, pro-Taiwan bureaucrat, the president delayed the decision, and eventually made the announcement without much consultation. Foreign Affairs officials were astonished to hear Mandela's announcement with no prior alert to the new policy position.

Clearly, a powerful president can determine the course of foreign policy – or even make foreign policy on the hoof – regardless of the organisational capabilities or constraints. Strong bureaucratic assistance for executive decisions is always a bonus but sometimes the country has to get the international affairs position from the president himself. The Lesotho crisis of 1998 showed the dangers of such an approach and it is to this case study that we now turn.

6.3 Lesotho

The crisis in Lesotho relates directly to a contested election outcome in Lesotho in 1998 that led to a coup-in-the-making. Aggrieved extra-parliamentary opposition parties, the military and the monarchy challenged the authority of the elected parliament and undermined its capacity to govern effectively after the 1998 election. The defeated opposition called the election a fraud and together they launched a campaign of popular mobilisation. As the weeks went by, their supporters issued calls for a rejection of the election results and the formation of a coalition government of national unity to lead the country to yet another election. Confronted by a developing crisis, Prime Minister Mosisili 'dithered ineffectively' and 'things became worse' (Southall, 1998: 25). The BNP used its connections with the military to gather arms for its youth league, which soon roamed the country in armed bands. Civil servants were prevented from going to work, and general lawlessness set in. Faced with Lesotho's descent into disorder, South Africa and Botswana responded to a call from Prime Minister Mosisili for military assistance.

Let us examine the unfolding chain of events in order to determine what happened. In our earlier overview we noted that Lesotho turned into a hotbed of protest and instability following a rather controversial election outcome. With SADC's blessing, the South African government intervened politically in an effort to defuse the situation. It offered the services of a small number of experts to review the election process and outcome. The so-called Langa Commission made its findings known, but this further fuelled the fires of discontent.

6.3.1 Crisis weeks in September

The issue of the Langa report – its contents and release – became critical to developments inside Lesotho. On Thursday 17 September acting President Buthelezi 'advised' that the Langa Commission Report '…will be handed over to its rightful heirs, the people of Lesotho.' His statement further noted that

> The Report is a sequel to allegations of fraud following the recent elections in Lesotho. We are however not in a position to reveal the contents of this report before all stakeholders including the government of Lesotho, the three opposition parties and his Majesty King Letsie III have had sight of the recommendations of the report.

His statement noted that the handing over of the report 'marks the beginning of a process that should lead to the normalisation of the political situation in Lesotho. *Part of this process is the need for the political management of the outcome of the Langa Commission Report'* (emphasis added). Buthelezi further noted that

> The deteriorating politico-security situation is a matter of serious concern to the troika and SADC countries. In particular we express our concern about the actions of mutineers within the Lesotho Defence Force. Current demonstrations which include illegal and violent actions subtract rather than add to the momentum for peace and stability (Buthelezi, 1998b).

Three days later, on the 20th, members of the SADC extended troika (Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique) again met with the various political parties in Lesotho in order to receive their responses to the Langa Commission report. In the view of the troika, it met with political disagreement regarding the way forward. It turned out the parties to the conflict could not agree on a 'neutral venue' at which the political negotiations could be pursued. The troika again expressed its concerns over the deteriorating situation in the country (SADC, 1998). It took two days for the King to broker an acceptable outcome to the problem of the venue. However, by then, the military intervention had taken place.

As it became clearer in September that the political and diplomatic intervention was not going to produce acceptable results, it was decided to prepare for a military intervention – the last card to play, so to speak. It remains unclear precisely who decided at what point

on the military option. We do know from the official communiqué released at the conclusion of the September SADC Summit in Mauritius that SADC Heads of State did not consider military action. SADC Chair Mandela asked President Chissano of Mozambique to mediate further in the Lesotho crisis (SADC, 1998b). The SANDF claims however that immediately following the Summit, on the 15th, the Ministers of Defence from South Africa and Botswana met in Gaborone where they agreed to prepare for a military intervention 'under the auspices of the SADC' and aimed for the 18th (SANDF, 1998b). Mosisili asked for military intervention on the 19th. South Africa decided to postpone the military intervention until 22 September in order to attempt further negotiations with the dissident elements (SANDF, 1998c). On the 21st, representatives from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Mozambique again met and confirmed the SADC mandate that action, including military intervention, would be taken in the event of a military coup in Lesotho (Kent and Malan, 2003: 4). By all accounts, at this time chaos descended upon Maseru and elsewhere in Lesotho and the joint South Africa – Botswana military intervention force crossed into Lesotho on 22 September to implement Operation Boleas.

As the dust settled and the military restored relative order, the SADC group of mandated countries were hard at work to resolve the political impasse. They maintained contact with all parties to the conflict and on 2 October, in a crucial breakthrough, all agreed to the holding of 'fresh elections' within 18 months, a review of the electoral system, and the reconstruction of the country (Mbeki, 1998).

A month later, Pahad gave the clearest explanation yet of government's approach to the Lesotho crisis. Speaking in the South African parliament, he described the opposition's 'barrage of criticism' as understandable because it was done out of 'ignorance, lack of information or simply political opportunism'. He then informed parliament that on the previous day the Lesotho parliament passed the Interim Political Authority Bill, '…a triumph for stability and democracy …it confirmed our view that unless the coup in Lesotho was ended and the security situation normalised, it would be impossible to deal with the political problem.' He recognised the 'important role' played by the SADC

facilitating team led by Mufamadi and the 'invaluable role of the SADC interventionist forces.' He then suggested that members of parliament had a duty to 'objectively analyse the Lesotho crisis' and proceeded to give his version thereof. In the wake of growing instability, all role players in Lesotho requested the assistance of the South African government to help normalise the situation. In August, Mbeki, accompanied by Nzo and Defence Minister Modise, visited Lesotho and after intensive consultations it was agreed that a SADC commission should be appointed to investigate the allegations of fraud. All parties agreed to be bound by the findings and to stop all demonstrations and protests. Unfortunately the commitment to stop all demonstrations was not carried out. The Langa Commission found that there were some serious irregularities in the electoral process but could not find conclusive evidence of government fraud.

Pahad then turned to the escalating security crisis, noting that while discussions were continuing about the handling of the report, demonstrations in Maseru intensified and junior officers started a mutiny. As a consequence, the government was in a state of paralysis, there was a state of anarchy, tension was growing and sporadic violence had erupted. On 12 September, Mosisili requested a SADC intervention to end the coup. Pahad noted that

> We, however, believed that further efforts should be made to find a negotiated solution. The SADC delegation continued to have numerous discussions … on several occasions the mutineers were warned of the consequences of the coup. This intervention led to the release of 27 army leaders. However the mutineers reneged on agreements reached and it became clear that they were intent on holding onto power.
>
> We concluded that if we failed to act, the consequences would have been too ghastly to contemplate. It was therefore decided that the SADC forces should intervene on 22 September (Pahad, 1998).

Pahad noted that within two days the military objectives were achieved and the security situation normalised. This normalisation enabled the political process to proceed. He concluded by saying that the SANDF gave the Defence and Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committees an open and frank assessment of lessons learnt from the intervention.

Credit for the breakthrough was claimed by all sides. In an interview with the Washington Times on the 10th October, SADC Executive Secretary Kaire Mbuende said 'SADC has demonstrated to the world that it has the capacity to solve the region's political and economic problems. This should give international investors confidence in the SADC region as the most attractive investment destination' (Mbuende, 1998). The Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, Njongonkulu Ndungane as well as Nzo were more modest and to the point in congratulating Mufamadi and his negotiating team 'for his leadership in resolving the crisis' (Ndungane, 1998). At the end of October the Defence Minister announced the withdrawal of almost half the South African troops deployed in Lesotho (Modise, 1998), and at the end of November the Ministry of Defence calculated the estimated costs of SANDF participation in Lesotho at R30 million (MOD, 1998).

On the eve of the new millennium, 31 December 1999, Deputy President Zuma spoke glowingly of South Africa's new profile in international affairs. In his view, South Africa's increasing obligations in the region and on the continent 'have won us much praise.' He believed

> We played a positive role in resolving the Lesotho crisis; we continue to play one in the Great Lakes region. The role we played in Congo and Nigeria suggest that we can provide regional leadership on a number of issues and to exert our influence to maintain stability (Zuma, 1999).

6.3.2 Analysis

In examining government's foreign policy behaviour, let us look at the three models in turn.

The Rational Actor model (Model I) asks 'what problem the state was solving, and what objectives were the state pursuing, in choosing policy x?' Similarly to Nigeria, the South African government's response to the Lesotho crisis of 1998 was clearly articulated. A remarkably similar justification for the intervention was given by various senior state sources – the South African (acting) president, cabinet and the foreign ministry, the military, and SADC. The ultimate objective was to stabilise Lesotho in order to protect South African interests and to allow democratisation processes inside Lesotho to develop. Let us track the decision making process from the highest office.

'I have already remitted today a report in terms of section 201 of the constitution of the RSA on the employment of the SANDF in Lesotho'. This was how Acting President Buthelezi started his statement in parliament on 22 September 1998, a few hours after South African forces crossed the border into Lesotho. His statement was a political bombshell, since none of the parliamentarians knew what he was about to reveal. Buthelezi's explanation came in two parts: clarification of operational details, and a justification for the choices made. Buthelezi explained

> the employment was authorised by me in my capacity as acting president. I have been in close consultation with SADC parties responsible for dealing with the Lesotho crisis. I have also been in consultation with the president and the deputy president who are out of the country.

He stressed that

> … the employment is effected as a combined operation together with the BDF, as an SADC intervention and not a South African operation. *The purpose of the intervention is to stabilise the situation for the purposes of achieving a lasting political solution* (emphasis added).

He then sketched the immediate context that in his view required this drastic step:

> This employment took place pursuant to an urgent request by the Prime Minister and Head of Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho. The Prime Minister requested the South African government together with the governments of Botswana, Mozambique and Zimbabwe *to intervene militarily for the purposes of restoring stability to the Kingdom*, in a situation where control over the armed forces of Lesotho by the lawful government had been lost (emphasis added).

He concluded by saying that '…operations of this nature cannot be subject of public discussion prior to the actual intervention. It is my intention to brief the leaders of political parties fully…at the earliest convenience. Cabinet will also be discussing this matter tomorrow morning' (Buthelezi, 1998).

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) issued a statement on the Lesotho crisis on the same day. To start with, the statement is titled 'SADC launches Operation Boleas in Lesotho'. It states that the Prime Minister of Lesotho '…requested in writing from the heads of state of Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, *military intervention to restore normality'* (emphasis added). It further explains that

> …the President's Office instructed the SANDF to conduct contingency planning on the 16th September 1998. Authority was also granted to the BDF to enter South Africa with their equipment to participate in this combined operation. Late evening of 20 September the combined Task Force Headquarters took up position in Ladybrand…This pre-positioning was merely a show of force and part of the contingency plan which was made and activated late in the afternoon of 20 September. The SANDF elements started moving late yesterday evening [21 September] from Bloemfontein to Ladybrand. They crossed the border at 05h00 this morning [22 September]. The Botswana elements moved down last night and will join the SANDF elements early this morning (SANDF, 1998).

It concluded with some operational detail:

> The main objectives at this stage are to create a safe environment by securing or controlling the Maseru Bridge border post, the LDF military bases, the radio station, embassies, Royal palace, airports, government buildings, power and water supply facilities (SANDF, 1998).

Political opposition parties in South Africa reacted with confusion and anger. Many sought further clarification and others questioned the motives behind the military intervention. Civil society interests responded in a similar manner – some NGOs managed to conduct a media briefing on the same day of the intervention.

In the meantime, Cabinet met the next day, Wednesday 23 September. The Office of the President issued a statement which noted that cabinet was briefed on the situation in the Kingdom of Lesotho (presumably by the acting president and the defence and foreign ministers). Based hereupon,

> Cabinet expressed its full support for the assessment of the SADC that the army mutiny of 11 September had created a situation of lawlessness and disorder. The government was paralysed; and the mutineers had all but seized power. Negotiations had stalled…Cabinet therefore endorsed the decision of the leaders of SADC to deploy a joint force in the Kingdom as a principled and correct one, premised on the unequivocal rejection of any acts of unlawful seizure of power against any democratic government. In this regard, South Africa had acted as part of a collective, to meet its SADC obligations. This was in response to a request by the government of the Kingdom of Lesotho…*It is also in the vital interest of South Africa that we should not allow instability to spread beyond Lesotho's borders* (Office of the President, 1998)(emphasis added).

Two days later, on Friday the 25th, the Minister for Provincial Affairs declared a state of disaster in six magisterial districts in the Free State province (bordering Lesotho), explaining that 'The number of refugees from Lesotho in the country at the moment is

estimated at 4000 and a larger influx is expected…Bordering towns may not have the ability and capacity to keep up with the influx of people' (Ministry for Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, 1998).

On the same day the South African Government Communication and Information Service (GCIS) issued a statement which explained that

> the SADC Heads of State and Government, after undertaking an assessment of the prevailing situation and in response to the request expressed by the government of the Kingdom of Lesotho, decided to intervene militarily with *the aim of bringing back order* …The military intervention by SADC aims equally *to create the favourable environment for the conflicting parties to hold a peaceful dialogue* towards finding an acceptable solution to their own problems (GCIS, 1998)(emphasis added).

A week later, speaking at the South African Institute of International Affairs, Nzo elaborated the reasons for military action in Lesotho. Having first explained his government's commitment to human rights and democracy, he turned to the Lesotho 'emergency'. In his view,

> …we were not willing to stand by, for fear of regional mandate, and see certain groups in Lesotho refuse to explore all peaceful means of dispute resolution, rather trying to win enough time to violently overthrow the government. This is not the way the modern world works, and we will act in an appropriate manner to each situation that arises. There is no greater threat to our collective efforts to build peace and prosperity than these types of rogue elements (Nzo, 1998).

From these statements we can deduct that the South African government's analysis of the crisis in Lesotho had led it to choose intervention as the most appropriate option. When it became clear that the political intervention – in the form of dispute resolution – might fail, a military intervention was planned at the last minute. Nevertheless, as shown

above, it chose to intervene in order to restore stability in Lesotho, protect its own interests, and thirdly to create a situation that would allow political negotiations to continue. The state's goals were clear. Rationally, it seems to have exercised the best choice, given the conditions. Subsequent events (political negotiations, a new constitution, and fresh elections) seem to have justified this course of action. But as we know, the intervention went wrong. Many people were killed and damage wrought. Why?

6.3.2.1 Unpacking the decisions leading to the intervention

Many commentators were critical of the South African government's decision to intervene militarily, claiming that it was based on wrong information, poor analysis of the situation, misguided, or even devious (for an overview see Lambrechts, 1999, Malan, 2000, Mills, 1998, Pherudi, 2003). One official post mortem states that the operation was an intelligence failure (SANDF, 1998c). If government knew what it wanted to do in Lesotho, but failed to implement its objectives properly or as planned, what went wrong? Which factors could account for this? Model II (organisational behaviour) alerts us to the role of state institutions, their capabilities, and their constraints. Recall that it asks: "from what organisational context, pressures, and procedures did this decision emerge?" Let us examine this aspect before we turn to the third model which looks at the political relations between decision makers.

We are fortunate to be able to draw on a remarkable series of official analyses of the event. This is remarkable because information about military operations is normally cloaked in secrecy and the pre-1994 South African government has carried out its violent regional destabilisation policies under strict secrecy. The Lesotho intervention was the first cross-border military intervention carried out under the authority of the post-apartheid South African government and therefore received much attention. In a deliberate break with the past the Military authorities in South Africa decided to make its analysis of the event available to the public. This information has allowed some analysts to gain a deeper understanding of the intra-state capabilities and constraints that affected

the design and implementation of the military intervention (Williams, 1998, Neethling, 2000) although not many has written about it in subsequent analyses of South Africa's foreign policy making.

The official analysis of the operation and its shortcomings can be summarised as follows.

The first important point relates to the official view of the decision. According to the SANDF, the South African President's Office instructed it to conduct contingency planning on 16 September 1998. Authority was also granted for the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) to enter South Africa with their equipment to participate in the operation as a combined task force (CTF). In the SANDF's view, 'The completion of military preparations and proper orders, together with the resumption of negotiations on 20 September, resulted in the intervention commencing on 22 September 1998' (SANDF, 1998a: 2). This statement, however, fails to mention that the 'resumption of negotiations on the 20th' was actually followed by a breakdown in talks on the same day (see the case study analysis in chapter four) and this fact presumably led to the decision to activate the military option. The operational design provided for a four stage intervention process. Stage one involved preparation and moving to the forward assembly area at Ladybrand (close to the border with Maseru); stage two related to the intervention itself, planned to secure the South African/Lesotho border post, the move to secure the King's palace, government buildings, airport and military bases, stabilisation of these areas and the disarmament of the dissident LDF elements, and a link up between the BDF and SANDF; stage three related to the continuation of stabilisation operations and the final stage related to the dismantling of the CTF.

In the view of the SANDF, the Operation was characterised by a number of weaknesses, of which the key factor was limited time to prepare: '…the situation in Lesotho developed quickly and there was very little time available between the call for help to the SADC and the necessity for action' (SANDF, 1998a: 8). The instruction to prepare the military option was taken on the 16th – 8 days prior to the intervention, or put another way, the call for military assistance from Mosisili came on the 19th – four days prior to

the intervention. For the SANDF, the minimum time required to prepare for a peace support operation is eight weeks. Other key weaknesses, according to the SANDF (1998a, 1998c) included:

1 No clear policy guidelines

The absence of a National Security Policy: '…the necessity to perform a military intervention came as something of a surprise to the South African military establishment'; the unclear nature of the operation: '…the fact that it was a military intervention as opposed to a peace operation, a law and order operation …'; the Combined Task Force initially used blank ammunition to minimise casualties; the absence of a wider mandate to cover collateral incidents such as looting in Maseru.

2 Absent or weak standard operating procedures (SOPs)

Lack of coordination between different levels of the Departments of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and Defence (DOD) – for example, because of lack of coordination with other state departments, the BDF was held up at the South Africa/Botswana border post, resulting in their late arrival and failure to prevent the looting of Maseru; all role players were not briefed ahead of the operation; limited intelligence liaison with the BDF; unavailability of aerial photographs; no scenario planning; minimal flow of counterintelligence both from Defence Intelligence and the CTF; no planning and doctrine to undertake psychological warfare; unavailability of finances prior to the operation 'as the necessary special unit code had not been created'; poor media liaison: '…lack of clear strategic objectives, …no cohesive corporate communication strategy in place.

3 Capacity constraints

Inadequate staffing levels at the Chief of Joint Operations level to mount an operation of this kind; weak intelligence collection capabilities, including confirmation of critical tactical information in time and unavailability of specialised counter intelligence support; minimal previous experience of such operations; depleted war reserves, budget cuts which led to limited reserves and stocks; shortcomings in logistical capabilities.

Apart from these limitations, the SANDF analysis noted that another key factor that affected the outcome of the operation related to the perceptions of the planners of the

Lesotho intervention. They perceived that the dissident elements in Lesotho would be easily overcome, and relied on an inadequate contingency plan that allowed for the evacuation of South African embassy staff only. Ultimately, the greatest mistake was to send in too small a force to secure the military objectives: '…this could easily be regarded as the result of a failure of intelligence' (SANDF, 1998c: 9).

Rocky Williams, director of operations policy in the DOD at the time of the intervention, justifies the decision by the 'SADC troika' to intervene militarily on the basis of 'stated SADC policy of preventing coups d' etat within southern Africa' (1998: 1). He argues that:

> It is therefore possible to question the mechanics of the intervention as well as the process whereby SADC reached the decision to intervene (particularly the legal and procedural detail of the mandate which was given to the force commanders) but there can be no doubting the sincerity of the SADC troika in arriving at this decision (Williams, 1998: 1).

In his view, more attention needs to be paid to the preparation of a comprehensive and consultative communication plan, the legal details of extra-territorial deployments, and there is a need to inform and brief all key government departments and chairs of the relevant parliamentary committees prior to the initiation of such operations. He concludes by saying that 'South Africa's approach to conflict has undergone considerable development in recent months. Cabinet recently approved a White Paper on Peace Missions which highlighted the importance of addressing the roots of conflict and not simply the symptoms…Unless SADC addresses itself to these issues any number of military interventions …will be of limited utility' (Williams, 1998: 2).

In 2003 Kent and Malan analysed South Africa's approach to peace operations by examining the country's involvement in peace missions in the DRC, Lesotho and Burundi. They found an absence of coordinated and able decision making of the kind required to undertake or participate in complex and costly peace operations. In

particular, they note that the decision to engage in a mission must be based on national and foreign policy interests (and, one might add, a national security policy). As they note,

> Since the decision regarding whether or not to participate is a political and foreign policy one, any decision to deploy on a peace mission must be made via an established, co-ordinated structure. While, in theory, such a structure exists, in practice, very little emphasis is placed on consultation and co-ordination between responsible government departments. Government departments, in particular foreign affairs and defence, must scrupulously enforce inter-agency co-operation with respect to information sharing and joint strategic planning, from early warning through to conflict management and peace-building (2003: 2).

Despite the creation of a peace mission co-ordinating office in the DFA, they note that

> To date, however, decisions continue to be taken at the level of the Presidency with little or no prior consultation or input from other levels of government, state departments, civil society or parliament. This has led to inter-departmental confusion, poor pre-deployment planning and preparation, media criticism, and a general lack of enthusiasm for South African participation in peace missions (2003: 3).

This shortcoming means that decision making remains more of a transaction, rather than a process.

Model III (Governmental politics) asks: 'which results from what kind of bargaining among which players yielded the critical decisions and actions?' The public and political reaction to the intervention was harsh and severely critical – government's response was no less so. By re-examining this interaction we should be able to draw some conclusions regarding government's perceptions, beliefs and choices.

The Ceasefire Campaign, The Black Sash and Gun Free South Africa issued a statement on the day of the military intervention, condemning South Africa's action and calling for an immediate withdrawal of troops. It stated that

> Our intervention in the Lesotho crisis has been a disaster from the beginning. Had we not delayed the issue of the Langa Commission Report to King Letsie III, government and political parties, the tension would not have increased to the extent that it has and now we intervene in the old South African style with armed forces to restore order (Sapa, 22.09.1998).

Following the announcement, South African opposition parties asked for more details of the deployment of South African troops in Lesotho, with some questioning the constitutionality of the action. General Viljoen of the Freedom Front, a former South African Defence Force chief, said the South African government should not regard itself as a superpower in Africa, as it would burn its fingers:

> This intervention is taking place in a very thoughtless manner, similar to when Mugabe intervened in the DRC without consultation. Now South Africa and Botswana have done it with Lesotho (Sapa, 22.09.1998).

The National Party also condemned the military action and the UDM's Holomisa accused the government of abusing its power: 'Neither president Mandela nor his deputy, Thabo Mbeki were in South Africa and it appeared there had been no special cabinet meeting to make a decision like that. Nor had parliament been consulted.' The PAC said the decision to send troops was proof of the government's incoherent and confusing foreign policy: 'These are the people that said no intervention in Nigeria and Congo. But now they are sending troops to Lesotho. It just does not make sense' (Sapa, 22.11.1998).

A few days later the DP questioned the battle readiness of the SANDF. In the view of its defence spokesperson,

> Apparently the SANDF contingent did not wait for the Botswana forces to arrive before commencing the incursion into Lesotho, possibly making the force understrength for the operation in question. Several reports indicate that the SANDF forces in Lesotho were operating with little or defective intelligence as regards their precise targets and the likely nature of resistance. Having achieved at least some of their objectives, the SANDF forces did not know what to do thereafter… (Sapa, 24.09.1998).

On the 29th the NP and UDM urged Mr Mbeki to appoint a public commission of inquiry into South Africa's involvement in Lesotho, to which the ANC reacted with anger: '…it appeared as if the opposition parties only became interested in the problems of Lesotho when the SADC decided to send troops to stabilise the security situation. They either conveniently forgot or are ignorant of the SADC's initiatives…' (Sapa, 29.10.1998). On the 31st, the PAC reacted with a more substantial critique. In its view, heaping blame for the crisis on the Basotho people and their army was being untruthful:

> The Basotho parties were still prepared to solve the crisis when the South African troops, under the mandate of the SADC, intervened. The Langa Commission inspired confidence in the political parties of Lesotho. This positive attitude was dashed by the way the South African government handled the Commission's report – delaying its release and the absence of both president Mandela and his deputy, Thabo Mbeki (Sapa, 1 October 1998).

The role of Churches in the resolution of the crisis also became apparent. Their approach was of a different kind to that of the South African political opposition and various NGOs. For example, the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, Njongonkulu Ndungane and colleagues from the region visited Lesotho (which is one of the countries of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa) in the week following the military intervention. Ndungane announced 'measures that would help restore peace and stability in Lesotho', including reform of the electoral system, the need for relief, reconstruction of the economy, the role of the monarchy and healing a traumatised nation (Ndungane,

1998b). However, despite Cosatu's apparent activist internationalist approach, it did nothing on the Lesotho crisis. As Dlamini notes, 'Cosatu had no role whatsoever. Cosatu did not take up the matter (of the SA / SADC intervention) at any level, not even at SATUCC level' (Dlamini, 2002).

The critiques from the political opposition in parliament and outside seem to converge on three points: mismanagement of the Langa report, a weak decision making process and the decision itself (to intervene militarily). On the first point, government admitted that the process of releasing the findings to the people of Lesotho had to be carefully managed and probably would agree that it acted rather clumsily by releasing an interim report, and then a final report after a long period of silence, giving rise to (unproven) speculation of 'doctoring' the findings. Concerning the decision itself, from the government's responses we can deduce that it felt it had done everything it could to mediate the conflict (after all, it had sent senior officials, including Ministers Mufamadi, Modise and Director General Selebi to mediate) and it was only when it became apparent, from the reports of these senior officials, that the disagreements had started to spill over into a violent mutiny, that government decided to prepare for a military intervention, and even then, believed that it held it back as a last option. When it became necessary to act, it did so with some reluctance, and with a badly prepared military force.

On the third point, it is clear that the decision to do so was made by the President and his senior Ministers, together with a section of the SANDF (CJ Ops). The complaint by the media and opposition that neither the President nor his deputy was in the country on the day of the intervention, or that government's intentions were poorly communicated does not alter the fact that the decision was appropriately taken by the highest authority. The fact that Parliament was not consulted prior to the intervention indicates the centralised nature of decision making during time of crisis (as we found in our discussion of the Nigeria crisis) but was not unconstitutional. Furthermore, alternatives to the intervention were considered. The option of a blockade was rejected because it was believed that such action would allow the mutineers to take control of the internal situation and that it would have victimised the entire population (SANDF, 1998c).

The problem, as Model III alerts us, was the 'action channel'. Was there an established process for aggregating competing perceptions, preferences, and stands of players in making decisions and taking action? Based on the above analysis, the answer is that an action channel existed but was poorly understood and mismanaged. SANDF post mortems indicate that key role players were either ignored or bypassed partly due to the lack of proper inter-agency co-ordination. For example, since the decision was taken to intervene jointly with the BDF, then surely the Departments of Foreign and Home Affairs (amongst others) would have been tasked to ensure fast border passage of the Botswana forces? The fact that they were detained at the border post is astounding (Pherudi, 2003: 125). Interviews with informed individuals corroborate the conclusion that the decision making and implementing process was a key weakness of the operation. According to Boshoff and Williams, senior SANDF officials at the time of the Lesotho crisis, several key politicians and senior officials were left out of the decision: cabinet members, parliamentarians, members of the intelligence community, including NICOC, and key members in the military, such as the Defence Secretariat (Boshoff, 2003, Williams, 2003). The chair of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs at the time, Ibrahim Ibrahim, notes that on the same day Buthelezi made the announcement (of the Lesotho intervention), his committee met to discuss foreign policy matters – but the Lesotho issue was not raised (Ibrahim, 2003). The conclusion of committee member Boy Geldenhuys is unsurprising: 'the role and influence of the portfolio committee is zero' (Geldenhuys, 2003).

Although we earlier argued that the decision was correctly taken by the President, Williams explains that the decision making process was rather oblique, consisting in the first place of a series of telephone calls between presidents Mandela, Masire and Mugabe (the SADC troika mandated to deal with Lesotho), followed internally by the Presidency (Williams, 2003). Pahad explains the process in more detail. According to him, a committee of ministers and officials undertook various visits to Lesotho prior to the intervention, and reported on its last visit to the president (a visit which saw last-minute negotiations with mutineers in their barracks) (Pahad, 2003). He admits that '…maybe

the group did not report to all concerned – our structures were not properly informed' (Pahad, 2003). He continues:

> Talks then broke down. It was decided to move in. Because the president was out of the country we consulted over the telephone, and because the committee had made its report and on the basis of the request (by Lesotho Prime Minister Mosisili) the military moved in. What level of preparedness the military had is a debating point. But the decision making process went through. Where I think we erred a little was not to send a very strong show of force…we were not sufficiently prepared. We needed superior military force. That is where we could have planned better. Not the decision to go, we had to move – fast – but adequately prepared. And our intelligence should have been better (Pahad, 2003).

Pressed on this matter, Pahad conceded that the decision making process was very new and that part of the difficulty was transformation within the military: 'we were all suffering because of the old and the new – suspicions between sectors, and so on…this tension between government sectors is not new. It is true for all governments' (Pahad, 2003).

6.3.3 Assessment

The Lesotho intervention has demonstrated the weaknesses in the South African government's decision making processes. Most interviewees agreed that this was realised by government and that adjustments were made. As discussed in chapter four (the institutional setting), soon after the Lesotho event a key improvement was made at senior level, where a cluster system was introduced to enhance policy co-ordination and integrity. Although not made in direct reaction to the Lesotho event, it could nevertheless be expected to prevent such occurrences. Other adjustments were also made, including the introduction, in 1999, of the White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, and the establishment of a National Security Council (NSC) whose task it is to enhance the state's response to perceived threats to the national

interest (Boshoff, 2003). Unfortunately no detailed information or analysis on the NSC could be obtained either from interviewees or the literature.

Model I has allowed us to focus on the broad foreign policy goals of the government. In this regard it is clear that the government had developed a vision of playing a significant role in Africa with peace making, peace keeping and peace building. However, Model II alerts us that the Lesotho intervention demonstrated that the decision making infrastructure necessary to carry out such a role, was lacking. Organisationally, the state was ill-prepared to back up its peace making efforts with military interventions. Indeed, the question of how the decision making process operated (or not) was a key focus of various analysts. Kent and Malan, for example, argue that both in the case of the Lesotho intervention and SANDF peacekeeping deployment to Burundi, political considerations (to intervene or deploy) outweighed any other consideration, leading to decision making from the top, excluding input from civil servants, military planners, and Parliament (2003: 7; see also Van Wyk, 1999). This finding is similar to our discussion above. However, the introduction of the White Paper has gone some way to clarify the decision making process. As Kent and Malan argue, the first South African deployment of personnel to the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) in April 2001 can be considered a model to be imitated, in terms of process and co-ordination. The decision making followed a pattern that saw the initial informal request from the UN passed on to South Africa's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York, which was then forwarded to the DFA and the DOD. The former was then tasked to examine the foreign policy implications, and the latter to conduct a feasibility study. Once the DFA confirmed the national interests related to the mission, and the DOD established that the SANDF had the capacity to undertake the mission, the Minister of Defence notified the Minister of Foreign Affairs, whom both agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the SANDF deploy in support of the mission. To complete the process, the DFA prepared a cabinet memorandum which was presented to Cabinet. Only once approval from all responsible institutions was reached could the DFA instruct its mission to the UN to advise the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) of South Africa's willingness to participate in the mission.

What do we learn from Model III? Why the decision to bypass so many relevant role players? Was this done deliberately, perhaps to maintain control at the top? If so, why? Although interviewees were reluctant to discuss this in any depth, it appears that the limited time available to make a decision (whether or not to intervene militarily) played a significant role in reducing the number of participants in the decision. This is hardly surprising: when faced by an immediate crisis, governments tend to concentrate decision making at the top (at the level of the president) in order to respond quickly. However this does not mean that key role players should be bypassed, particularly those who are able to view and guide the analysis and decision making process form a holistic governmental perspective. This is why most governments have individual role players such as national security advisors, backed up by structures such as national security councils. The other significant factor relates to what Pahad calls tension between the old and the new and between government sectors. This is substantiated by our analysis above. Pherudi adds that the Deputy Chief of the SA Army and the Chief of Special Forces 'condemned the operation' (2003: 128). It is clear that Mbeki was keen to rectify the problem (to the extent that it is possible) by establishing a well-understood and well-functioning 'action channel': an established process for aggregating competing perceptions, preferences, and stands of players in making decisions and taking action. This role is taken up by the Presidency, the cluster system, NICOC, and the NSC. How well it functions remains an open question, given that the South African government has yet to establish a National Security Policy as an overarching policy framework. Our third case study, Zimbabwe, ought to cast light on this very question, and it is to this crisis that we now turn.

6.4 Zimbabwe

We can't afford a complete collapse of Zimbabwe on our borders, so we've got to try and do whatever we can.

Mbeki, 2001

Our efforts at negotiations are not working but we don't have an option

Pahad, 2003

6.4.1 The crisis of collapse

The 'Zimbabwean crisis' is a complex situation, with its origins in a number of structural factors flowing from the country's historical experiences: colonial exploitation, a grossly uneven distribution of land and economic resources, a stalled transition to democracy, patronage and authoritarianism by a corrupt elite, the failure of redistributive economic policies, and subsequent attempts at reform and structural adjustment.

Three events in the late 1990s triggered economic and political turmoil: Mugabe's pacification of the war veterans who demanded – and received – pensions that the state could ill afford, implementation of a land distribution programme, and Zimbabwe's military involvement in the war in the DRC. The MDC was subsequently formed in 1999 as an attempt by opposition forces to challenge Mugabe's hold on power. Zanu-PF's loss of the 2000 referendum on constitutional change was erroneously interpreted as an early victory for the opposition.

Indeed, the embattled Mugabe employed various tactics in an effort to regain legitimacy and control. These included a chaotic land redistribution programme and an increasingly authoritarian style of governance, resulting in a crackdown on civil liberties. The run-up to the June 2000 parliamentary elections – narrowly won by Zanu-PF - saw a violent

campaign against farmers, their workers and supporters of the opposition. The subsequent course of events leading up to the 2002 presidential election continued the trend. Under highly controversial conditions Mugabe claims to have won another six-year term as president. The weakening of governance continues, with a collapsing economy and intensifying poverty its most visible symptoms.

6.4.2 Analysis

What can we learn from the rational actor model (Model I): 'what problem was the state solving, and what objectives were the state pursuing, in choosing policy x'?

The South African government's overriding objective was to stabilise Zimbabwe. It planned to be active on three fronts: assisting Zimbabwe in reversing its economic woes and resolving the land crisis, and promoting a negotiated resolution of the political situation. Unlike its approach to Nigeria (our first case study) it considered various bilateral and multilateral approaches to implement its objectives. Underlying all of these was the key goal of securing South Africa's interests; hence Mbeki's comment quoted at the introduction to this section. Policy options were assessed and conclusions reached. The options of pursuing sanctions, regime change or military intervention were believed not to be feasible: 'all these will have negative consequences, such as instability, and it would isolate us from Africa' (Pahad, 2003).

However, this summary tends to mask the complex and fluid situation and manner in which the South African government defined (and redefined) its definition of the situation and how it shifted its responses. In order to explore the Model I questions (on the state's definition of the threat (if any), its goals, its perceived options for addressing it, the strategic costs and benefits of each option, and the preferred choice) it is helpful to briefly turn to Model III (governmental politics). The latter focuses on the question of *who chooses*. It alerts us to the importance of identifying the key players in this situation and their views and values. It also asks questions about the action channel. Based on our analysis of the foreign policy making process (chapter four), inputs by the interviewees,

and from personal experience we can safely assume that Mbeki is the key foreign policy actor in the South African government. Of course, he is not the only one, but without doubts the most influential individual. In addition to him one can identify a close circle of advisors, in the Presidency and outside: Aziz and Essop Pahad, Foreign Minister Zuma, and other members of the ANC National Working Committee (NWC). The latter consists of the seven office bearers of the party, 15 elected members, and three ex-officio members (http://www.anc.org.za/lists/nwc.html). A close reading of Mbeki's statements on Zimbabwe (complemented by his advisors) therefore allows us to understand government's 'rational actions' – its definition of the situation and choice/s of action.

In Mbeki's view the factors that led to the crisis in Zimbabwe were related to the nature of the pre-independence colonial and racist British occupation, the nature of the subsequent transition – the Lancaster House negotiations – and the colonial legacy inherited by the new government – poverty, debt, and the land issue (Mbeki, 2001b; 2003). In order for the Mugabe government to deal with this situation it applied a set of policies that were not sustainable over the medium term. It ran up a huge debt and was forced into a structural adjustment programme (Mbeki, 2001b). Losing control over the economy led to deteriorating living conditions and political unrest, culminating in ever-more desperate attempts at controlling the situation (Mbeki, 2001b). By 2000, with the development of a substantial political opposition, the Mugabe government was in crisis (2002b).

How to respond? In Mbeki's view, his government's approach had been based on four key assumptions. Firstly, respect for Zimbabwe as a sovereign state with a democratically elected government (Mbeki, 2001a). Secondly, recognition of the crisis: Mbeki said his government had already anticipated the crisis in 1998 (Mbeki, 2002b). Thirdly, the belief that a multilateral approach was best suited to deal with the crisis (Mbeki, 2001a; 2001b). Fourthly, the imperative to act was based on the fact that the two countries were neighbours; for the president, '…we are tied together by history, language, culture and a similar legacy. Being inextricably linked to each other, we share a common destiny' (Mbeki, 2002b).

These assumptions guided the South African government's policy choices, as it precluded it from exercising certain options and opened the door to others. Between 1998 and 2002, the South African government exercised three key policy options. The combination of strategies and interventions became known as 'quiet diplomacy' or 'constructive engagement' with Zimbabwe. These will now be explored, from the perspective of the key decision makers as identified above.

The **first** policy option was to concentrate on the land question. According to Mbeki, his government had acted as early as 1998 '… to assist the people of Zimbabwe to find the necessary resources to address the land question in that country' (Mbeki, 2002b). This was done, he added, '…because it was clear that unless this matter was dealt with urgently, it could provoke a crisis within Zimbabwe' (Mbeki, 2002b). Unfortunately, neither the 1998 high-profile International Conference on the land question, which involved the UK and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as donors, nor a subsequent follow-up by the South African government to secure international financing for the deal, delivered results. In fact, Mbeki argued that once the money was raised by his government to pay for 118 farms, the matter was handed over to the UN where '…it collapsed in the intricacies of the UN bureaucracy' (Mbeki, 2003). As a consequence, Mbeki argues, having failed to restore the land to its original owners in a peaceful manner, a forcible process of land redistribution perhaps became inevitable. He noted that 'though we were conscious of the frustration that had built up in Zimbabwe, we urged the government both privately and publicly to act against the forcible seizure of white farms and other violence in the country' (Mbeki, 2003). On 5 May 2000, Mbeki said

> we trust that ways and means will be found to end the conflict that has erupted in some areas of Zimbabwe, occasioned by the still unresolved land question … Peace, stability, democracy and social progress in Zimbabwe are as important for yourselves as they are for the rest of the region (Mbeki, 2002b).

What about the option of promoting human rights in Zimbabwe? This option was a muted one because it didn't quite fit the logic of quiet diplomacy. It is only fair to point out that contrary to claims by the political opposition, president Mbeki was outspoken on human rights issues on various occasions. On 20 September 2000 Mbeki said in parliament '…land reform in Zimbabwe has to be addressed in the context of the Zimbabwean constitution and law, in a manner that does not result in conflict'. A month later, he said land distribution 'must be handled within the context of the law and recognition of property rights, and without violence. South Africa cannot allow that type of conflict where people are illegally occupying land to spill over into South Africa' (Mamoepa, 2001). On 23 February 2001, at the end of the International Investment Council meeting in Cape Town, he said: 'We continue to be concerned about the situation in Zimbabwe. Some of the things that have been happening recently are to all of us matters of serious concern; things that have been affecting the judges, affecting the press, apart from the earlier questions to do with land distribution' (Mamoepa, 2001). At a meeting with newspaper editors on 22 March 2001, he said South Africa had told Zimbabwe '…there should be no occupation of farms; there should be a process that addresses the interests of all Zimbabweans and there should be land distribution that is just' (Mamoepa, 2001). In an interview with the UK's Channel Four News on 3 May 2001, he repeated his concerns: 'there are things that have gone on in Zimbabwe, which are wrong. And we have said so to the Zimbabwean government that, you know, the occupation of farms, the violence and all those things, issues of the rule of law and so on, these matters have to be addressed' (Mamoepa, 2001).

On 23 May 2001 South Africa's diplomatic representative in Harare also came out with criticism, saying 'South Africa does not, and will never condone the violence seen in the country, excuse the occupation of farms and serious harassment of people in the rural and urban areas, and strongly condemns the latest spate of business invasions in Zimbabwe' (The Financial Gazette, 24.05.2001). Mbeki's foreign policy right-hand man, Pahad, also weighed in with criticism of the Zimbabwean government's policies. On 12 August 2001 he said 'We can't take any action that would lead to the collapse of the Zimbabwean

economy. That does not mean we accept everything that is happening there, the land occupations and the violence' (Sapa, 12.08.2001).

The **second** policy option was to encourage civil society in South Africa to engage in activities in support of finding solutions to Zimbabwe's crisis, which in Mbeki's analysis had grown from the land issue and the economy to include national reconciliation, the electoral process and food shortages (Mbeki, 2002b). In Mbeki's view, since 1998 '… various sectors of our society have intervened to lend a hand to the people of Zimbabwe to help them meet the challenges facing them. These have included the government, political parties, and the ANC in particular, the farmers, business people and our religious leaders' (Mbeki, 2002b). In early February 2002, Mbeki and Ministers Mdladlana (who heads the government's task force dealing with Zimbabwe), Pahad and Pahad met with various civil society groups to share ideas and agree on a common approach on how to deal with the Zimbabwe crisis. These included representatives of Cosatu, South African churches, business leaders from Anglo American, and the farming union AgriSA (Sapa, 7.02.2002).

Persistent critique from conservative and liberal civil society quarters (see the overview in the case study) prompted defensive responses from government. Democratic Alliance leader Tony Leon made a particularly hard-hitting speech at the Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg in December 2003, claiming 'Quiet diplomacy is dead. It breathed its last in the waning days of November, when Obasanjo announced that he would not, after all, be allowing Zimbabwe to attend the Commonwealth meeting in Abuja this week.' In Leon's analysis it has been clear for a long time that quiet diplomacy could not succeed, because it was not a strategy, had no clear goals, or any firm principles: 'It is a means, not an end. That is why it had to fail' (Leon, 2003).

Government responses to these critiques are important because they reveal which policy options it was not prepared to consider. These included so-called regime change, sanctions, and any form of hard intervention. In Pahad's view,

> Our critics fail to explain what 'megaphone diplomacy' has achieved. They fail or refuse to acknowledge that since the political and economic crisis started we have been tirelessly engaged in efforts to help the Zimbabweans to deal with their crisis. Any honest person, not motivated by hidden agendas, must acknowledge that we have consistently, bilaterally or through SADC, raised areas of concern and sought solutions. We reject any suggestions of regime change by force. Also, no Zimbabwean has called for sanctions and so this is not an option (Sapa, 18.2.2003).

The next month, on 3 March, Dlamini-Zuma told members of the Pretoria Press Club that governments could not use the same methods as the media: 'The problem with you is that you are waiting for one word – condemnation of Zimbabwe. You will never hear that. It is not going to happen as long as this government is in power' (Sapa, 03.3.2003).

In the third place, given the limited progress with the land issue, government's focus shifted towards working in a multilateral mode. Its strategy was now to combine political forces with SADC and the Commonwealth as the preferred vehicles to bring about change. It was believed that contrary to the hostile British and American approaches, these organisations had the required standing and influence to effect change in Zimbabwe. The preferred style of intervention was peer pressure and persuasion, delivered via the good offices of the leaders of these organisations. Key players turned out to be Mbeki himself, Obasanjo of Nigeria, SADC chair Muluzi of Malawi, and Commonwealth Secretary General McKinnon.

At the 2001 SADC Summit in Malawi, the organisation's fourteen members discussed the Zimbabwe situation because, in the words of Mbeki, '…they are concerned both about the country itself and its impact on the rest of the region' (Mbeki, 2001b). Summit agreed to assist Zimbabwe 'to pull the country out of its economic crisis', to assist with resolving the land crisis, and support democracy (Mbeki, 2001b). Consequently, it agreed that a SADC delegation would visit Zimbabwe to talk to as many sectors as possible and support all national efforts towards united action for stability and progress.

The delegation would consist of Heads of State of Malawi, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Botswana and South Africa. It also agreed that SADC should approach the international community for assistance '…by pursuing the pledges that were made in the past to help finance a programme of land and agrarian reform' (Mbeki, 2002b).

The Commonwealth Chairpersons' Committee on Zimbabwe (the 'Troika') comprised the Prime Minister of Australia (Chair) and the Presidents of Nigeria and South Africa. The Troika was mandated by Heads of Government at their 2002 summit to 'determine appropriate Commonwealth action on Zimbabwe' in accordance with the Harare Commonwealth Declaration and the Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme.

On 19 March 2002 the Committee decided to suspend Zimbabwe 'from the Councils of the Commonwealth' for one year with immediate effect. They agreed that the issue would be revisited twelve months later having regard to progress in Zimbabwe, based on the Commonwealth Harare Principles and reports from the Secretary-General. The Committee also mandated the Presidents of Nigeria and South Africa to continue to 'actively promote the process of reconciliation in Zimbabwe' and to appoint special representatives to remain engaged with all the parties concerned towards this end. The Committee had also mandated the Commonwealth Secretary-General to engage with the Government of Zimbabwe to ensure that the specific recommendations from the Commonwealth Observer Group (COG) to the March Presidential elections were respected and to remain actively engaged with the UNDP in promoting transparent, equitable and sustainable measures of land reform in Zimbabwe.

In the meantime, it emerged that Obasanjo undertook another diplomatic initiative in January 2002, by pressurising Mugabe into talking with the MDC. Reports claim that Obasanjo presented the proposal for negotiations to both Mugabe and Tsvangirai at separate meetings in Harare towards the end of January, and that when he returned to Harare in March to maintain the initiative, he also telephoned Mbeki to inform him of this. Consequently, both presidents met with Mugabe and Tsvangirai in Harare on 18 March (Financial Gazette, 04.4.2002).

In the fourth place, it is at this point that the South African government's strategy appears to have shifted towards the objective of persuading the Zimbabwean parties to adopt negotiations as the solution to the crisis. On 7 May, Pahad said 'National reconciliation in Zimbabwe must remain our goal' (Sapa, 07.5.2002). Mbeki reiterated this on 13 June in a television interview, when he responded to a question regarding the policy of quiet diplomacy:

> The specific things that we think need to happen in Zimbabwe are, first of all, that the political leadership in Zimbabwe must take a decision about its own country. We said both to the ruling party and to the main opposition the MDC, that in our view they had to get together and agree…Well, fortunately, they agreed. Talks have been adjourned, now we have intervened again to say we don't think the talks should be adjourned.
>
> The second thing…is linked to the question of what do you do to assist with regard to the economic recovery of Zimbabwe? We've made certain commitments…we actually have quite a detailed proposal from one of the developed countries to say if the political situation was right, these are the sorts of resources that would be immediately available to assist. But it is conditional on the resolution of the political matter. So there are many interventions of this kind (Sapa, 13 June 2002).

In early 2004, Pahad met academics in a roundtable meeting at the Human Sciences Research Council for purposes of 'clearing the air' and 'sharing information' regarding Zimbabwe. Based on personal notes and the transcript of the meeting (subsequently released for limited distribution), Pahad's input can be described as a reflection on government's analysis of the situation and its preferred policy approaches. He acknowledged that Zimbabwe's collapse would have disastrous consequences for South Africa, SADC countries and for Africa as a whole. He explained that government's first objective was to prevent the possibility of a civil war in Zimbabwe and, in that context, to

seek ways to stabilise the economic and political situation. He added that it was essential to act in the SADC context and to avoid unilateral actions, which would lead to (South Africa's) isolation in Africa. On this basis, he said, government has concluded that there was no alternative to so-called quiet diplomacy. This approach, he explained, was to look for solutions and avoid counter-productive publicity. He added that the making of strong statements was not an end in itself: 'Many of the supporters of loud diplomacy and measures such as sanctions have come to realise that this is also not working and that we need to find more creative solutions.'

Pahad said the post-1994 South African government intervened to try and convince the Zimbabwean government to change its (economic and social) policies to avoid disaster, and assisted it to renegotiate the terms of the SAP with the IMF.

However, he noted, at that point events were overtaken by the consequences of the accelerated land redistribution policy. He explained that in 1998, then-deputy president Mbeki initiated a process that led to an agreement between the government of the UK and other countries to fund a land reform programme by the Zimbabwean government. The South African government also approached the UNDP to assist with its implementation. For various reasons this agreement was not implemented.

Pahad also identified other reasons for the continuing tensions in Zimbabwe, highlighting political party dynamics and human rights abuse. He spoke about the 'serious weaknesses' in Zanu-PF as a party and as a government, as well as the poor tactical choices of the admittedly strong opposition, the MDC. In his view, every time there was progress they (MDC) resorted to mass action '…or there are press leaks that set things back'. He added that the South African government had expressed its concern about human rights violations. In his view, the resort to youth brigades and war veterans was dangerous.

He then dealt with the South African government's approach in more detail. In line with SADC, it opposed sanctions, because the sanctions that had been imposed were seen by

Zanu-PF as part of a drive by foreign governments for regime change. SADC was also suffering from the imposed sanctions such as the refusal by the US and EU to accept SADC delegations. It also opposed a strategy based on regime change (the so-called Milosevic option). He noted that South Africa lacked the resources for direct intervention, and argued that the South African government believed that the only long term solution will come through Zimbabweans getting their act together and deciding on a way forward without outside interference, including interference from South Africa. It has argued this view to the G8 and to the Nordic countries. In April 2002 both Mugabe and Tsvhangirai approved a Commonwealth initiative proposed by Mbeki to start inter-party talks. Representatives from South Africa and Nigeria negotiated an agenda with the following nine points: creation of conditions conducive to normal political activity, legitimate elections, respect for the sovereignty of Zimbabwe, confidence-building measures, politically motivated violence, constitution, economic development, consensus on land reform, and the way forward. These nine points, he believed, provided a basis for genuine negotiations and the longer the situation persists the worse it will become. It was essential for Zimbabweans to break through this vicious circle in order to find a solution. In summary he stated that his government was committed to finding a solution to the Zimbabwean crisis through its approach of quiet diplomacy and is working closely with other countries in the SADC and on the continent to achieve this.

6.4.2.1 Policy failure

By late 2001 the South African government had to admit to limited progress regarding its efforts to 'quietly' influence the Mugabe government. Interviewed on 6 August 2001 on the BBC's Hard Talk programme, Mbeki said he did not know why Mugabe had failed to listen:

> I don't know. What I know is that we can't afford a complete collapse of Zimbabwe on our borders, so we've got to try and do whatever we can. I am hoping that …a team of Commonwealth Ministers are just being established to deal with all of these questions and I'm hoping that we'll get something out of that particular process (Sapa, 6.08.2001).

During a public meeting in May 2002 Defence Minister Lekota admitted that quiet diplomacy and constructive engagement with Zimbabwe had failed. But he also stated that had South Africa publicly condemned Zimbabwe during its presidential elections, such measures would also have been counter-productive (Mail and Guardian, 12.5.2002). The melt-down in Zimbabwe was having a detrimental effect on the South African economy, as acknowledged by Reserve Bank governor Mboweni in September 2002 (Beeld, 26.9.2002). In December, Mbeki publicly admitted that his policy line had not brought the desired change (Business Day, 3.12.2001).

The Commonwealth was not making any progress either. Its Troika again met in Abuja, Nigeria, in September 2002. Following a review of recent political developments in Zimbabwe, the Committee 'deeply regretted that the process of reconciliation facilitated by the Special Envoys of the President of Nigeria and the President of South Africa had stalled' (Commonwealth, 2002). The Secretary-General reported that

> …as a consequence, the level of suspicion, division and hostility between the various parties in Zimbabwe has increased considerably in recent months and that reports of harassment of the political opposition, the press and sections of the judiciary continued (Commonwealth, 2002).

The Committee also noted that despite repeated efforts, including in collaboration with regional Commonwealth Heads of Government, the Commonwealth Secretary-General had been unable to establish a dialogue with the Government of Zimbabwe in fulfilment of his mandates. Further meetings of the CMAG took place, but by the time of the 2003 CHOGM meeting in Abuja, the die was cast. It became clear that progress was elusive. The meeting decided to maintain Zimbabwe's suspension (Commonwealth, 2003). In response Zimbabwe decided to terminate its membership of the Commonwealth, thereby effectively bringing the Commonwealth initiative to an end.

6.4.3 Assessment

The rational actor model allowed us to analyse South Africa's Zimbabwe policy. Firstly, the government has calculated the threats flowing from the unfolding crisis in Zimbabwe. Secondly, the key policy makers defined the South African government's goals quite clearly. Thirdly, they had applied their minds regarding the menu of choices or policy options to address the issue, and have made a strategic cost-benefit analysis of these. On this basis, they came to the conclusion that quiet diplomacy was the best choice, given the specific conditions in Zimbabwe.

However, the burning question is why the South African government pursued these policy options when in the view of itself and its political opponents, it resulted in failure? Could model II throw light on this question?

Model II (organisational behaviour) asks: 'from what organisational context, pressures, and procedures did this decision emerge?' This model focuses our attention to the structures that allows or constrains decision makers to pursue a certain course of action.

Is it possible that the South African government shared not one, but multiple views of the situation in Zimbabwe? Are there examples of inter-agency disagreement and friction? What abilities did it have to read the crisis objectively? Who created the menu of options for action and was there organisational capacity to implement decisions?

Turning to the interviews, a number of interesting additional explanations for government's policy choices emerge. Eddy Maloka notes that it is important to acknowledge that the South African government's policy was not static, that shifts occurred within the broad 'quiet diplomacy' approach (Maloka, 2003). In his view the policy shifted from outright support (for the ruling party in Zimbabwe) to an attempt at influencing leadership change in Zanu PF, to a negotiated political solution on the basis of a government of national unity (GNU). He also notes that the liberation movement dynamic in the region is key to understanding the policy options. For example, a key

influence on the ANC's choice to maintain solidarity with Zanu PF is the role of the international community. It is perceived that the latter has an agenda to remove ruling parties in the region, which would open the door for opposition parties to take over governments (Maloka, 2003).

The idea of an evolving quiet diplomacy resonates with Pahad's recollection. He explained the shifts as follows:

> Zimbabwe is critical to us because of its economic potential. We were mandated to renegotiate Zimbabwe's relationship with the IMF. Our Finance Minister spoke to the IMF. But then came the land issue. Our position was clear: land reform is key but must take place within the rule of law. We also concluded that after 28 years of one party rule the party structures decayed. On the other hand the MDC was a conglomeration of anything that stood against Mugabe. And they had no policies. They admitted that to us.
>
> Our immediate tactical objective then was to start interacting with both sides, to convince them to start some form of GNU. I believe there were elements on both sides that were hostile to the process…nevertheless we met both sides. We've managed to bring them close (Pahad, 2003).

Ibrahim's explanation for the foreign policy dilemma is that it '…is coloured by our relations with Zanu PF and the Frontline states. The ANC NEC view is that Zanu PF is still the most progressive force in Zimbabwe, although it has made errors' (Ibrahim, 2003). He argued that according to the December 2002 Presidential Report the ANC was concerned that outsiders – Westerners – wanted to bankroll the creation of an opposition, so it was worried about the role of Renamo and the MDC. In his analysis, the ANC does not want to throw its weight in with the MDC, given that it was suspicious of its backers – but, at the same time, it was very frustrated with Zanu PF's inability to resolve the crisis. Ibrahim concluded that '…Mbeki feels that he's run out of initiatives but doesn't want to take a hard line in order not to lose the go-between role' (Ibrahim, 2003).

Geldenhuys provides another view. He argues that

> …since Mbeki took over (as president) I picked up sensitivity on Africa. South Africa is sensitive to be seen to be taking foreign policy decisions on Africa on its own – it prefers the multilateral route. On Zimbabwe, South Africa was falling in line with SADC positions…it would never choose otherwise (Geldenhuys, 2003).

Former SACOB director Raymond Parsons is much more critical of this aspect of the South African government's approach:

> The mistake was continuing with the brotherhood – the whole Africanist thing – respect for age, and so on…we're an emerging market – do they realise the impact of 'dropping clangers' [meaning making mistakes] upon the value of the Rand? (Parsons, 2003).

He also questions the decision making process on Zimbabwe, which he terms 'democratic centralism':

> …how much intellectual capital goes into thinking about problems such as Zimbabwe? All of a sudden, a decision emerges. Despite so many workshops, why? There must be a systematic failure in the state's decision making processes. Cohesive decision making is not served by ad hoc consultation or advice (Parsons, 2003).

Unfortunately our information on Cosatu's approach to the Zimbabwe crisis is fragmentary. Dlamini (2002) explains Cosatu's initial approach:

> Zimbabwe became a big issue for Cosatu in 2000. We had always had contact with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions to the extent that around October 1999 Cosatu sent Willie Madisha and myself to Zimbabwe to meet with the

various unions to find out what the situation was. We also met with the representatives of the ILO as well as the International Trade Union Solidarity structures…we went there on a fact-finding mission and by that time it was clear that there was a big problem that had developed between the Zimbabwean government and the trade unions.

At that time the MDC was still in its infancy and had not much impact yet, and Morgan Tsvangirai was still the general secretary of the ZCTU. The 'quiet diplomacy' policy of the SA government had not yet been as prominent as it is now (Dlamini, 2002).

6.4.4 Conclusion

The Zimbabwe case study reveals a number of insights. Seen in the context of the other two case studies, and in light of the exploration of the institutional setting in chapter four it appears that the South African government had re-organised and refined its foreign policy making tools to deal with perceived crises more adequately. Between 1995 and the early 2000s the state has indeed introduced more sophisticated policy making structures, including a National Security Council (an outcome of lessons learnt from the Lesotho crisis, although there is no evidence of its role vis-à-vis Zimbabwe). Similarly it appears that the state's analysis of the situation had developed significantly – the quality of Pahad's analysis of the situation suggests that he and his colleagues were well-informed about the basics. Yet the question persists: why the seeming inability, between 1994 and 2002, to deal with the matter?

Several responses are possible. The first is a moral judgment. It would be wrong (and logistically impossible) for South Africa to bring about regime change. Short of a forceful intervention (blockade, military action) there was not much else that South Africa could have done to influence the situation. The assumption is that internal Zimbabwean dynamics would dictate its political future. In this sense then, regardless of decision making processes, the South African government's hands were tied by the

international rules of state interaction. These rules include the well-known trio of sovereignty, respect for territorial integrity and non-interference. Even the more recent interpretations of sovereignty which allow for humanitarian intervention under certain conditions (genocide, large-scale violence, crimes against humanity) did not open the door for South Africa to consider stronger action on Zimbabwe, since there was no regional or international consensus that such conditions existed in Zimbabwe. The rules of inter-state diplomacy also encourage states to participate in, and abide by the decisions of regional, continental and international organisations – an option South Africa exercised in actively participating in SADC, AU and UN processes. Consequently many believe that although South Africa's national interests dictated some form of action, 'quiet diplomacy' was the best it could do, given the realities of inter-state relations. From this reading of the situation, there was no policy failure to speak of – if anything the government's responses were realistic and merely needed better public communication and explanation.

There is another interpretation. Not everybody is convinced government's identification of the situation was accurate enough to allow the generation of appropriate policy responses. Did it read Zimbabwe's internal political dynamics well enough? And who did that, anyway? Why was the idea of 'Mugabe's exit' obsessively discussed in policy circles as a real option prior to the presidential election, when Mugabe himself never intended to retire from the political scene (voluntary or forcefully)? How realistic was the policy option of a negotiated settlement and a GNU? Was the South African government able to anticipate developments in Zimbabwe and therefore in a position to develop policy options pro-actively?

Despite substantial progress with the organisational restructuring and upgrading of the foreign policy decision making machinery, there seemed to be a missing element, namely the existence of the 'action channel': an established process for aggregating competing perceptions, preferences, and stands of players in making decisions and taking action. There is little evidence to suggest it existed and was active in terms of crisis decision making, whether at the level of the NSC, NICOC, the Presidency, the IRPS cluster or

elsewhere. This is not to say that crisis decision making did not take place; the question is whether these crucial decision making bodies and the players within were drawn together by such an established process of aggregating decision making. The black box of decision making remains frustratingly impenetrable; despite our knowledge of the role of a small number of non-state actors ('trusted' NGOs and academics) in the foreign policy decision making process, on critical issues they are bound by the rules of non-disclosure. With a credible action channel in place and operational, the South African government's responses to Zimbabwe's multiple crises could conceivably have been developed and implemented more successfully.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

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CONCLUSIONS

International incidents should not govern foreign policy,
but foreign policy, incidents

Napoleon Bonaparte

7.1 Outline of this chapter

This chapter offers an interpretation of the findings of the study. It also reviews the research process and reflects on methodological issues that emerged during the design phase. It starts with an introduction to the nature of the questions the study attempted to address, and then identifies and discusses theoretical lessons from the case studies. The chapter then reviews the data collection process and concludes with some comments regarding the experience of applying Allison's models in the South African setting.

7.2 Introduction

In 1994, the world witnessed a brutal attempt at exterminating an entire minority group. This had happened before, most infamously in Nazi Germany, Stalin's Soviet Union, Turkey in the early 1900s and in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, but the widespread slaughter of Tutsi men, women and children by their Hutu counterparts in Rwanda – although not the first such incident on the continent – was the worst form of mass killing Africa has ever experienced (de Waal, 2000). How did the South African government respond to the unfolding tragedy in Rwanda in mid-1994? No government could claim not to have known of the unfolding events (although some attempted some response; Melvern, 2000). The genocide of over 800 000 people in a matter of months can be described as a crisis in the true sense of the word. From an international perspective, the incident constituted a severe threat to the basic values of the political system, it happened in a relatively short time, and there was an increased expectation by those involved that

hostilities would sharply escalate (see chapter two for a discussion of *crisis*). Analysts have not adequately explored the South African government's apparent lack of response. Pressed for an explanation, one might argue that given the timing and nature of the rather delicate transition from apartheid to democracy, the new government, elected in April 1994, hardly had time to focus its attention on crises elsewhere. South Africa at that time was very concerned about the possibilities of a violent backlash by anti-democratic forces. However, the Rwandan crisis was long in the making – a large-scale genocide takes months or even years of preparation, including the acquisition of weapons from external sources (De Waal, 2000). One would have expected the ANC to rely on its African network, built up during its time in exile, to inform it of the impending crisis and to have exerted some influence upon the situation. Moreover, one would have expected representatives of the new government to immediately raise the issue at the level of the OAU or UN. After all, in 1994 South Africa was elected to the OAU Central Organ for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (Mandela, 1996). Was the new government deliberately ignoring the crisis in Rwanda, as so many other governments chose to do?

It was only ten years later that Mbeki gave a clear explanation of the government's thinking at the time. During a visit to Kigali, on the 10th commemoration of the genocide, he addressed the Rwandese president with the following words:

> History decreed, Mr President that during the very same month that your country and people saw the beginning of the unimaginable nightmare of genocide, your brothers and sisters in South Africa ended the apartheid system by participating in our very first democratic elections. Because we were preoccupied with extricating ourselves from our own nightmare, we did not cry out as loudly as we should have against the enormous and heinous crime against the people of Rwanda that was committed in 1994. For this, we owe the people of Rwanda a sincere apology, which I now extend… (Mbeki, 2004).

Mbeki then offered a significant further explanation of behind-the-scenes developments at that time. He revealed that the apartheid administration supplied some of the weapons used by those who massacred a million of their compatriots. He also said that the ANC was requested by the Rwandan Patriotic Front to ask the apartheid regime to stop the supply of weapons, but that the latter refused: 'representatives of the oppressor regime boldly asserted the precedence of profit from the sale of the instruments of death over the lives of the people of Rwanda' (Mbeki, 2004). From this we can deduce that both the outgoing and incoming government (to be precise, the Transitional Executive Council or TEC, made up of representatives of the NP, ANC and smaller parties) had knowledge of the impending crisis in Rwanda, that the ANC component of the interim government had acted in a limited fashion, but even if it had wanted to respond more comprehensively, domestic circumstances – the nature of the regime change – made any such intervention next-to-impossible.

This dramatic example of crisis behaviour brings to the fore the various factors at play when a government is faced with a crisis and has to develop a response (whether action or inaction). As we have learnt from the theory, foreign policy choices depend on the interpretation of the situation by senior decision makers, as well as the nature of the decision making process itself. A further key factor involves an appreciation of context: an understanding of the environment, both domestic and external, against which decisions are made, is necessary in order to fully explain a foreign policy decision.

In the case of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, it is quite clear the ANC and therefore the new government had knowledge of the situation. It is also clear from Mbeki's revelation that it interacted with key players in that situation. However, several factors conspired to prevent it from making a stronger intervention. The first is that the ANC was taking control of the machinery of governance, including staffing the foreign policy decision making structures, precisely at the same time as the genocide unfolded. As we have seen from the description of the institutional setting (chapter four) this transformation process was difficult and time-consuming (Evans, 1995, Alden, 1993). Second, in terms of policy objectives, the focus was very much on the normalisation of South Africa's

political and economic relations with the international community (Mandela, 1993). This occupied the agenda of the foreign policy makers for many months following the 1994 elections. As important were the pressing objectives of domestic stabilisation and transformation (Bond, 2000, Marais, 2001). It is against this background that it becomes clear that even if the new government had wanted to intervene more forcefully in the Rwanda crisis, circumstances prevented it from doing so.

Nevertheless, what of subsequent government responses to perceived crises on the continent? Surely, by now it has the structures and processes in place to develop adequate responses, particularly one as close at home as Zimbabwe? We explore these factors by looking at the three case studies and the insights they yield.

7.3 Foreign Policy Analysis and Allison's Models

7.3.1 The rational actor model (Model I)

Our study supports one of the key findings by a range of foreign policy analysts (Allison and Zelikow, 1999, Hermann, 2001) that reliance on the dominant rational actor model (Model I) alone is not enough if one wants to explain a foreign policy decision or event. Although of limited applicability, it is of undeniable value: it clarifies issues. As we noted in chapter three, this model submerges the internal complexities of governmental decision making in the simplification of a united, purposive actor. It allows the analyst to package otherwise confusing and even contradictory details in terms of a single dynamic. In this way, it is possible to find answers (chapter six) to questions such as why the South African government pursued sanctions against the Abacha regime, why it intervened militarily in Lesotho, and why it chose 'quiet diplomacy' in its response to the Zimbabwe crisis.

7.3.2 Organisational behaviour (Model II)

Very little evidence emerges to point to foreign policy decisions as outputs of large organisations functioning according to regular patterns of behaviour. The assumption of Model II is that individual decision makers have a difficult time managing the influence and control of large organisations. It notes that presidents often find their choices determined for them by organisational procedures. In the case of South Africa, between 1994 and 2002, the opposite situation prevailed. This is because the nature of the transformation process in South Africa in the 1990s delayed the emergence of stable organisational architectures and standard operating procedures to such an extent that individuals without the backing or safety net of institutions undertook policy making during crises. In many cases decision makers have little 'fixed procedures and programmes' to draw on and therefore rely on personal preferences, analyses and networks to come to a decision. As discussed elsewhere in the study, Mandela was very much his own man. He single-handedly declined a request for mediation by the Polisario Front, and announced South Africa's diplomatic recognition of the PRC (and the simultaneous de-recognition of Taiwan) with little prior consultation. In the case of Nigeria, it was up to Mandela, attending a Commonwealth meeting in New Zealand at the time the crisis broke, to analyse the situation, formulate alternatives, make a choice, and run with it. Back in Pretoria, relevant departments and Parliament, caught off guard, were playing catch-up as Mandela moved from one decision to another.

In the case of Lesotho, the study's key finding is that decision making took place against a backdrop of organisational disorder. Relevant state departments and agencies (including Parliament) were either bypassed or wilfully ignored, leading to poor quality of decision making which in this case led to tragic consequences (a military intervention, one would assume, would always be accompanied by professional data gathering and analysis – that is, good intelligence).

Policy failure in this case then can be attributed to a combination of a weak institutional setting and an unclear 'chain of command' regarding decision making – although

technically correct, the practical reality was that neither Mandela nor Mbeki was perceived to be driving this particular policy objective. That is another way of saying that the 'action channel' was weak or perhaps even non-existent. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether government had succeeded in rectifying this policy making shortcoming.

In the case of Zimbabwe, we discovered that although government was beginning to overcome the dysfunctional organisational culture, not enough was done to enable better decision making. Indeed, it is unclear to what extent a more co-ordinated and centralised governance structure (introduced in 1999 and described in chapter four) enhances foreign policy making vis-à-vis critical issues. The question is whether government is able to introduce and operationalise an action channel for foreign policy decision making, particularly during crisis. It has become clear that such a policy making instrument is necessary for effective policy outputs, whereby an established process is used for aggregating competing perceptions, preferences, and stands of players in making decisions and taking action.

7.3.3 Governmental Politics (Model III)

The description of decision making, which we find in Model III, appears quite relevant for most of our cases. Recall that this model views government action as the result of bargaining games between many actors as players who represent government departments or agencies, each with their own interests to pursue, which might or might not converge on any particular issue. From the perspective of this model,

> Government actions are really an agglomeration or collage composed of relatively independent decisions and actions by individuals and groups of players …as well as formal governmental decisions and actions that represent a combination of the preferences and relative influence of central players or subsets of players in more specific circumstances (Allison and Zelikow, 1999: 235).

In other words, the push and pull of politics often prevent or impede the establishment or efficient operation of an 'action channel', and we found this to be generally true for crisis foreign policy decision making in South Africa in the period under review. In the Nigeria case, we found a very narrow circle of decision makers in charge. In the case of Lesotho, there was little co-operation or co-ordination between various players to produce an optimal policy response. Consequently when a decision was made to intervene, the implementation thereof was characterised by mismanagement, incompetence, and misunderstanding. The case of Zimbabwe is more difficult to summarise. The application of Model I demonstrated that the decision makers' analysis of the situation was sophisticated and the setting of goals progressed in a logical manner. The accusation that South Africa had no policy on Zimbabwe was only true in the sense that government's policy objectives lacked proper public communication. By applying Model II we conclude that little or no standard operating procedures existed to allow the aggregation of competing perceptions and preferences for making decisions and taking action. Hence, as Model III suggests, decisions regarding the Zimbabwe situation remained concentrated at the top, with Mbeki and his close advisors determining outputs.

It could be argued that such behaviour is to be expected from leaders facing a crisis – indeed, a key argument of Allison's *Essence of Decision* is that a small committee of influential men (the Executive Committee of the National Security Council) determined the American response to a perceived nuclear threat from the USSR. However, it could equally be argued that the smaller the circle, the greater the impact of misperception (Jervis, 1976) and groupthink (Janis, 1972) whereby members of a cohesive group strive for unanimity, in the process overriding their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action. However, to fully explore this avenue of research requires the construction of individual decision makers' belief systems and operational codes – as we noted in chapter two, a methodologically demanding course of action.

Model III is difficult to operationalise. This is where the analyst is expected to work creatively with acquiring and interpreting available information in order to weave an account of the decision making process that sounds credible. Our experience reveals a

number of methodological difficulties. Finding answers to the seemingly straightforward operational questions (who plays what kinds of games to achieve which outcomes?) requires an inordinate amount of information. Complicating the matter is the fact that most information dealing with crisis decision making is treated as classified, making access difficult. As an outsider (to the decision making process) the expectation of untangling the details of bargaining between key players becomes difficult to meet.

And perhaps as important, the assumption of Model III that decision-making results from compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interests and unequal influence (Allison and Zelikow, 1999: 295) needs careful interpretation. As discussed in chapter four, South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy decision-making structures, processes, and the individuals who occupy those positions displays a larger amount of cohesion and unity than disagreement and contradiction. This is not to argue that policy disagreements do not exist; rather, in the foreign policy arena there is little scope for divergence, given the ANC's broad but nevertheless progressive ideological coherence, built around Mbeki's view of the world and based upon the ANC's seven 'principles'. Again, there is ample evidence that between 1994 and 2002, Mbeki as president of the party and the country has had an overriding influence on the content of international relations debates and thinking inside the ANC and government (Jacobs and Calland, 2003). Hence, decision makers with alternative interpretations would not easily reveal their views, and consequently interviews tended to mirror this power relationship.

In summary, we can present our findings as follows:

Table 15 Explanatory efficacy of the models

South African foreign policy responses to perceived crises in:	Models of decision making		
	Rational Actor (I)	Organisational Behaviour (II)	Governmental Politics (III)
Nigeria (1995) (quiet diplomacy/sanctions)	Partially	No	Yes
Lesotho (1998) (mediation/military intervention)	Partially	Partially	Yes
Zimbabwe (2000) (quiet diplomacy)	Partially	No	Yes

Generally, how does one evaluate models? Chapter two suggests applying the criteria of plausibility – evaluating a model in terms of the quality of its arguments. Our experience suggests that model I – rational actor – is consistent with available evidence, but does not explain very much, and does not really say anything different to any existing theory (such as realism and its variants which similarly assume rational decision making behaviour). The score for Model II – organisational behaviour – is less optimistic. From a South African perspective, one cannot automatically assume the presence of strong state capacity (organisational structures, processes and people operating under established SOPs) as a key feature of the foreign policy decision making process. Model III – governmental politics – is consistent with available evidence (to the extent that one can accurately depict the games players play), seems to explain much, and adds to our understanding. Limits to its applicability are discussed below.

7.4 Reflections on the collection and interpretation of data

The gathering of documentary evidence regarding the theory and practice of public policy, and in our case, foreign policy, was straightforward and without much complication. The requirement to complement this information by way of conducting interviews with players who were influential in the decision making process was not so

easy to achieve; nor the gathering of evidence of foreign policy decision making processes (the 'who said what to whom, and when' variety).

Chapter three details the interviews on which the study drew. Aspects of the interview process were complex and frustrating. The process included obtaining a letter of introduction from the supervisor. This letter was included in the written request for face-to-face interviews, made to all interviewees. This was followed by telephone calls to request or confirm appointments. Several interviews did not materialise, for a variety of reasons (see chapter three for detail). These formal procedures, although understandably important, tended to make access to high-level decision makers difficult.

Regarding the content of the interviews, we can draw several lessons. The initial approach taken by the author was to present an interviewee with a brief summary of the research project and a small number of probing questions prior to the interview, in order to help prepare the person with the discussion. The interview experience revealed the limitations of this approach. Interviewees appreciated the overview of the project but except for some academics, none showed much interest in the theoretical arguments underpinning the research. Instead, interviewees were more prepared to talk about their personal experiences in relation to the issues under investigation. This line of investigation was thought to be valuable and the author spent considerable time trying to 'locate' the individual in the broader foreign policy process (for example, as an ice-breaker the author asked "where were you when crisis x broke?"). Intriguingly, few interviewees seem to have had an opportunity (yet) to speak publicly of their role in the foreign policy process relating to the three crises. This resulted in a unique situation where the seemingly strict rules for conducting interviews were discarded in favour of an approach that allowed interviewees to 'freely associate'. Many used the time to review and reflect rather broadly on what happened, and their role in the process. Interviews therefore turned out to be the opposite of ticking boxes on questionnaire forms – the interview with Mr Pahad for example developed into a two-and-a-half hour talking session, much to the annoyance of his personal assistant. There is therefore much value in getting interviewees to talk freely, but some dangers as well, such as the inability to

use a senior decision maker's time effectively during an interview to respond to key questions. It is hardly feasible to redo an interview, covering the same set of questions, without annoying the interviewee, and therefore disturbing the delicate relationship between interviewer and interviewee. This researcher did not attempt such a strategy.

The question of the researcher's relationship to the foreign policy decision makers, raised in chapter three, is pertinent and needs reflection. Given his earlier foreign policy engagements (through research and policy advice) he was able to gain 'privileged' access to decision makers and occasionally, behind-the-scenes decision making dynamics. This assisted to some extent with the setting up of interviews with busy decision makers. However, being based at an academic institution removed him from direct involvement and this allowed him to develop a reflective approach to foreign policy making and makers. In this sense, then, it was possible for the interviewer to project a neutral posture in the interview. Being neutral in an interview situation is not always possible, of course. One is always tempted to employ 'friendly' interview techniques (open body language, avoiding disagreements, encouragement to tell more, etc) but one can be neutral in the sense of neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the interviewee's version of events. Regrettably, interviews with presidents Mandela and Mbeki never materialised; a shortcoming in the process. In addition, because of the rules of non-disclosure, the researcher refrained from adding some of his prior experiences and information about closed decision making processes or outcomes into the text. In this sense, the final text does not always tell the story in full – a shortcoming especially regarding explanations of the dynamics of governmental politics underlying all policy decisions (Model III).

The interpretation of the collected data generally corresponded with the guidelines provided by Ely (1997) as specified in chapter three. In practical terms the researcher turned to analysis only at the point where all the interviews were completed and additional data were collected. The first step was to 'segment' the information into meaningful units, corresponding to the cases. This yielded an enormous amount of detailed information, which was further sorted in terms of the key questions emanating from Allison's three models. The analysis then proceeded based on the questions the

models ask of each case, and involved comparison, a flexible and tentative exercise. As Ely suggests, the manipulation of the data during analysis was an eclectic activity, neither mechanistic, nor scientific – a type of 'intellectual craftsmanship'. The challenge for the researcher was to create order out of a chaotic collection of data, and in his experience, the first *key challenge* was the need to understand the timeline of the individual cases both in terms of what happened (breaking events on the ground, so to speak), and the decision makers' responses. The ability to align events and decisions is something that occupied Allison's work as well. The second key challenge, interpretation of the resultant sets of data, is an issue we now turn to.

7.5 Policy making

It is necessary to reflect on the relationship between theory and practice – that is, between the theoretical insights provided by the literature on foreign policy analysis and public policy and the study of the South African government's foreign policy making on African crises. The study shows a comfortable fit between these two themes and the analysis of foreign policy in practice demonstrates the applicability of the definitions of public policy, policy formation, policy analysis and decision making (as discussed in chapter two). We recommend a re-interpretation of two concepts. The first is *public policy making*, originally understood to refer to the process whereby authoritative plans or courses of action are devised on public issues. The study suggests that senior decision makers often face situations of incomplete or inaccurate information, limited time and pressure to show results, and therefore, the making of authoritative courses of action becomes difficult. Hence, we understand public policy-making to be a political problem-solving activity in the face of complexity rather than a logical process involving well-informed calculations by rational actors who seek to maximise economic utility, political power, or organisational effectives. Secondly, the presentation of the public policy process in chapter two identified the *policy formation stage* (a combination of the policy formulation, decision and implementation phases) as conceptually distinct and potentially useful for our analysis. Our analysis demonstrates that decision makers cannot engage in policy formation unless they have recognised a problem as deserving of governmental

action (the policy agenda phase). More broadly, we conclude that the approach which divides the policy process into stages and phases (see table three, chapter two) might be analytically useful but seems artificial, because in reality the process does not always run in a linear fashion, and as we suggest above, is often the victim of chaos and complexity. If questions of operationalisation are addressed, the new generation models and concepts of networks, communities, streams, advocacy coalitions and complex adaptive systems should be able to provide the analyst with a deeper understanding of the dynamics of decision making in the public policy environment (Parsons, 1995).

7.6 The value of Allison's Models

The organisational-process and bureaucratic politics models have intuitive appeal because they move beyond the model of a unitary state with an objective national interest. Appealing as they are, they have generated questions and criticisms, some of which were discussed in chapter two. Here we will focus on the key question of their applicability in non-US settings. Analysts argue that the models seem most applicable to developed states with complex bureaucracies and democratic institutions. In developing countries with small bureaucracies and a history of presidential authority, bureaucratic competition and operational routines can hardly explain policy – seemingly true for most Southern African countries (Khadiagala and Lyons, 2001). South Africa can be regarded as a developing country, but with a complex bureaucracy and evolving democratic institutions. Policy making takes place in and through institutions infused with the ideals of democratic governance, including multiparty politics and regular elections, a progressive constitution, entrenched civil liberties, the separation of powers, a strong parliament and a robust civil society (Daniel, Habib and Southall, 2003). Yet, research on Canada has suggested that these models do not work well in countries with Western-style parliamentary systems. The reason is that 'in parliamentary systems the concentration of political authority in cabinet allows the political executive to impose constraints on legitimate conflict between policy makers at lower levels in the decision making process' (Mansbach, 1994: 383). Judged from the comments of parliamentarians interviewed for this study, it seems to be true for South Africa as well and this reality

places limits on the applicability of models II and III. Policy choices are largely determined by the values of top decision makers rather than by the parochial values of lower-level bureaucrats. Despite this criticism, the models have allowed us to focus on bureaucratic competition and organisational routine (or more precisely the absence of coordination and harmonisation) in the South African context. We were able to identify the absence of an action channel that opened the door for an explanation of certain foreign policy outcomes which the rational actor model tended to obscure or underplay. Indeed, the existence of an established (and credible) process for aggregating competing perceptions, preferences, and stands of players in making decisions and taking action seems to be the most critical factor influencing the ability of the state to engage in systematic foreign policy decision making regarding crises.

We recommend therefore that future analyses of this kind focus more closely on uncovering the action channel or where it does not exist, spelling out the implications. Such a focus should also pay particular attention to the existence of a range of factors that in our view impacts heavily on crisis decision making in the South African setting. These include:

- the historical experiences of decision makers (for example, the impact of liberation struggle and exile on cultures of decision making),
- the power of personality (in many cases a president exercises a commanding influence, if not iron grip, on the levers of political power),
- the absence of stable institutional settings (that tends to weaken the establishment and operation of an action channel),
- weak parliamentary participation and oversight in crisis decision making.

It is also worth restating the value of recognising the role of the seven causal factors (part of Model III) in explaining results of group decision making. These include:

- the focus on channels, not boxes – that is, the design and management of decision making processes,

- the interests which decision makers and their agents bring to the table,
- who participates and in what roles,
- the impact of decision rules (our study suggests crisis-related decisions in settings such as South Africa are often informal, ad hoc and consensus-seeking),
- the way problems are framed (agenda setting),
- groupthink, and
- the complexity of joint action.

Finally, a broad criticism of the models relates to their explanatory power. It is true that the decision making paradigm fails to identify all the units of analysis that can help us understand foreign policy. For example, the models do not adequately capture the effect of international institutions (UN, SADC), the structure of the global system (power, globalisation), or the influence of sub national actors (NGOs, business, labour). It seems that most analyses based on Allison's models are aware of these shortcomings and do not pretend to be comprehensive (Allison and Zelikow, 1999). Our study deliberately focused on the activities of the state – foreign policy behaviour in very specific conditions – and therefore did not attempt to provide a comprehensive account of all the influences upon policy making. The challenge was precisely to steer away from global and international theories and to examine the inner workings of the black box of decision making. To that end, the literature on policy making, including foreign policy making in response to perceived crisis, proved useful and insightful.

In conclusion, we recommend the Allison models and concepts to researchers eager to contribute to knowledge of foreign policy decision making in African or more broadly 'global South' settings, but with some qualifications or modifications. Although we have elaborated on the latter, it is worth restating the key points:

- All the models are worth applying: even if some offer sub-optimal explanations, the value lies in comparing and contrasting the various perspectives.
- In exploring decision making from the perspective of Model III the focus should be on the 'action channel', and the implications of its existence/absence.

- Recognition should be made of the range of South African content-specific factors affecting decision making, as identified in the preceding paragraphs.
- A key test would be to determine whether the information one needs to make Model III applicable, actually exists or is readily available. Recall that Allison and Zelikow were able to draw on many years of data collection as well as the release of declassified transcripts of decision making sessions – a critical source of information not always available to researchers looking at South African cases.
- Another key ingredient would be integrity and trust – few researchers would be able to meaningfully excavate the black box of decision making without sustaining those values.

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Addendum One **The core questions relating to Allison and Zelikow's three models** (Allison and Zelikow, 1999: 389-90)

Model I Questions:

1. What are the objective (or perceived) circumstances that the state conceives as threats and opportunities?
2. What are the state's goals (e.g. survival, maximisation of power, regional stability, etc)?
3. What are the objective (or perceived) options for addressing this issue?
4. What are the objective (or perceived) strategic costs and benefits of each option?
5. What is the state's best choice given these conditions?

Model II Questions:

1. Of what organisations (and organisational components) does the government consist?
2. What capabilities and constraints do these organisations' existing SOPs create in producing information about international conditions, threats, and opportunities?
3. What capabilities and constraints do these organisations' existing SOPs create in generating the menu of options for action?
4. What capabilities and constraints do these organisations' existing SOPs establish for implementing whatever is chosen?

Model III Questions:

1. Who plays? That is, whose views and values count in shaping the choice and action?
2. What factors shape each player's (a) perceptions; (b) preferred course of action; and thus (c) the player's stand on the issue?
3. What factors account for each player's impact on the choice and action?
4. What is the 'action channel', that is, the established process for aggregating competing perceptions, preferences, and stands of players in making decisions and taking action?