

CHAPTER 7:

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

The international community plays a pivotal role in any in - depth analysis of a state and its foreign policy due to the effect that foreign policy has on other states, the way international law binds countries to one another, and the fact that international trading and technology increasingly connect the globe more and more.

This chapter focuses on South African and British foreign policy and the effect that Zimbabwe's land redistribution programme has had on them. It is important to investigate these foreign policies in order to give a view of Zimbabwean land reform. The effect of land on Zimbabwe's foreign policy toward South Africa and Britain was investigated in the previous chapter, and their foreign policy is reviewed here in order to produce a picture of the separate effect the same issue has on the foreign policy and decision – making of two foreign countries.

The section entitled “The Decisions of States” in Chapter 4 will briefly be applied to the foreign policy sections of this chapter in order to fully unravel the action that is foreign policy decision – making. This is done in order to ascertain why certain actions were taken, and what affected decisions.

This chapter also includes and investigation into regional co – operation in Africa and the effect Zimbabwe has had on it, and the influence certain regional organisations have had, and continue to have, on Zimbabwe. This investigation is important because it places Zimbabwe in the larger context of the African continent, and it highlights the mechanisms for co – operation and their limitations.

SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD ZIMBABWE

South Africa has always been very closely associated with Zimbabwe. South Africa's foreign policy toward Zimbabwe over the last five years has been questioned more and more due to the increasing seriousness of land redistribution in Zimbabwe. This has also raised questions of land redistribution in South Africa.¹

To better understand South Africa's involvement with Zimbabwe, one has to view the history of its foreign policy toward Zimbabwe. After the coup de tat in Portugal in 1974 that installed a government that strongly favoured decolonisation (Mozambique gained its independence from Portugal a year later), South Africa began to promote a negotiated settlement in Zimbabwe between Smith and the African nationalists.² This was because South Africa was a lifeline to Rhodesia for years in terms of economic imports and exports and foreign investment, not to mention military equipment and support during the armed struggle.

Independence from white - rule came to Botswana in 1966, and Angola and Mozambique in 1975. South Africa itself, had gained full independence from Britain in 1961, yet in its case, the majority of the population (black people) did not control the government. Instead, power had been kept in the hands of the white population. It is surprising then that the Nationalist Party in South Africa had always opposed decolonisation (for example, Harold Macmillan's "Winds of Change" speech of 1960 was vilified in South Africa³), because it promoted black – majority rule in the rest of the region and led to pressure being applied on SA by organisations like NAM to reach a negotiated settlement. By supporting decolonisation, the SA government had to realise that new black – majority government would not look upon Apartheid with approval.

During the 1970s, South Africa adhered to a two – track approach to its foreign policy toward Rhodesia. One track was that South Africa's vital support was never fully removed from the country (for example, military aid), and the other track was that South Africa applied political pressure on Rhodesia to reach a negotiated settlement.⁴ This was because South Africa was only beginning to accept the inevitability of a black – ruled government in Rhodesia. This 'outward' policy was also used to attract attention away from Apartheid and South Africa's isolation.⁵

In terms of foreign policy decision – making in an international relations context, the above – mentioned approach of the 'old South Africa' was one in which the regional environment played a large role. For this reason, Allison's model number 2 can be applied, suggesting that South Africa's foreign policy toward Rhodesia was to some

extent influenced by political bargaining (a fight between those who wanted to remain as isolated as possible – especially considering South Africa's defeat in Angola in mid – 1976⁶ – and those who wanted to use diplomacy to deflect attention from the Apartheid regime). However, this was not really a successful strategy under Vorster due to the fact that the domestic situation in South Africa was so severe - internally he harshly suppressed the Soweto uprisings in 1976, which attracted much international attention.⁷

The normative notions of order, justice, freedom and change now greatly effect popular opinion about Zimbabwe.⁸ Justice and freedom are also realist notion, yet realists need to confront the realities of power among states – some gain power and some lose power, and therefore power and the balance thereof persist.⁹ The notion of justice also includes human rights protection and practices. A need for order, justice, freedom, and change in Zimbabwe is an opinion held by many South Africans considering the transition that the country made from Apartheid - to a negotiated settlement – to an entrenched democracy. For this reason, a want for order, justice, freedom, and change for the people of Zimbabwe is not that far fetched.

Since the late 1990s onset of what has been called, the Zimbabwean 'crisis', virtually all attempts at explaining (or rationalising) South Africa's foreign policy towards Zimbabwe have been dominated by a one – dimensional focus on the political context of policy – making. In the few instances where economic considerations have come into play, the arguments have focussed on altruistic motivations to avert a complete 'collapse' of the Zimbabwean economy and prevent any associated domestic and/or regional contagion.¹⁰

This altruistic approach is not sound. Zimbabwe's economy has already collapsed, and the solution is not for South Africa to prop up what's left. One has to ask the question, "What is needed to rebuild Zimbabwe's economy?" The only answer to this question is massive political and economic reform. That is what South Africa should be supporting.

When referring to "domestic contagion", the land issue in South Africa is implied. For Mbeki government and many black people in South Africa, Mugabe is addressing what Mbeki calls "one of the enduring legacies of colonialism".¹¹ There is a racial

divide in this debate due to the fact that the “legacy” is large – scale white ownership of land at the expense of the black majority.

Even though Mbeki will not publicly reprimand Mugabe, he has not dealt with the land issue in his country the same way. This suggests that he strongly disagrees with Mugabe’s implementation. Much of the land legislation in South Africa was implemented before Mbeki’s presidency, but he has not fought any legislation, and if anything, he has supported it. One could assume from this that Mbeki has supported this legislation because he fears a repeat situation of what is happening in Zimbabwe in his own country.

Following the promulgation of the Restitution of Land Rights Act, Act 22 of 1994, members of the public were invited to submit land claims before a deadline that was extended to 31 December 1998. A total of 68, 878 restitution claims were registered with the Land Claims Commission, which investigates the validity of each claim, and recommends a resolution to the Land Claims Court for approval or adjudication in the event that a claim is contested.

This legal process started very slowly. By September 2000, 12, 623 households had received a total of 268, 306 hectares - or less than one percent of land available for redistribution. However, following an instruction to the Commission by President Thabo Mbeki to finalise all land claims by the end of 2005, the pace accelerated remarkably. By October 2002, more than half of the claims (35, 173) involving 84,928 households had been settled.¹²

Also,

In 1996 an interim law (Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act, Act 31 of 1996) was passed to protect homeland residents against abuses such as the sale of their land by corrupt traditional leaders, while a new Land Rights Bill was being developed with the aim of transferring ownership from the State to the people living on the land.¹³

The above – mentioned legislation provides an insight into the difference between the South African land redistribution process and that of Zimbabwe. New legislation has been introduced subsequently, and political parties have contested some of it, yet all in all, the South African land redistribution programme has worked, and the law has protected the people involved in it.

Mbeki continues to stay silent on the Zimbabwean issue and is following the foreign policy path of 'quiet diplomacy'. 'Quiet diplomacy' implies economic business as usual with Zimbabwe, and a somewhat neutral and contradictory stance on anything political. This is the definition that one gets from the media¹⁴, however, diplomacy by its very nature is quiet – around the world it implies negotiations that happen behind closed doors. For this reason, the term "quiet diplomacy" is a misnomer.¹⁵

Diplomacy is always good, yet the South African government needs to have a strong opinion on Zimbabwe in order to have a concrete foreign policy. They do not seem to have one. Mbeki defended Mugabe's 2002 electoral process by accusing the "white world" of a "stubborn and arrogant mindset (that) at all times must lead...its demands must determine what everybody else does."¹⁶ He then went on to call for democracy in Zimbabwe. Note that the quote remains somewhat vague and misleading, and then seems to contradict itself with a call for democracy. This is Mbeki's way of 'sitting on the fence'.

Morgan Tsvangirai has accused Mbeki of being a "dishonest broker", and claimed that his silence is worsening the situation in Zimbabwe.¹⁷

According to the Zimbabwean editor of World Press, Iden Wetherell, much of Mbeki foreign policy approach toward Zimbabwe is the result of Mbeki's fear of being wrong – footed by the PAC and the land lobby, and fear that the division within the ANC will affect his presidency.¹⁸ According to the editor, civil society in Zimbabwe says that Mbeki does not need to oppose land reform – he needs to tell Mugabe that land reform has to be transparent, legal, benefit those most in need, and not disrupt agricultural production.¹⁹ This should not be hard for Mbeki if he uses the South African Constitution as a guide; however, he has yet to speak out on this point.

Mbeki's 'quiet diplomacy' has yielded some results, however. South Africa has attempted to be the broker discussions between Zimbabwe, Britain, and other regional organisations. Unfortunately, these discussions have never produced anything fruitful. South Africa encouraged bilateral discussions on trade and economic co – operation with Zimbabwe in September 1999.²⁰ These discussions ended up focussing mainly

on the DRC, and not trade and economic relations, and in another meeting during the same discussions held between Zimbabwe and SADC, SADC seemed to close ranks with Zimbabwe instead of disagree with its policies.²¹ Before the June 2000 elections in Zimbabwe, Mbeki himself made at least four trips to Zimbabwe to discuss various issues with Mugabe. Once again, nothing concrete transpired from these meetings – if anything, it looked as if Mbeki was giving Mugabe his support.²²

In 2003, Basildon Peta noted, “President Thabo Mbeki has sprung to the defence of President Robert Mugabe’s regime in remarks that hold Britain responsible for the Zimbabwe crisis”.²³ According to Peta, Mbeki also lashed out at the Commonwealth for extending Zimbabwe’s suspension. Zimbabwe was suspended from the Commonwealth in 2002, yet Nigeria hosted the 2003 Commonwealth summit – a country that shelters Liberian ex – President Charles Taylor who is indicted on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.²⁴ South Africa has extended the same courtesy of shelter to the ex-Haitian dictator Aristide (at the tax payers expense). One can conclude from this that no ‘rule of thumb’ exists in international politics. This places the Commonwealth in a hypocritical light. Speaking at the same conference, British Prime Minister Tony Blair said Zimbabwe should remain suspended from the Commonwealth until democracy, human rights and proper governance were introduced to the country.²⁵ “The statements stressed the earnest desire to facilitate the early return of Zimbabwe to the Councils of the Commonwealth.”²⁶

Mbeki’s remarks are certain to disappoint many already angered by him unflinching defence of the Mugabe government at the Commonwealth summit in Nigeria and his attempts to lead the ouster of its Secretary General Don McKinnon, who has been a vocal critic of Mugabe. The point is that Mbeki is now looking a bit silly in his campaign to defend the totally indefensible,” said prominent Zimbabwean academic Lovemore Madhuku. “I think he has made it clear that his African Renaissance and Nepad projects which are predicated on good governance are not worth the paper on which they are written....”²⁷

This illustrates how South Africa’s reaction to Zimbabwe affects the international debate on the issue. One also has to take into consideration the fact that South Africa is seen as a leader in southern African. This implies that the region and the

international community look to South Africa for leadership and guidance on southern African issues.

B.P. White talks about decision – making analysis.²⁸ In terms of foreign policy, it states: “As most critics have pointed out, a host of problems stem from the assumption that foreign policy consists of conscious, isolatable decisions”.²⁹ Foreign – policy decision-making discusses idiosyncratic variables.³⁰ This refers to the perceptions, images, and personal characteristics of decision makers. When considering this, one has to consider Mbeki’s attitudes and beliefs. From this assumption stems Mbeki ‘African Renaissance’ and his belief that Africa must help and further advance Africa – yet in order for this to happen Africa seems to need massive outside assistance and debt forgiveness. A conclusion that could be drawn from this is that Mbeki considers Mugabe ‘brother African’ and therefore does not want to make an enemy of Zimbabwe. Also, the perception that the PAC has of Mbeki is very important to him considering the strong historical association between ZANU – PF and the PAC, and the disruption that the PAC could cause over the land issue in South Africa.

The PAC strongly and openly supports Zimbabwe.

*The PAC has often expressed itself in favour of President Robert Mugabe’s often violent land redistribution campaign that has seen most white farms confiscated and given to party cronies and pro – Mugabe war veterans – many too young to have experienced the conflict in 1979.*³¹

On 27 October 2004 the PAC cheered the decision by Harare to boot out a COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) fact – finding mission to Zimbabwe.³²

Although referred to as ‘the old guard’, Mandela, however, reprimanded Zimbabwe for their deviation from the principles of good governance and human rights violations.³³ This indicates a change of opinion, considering that during a visit to Zimbabwe in May of 1998, Mandela (then president) indicated a willingness on behalf of South Africa to continue discussions that would bolster bilateral trade deals in agricultural products.³⁴ Mandela, however, is not in power anymore, and will not

stand for re – election. Mbeki, as President and as representative of the African National Congress, do not want to upset his constituency (there is a public expectation of the role of president).³⁵ Yet, indications exist that public support for quiet diplomacy is faltering.³⁶ However, Zimbabwe is dependent on South Africa for fuel and electricity, so the economic situation in Zimbabwe at the moment places strain on South African resources as companies like Eskom, Sasol and Transnet are owed in the millions by the Zimbabwean government.³⁷

A national variable to the South African foreign – policymaking process that Mbeki has to deal with is the geographic location of Zimbabwe.³⁸ It is therefore surprising that Mbeki has taken the stance he has, because problems in Zimbabwe mean problems in South Africa in terms of refugees and lack of export income and foreign direct investment. It seems, therefore, that Mbeki's main focus lies with his national political agenda.

Reasons why South Africa should take a harder line toward Zimbabwe are the breakdown in the political structure of a neighbour, a defiance of human rights norms and international legal obligations, and the economic ruination of a country (that again is in close proximity to South Africa).

However, in a statement issued to *The Star* newspaper on 18 January 2005, the South African government finally came out against the electoral process in Zimbabwe. The Mbeki government said that elections needed to be free and fair.³⁹ Yet, the South African monitoring committee stated that the 2005 elections in Zimbabwe were fair, even though many other countries and organisations claimed that they were not.⁴⁰

During the Apartheid years, members of the international community became fiercely involved in the struggle in SA, and many stayed involved until it had reached a negotiated settlement. From the 1940's onward, organizations such as the United Nations (UN) led a global campaign to isolate South Africa. Groups like the Organization of African Unity (OAU – now the African Union), the Non – Aligned Movement (NAM), the Southern African Development Community Co – ordination Conference (SADCC), and the Commonwealth – Eminent Persons Group also backed the UN.⁴¹ Among Western countries, Scandinavia, Canada and

New Zealand took the hardest line toward Pretoria.⁴² Together with African states, they were the first to join arms, oil, athletic, cultural, academic, and trade boycotts aimed at the Apartheid government.

The international intervention in South Africa set the country on the road to democracy. Zimbabwe is desperately in need of the restoration of democracy, yet as long as 'quiet diplomacy' is the foreign policy approach of choice there remains little hope of democracy being restored.

If one follows the national and international speeches given by members of the ANC government on the political party's official website, a pattern begins to emerge. This pattern is one of wanting to diplomatically assist all sides involved in the Zimbabwean crisis to reach solution to the many problems that face South Africa. This is not necessarily the best foreign policy objective. Other options that face the South African government are: Firstly, military intervention in Zimbabwe and peacekeeping after a democratic government has been installed through fully monitored free and fair elections. Secondly, forcing Mugabe into a corner by cutting off South African support, for example, SA stops supplying electricity to the country, and thirdly, active persuasion of the regional community, which results in the isolation of Zimbabwe. There are pro's and cons to all these approaches, and Mbeki, as president of the country, must have weighted them up, yet he chose slow diplomacy above the rest. This is probably because pulling support from Zimbabwe would leave more people starving (bring up the notion of human rights protection), military intervention could take years if one includes peacekeeping, and would require a very large budget, and regional persuasion relies too heavily on gaining the unequivocal support of other southern African countries, as well as the UN.

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD ZIMBABWE

*The continuing crisis in Zimbabwe has been a significant concern for Britain's foreign policy elite. Few events in Africa in recent years have so excited British opinion on foreign affairs as the downward spiral of Zimbabwe under President Robert Mugabe. This slide into lawlessness the wholesale illegal confiscation of land, the free fall of the Zimbabwean economy and the presidential competition between Mugabe of the ZANU – PF and Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC has occupied many editorials and commentaries, with diverse opinion being proffered on how Britain should react.*⁴³

British and Zimbabwean government representatives met in April of 2000 and attempted to reach a resolution to the land crisis.⁴⁴ At the same time, as Zimbabwean war veterans were invading white and black – owned commercial farms in Zimbabwe (very few were actual war veterans - indeed, a person would have to be a minimum of 32 years of age in 2000, as they would have had to have been 12 when the war ended). At this meeting, then British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, said Britain was willing to make available £36 million over the next two years – most of it to pay for the land redistribution process in Zimbabwe. Britain's stipulation, however, was that the money would not be made available until farm occupations ended and the bloodshed stopped.⁴⁵

Mugabe, who did not attend these talks, said that Britain had a moral responsibility to Zimbabwe because many white farmers acquired their land under British rule.⁴⁶ Mugabe encouraged the farm squatters, even though the Zimbabwean courts had declared the land occupations illegal.⁴⁷ He also manipulated this when he replaced objective judges with ZANU-PF appointees.⁴⁸

An important fact to note in British – Zimbabwean relations is that Britain provided a large amount of money for land redistribution in the 1980's, but stopped funding in 1996 due to allegations of corruption within the Zimbabwean government.⁴⁹ In 2000, British aid to Zimbabwe (channelled mostly through NGO's) had dropped by £5 million pounds in two years.⁵⁰ According to Radio Netherlands, another of Britain's requirements that had to be met by Zimbabwe were free and fair parliamentary elections, to be held in May or June 2000.⁵¹

The reason why the relationship between Britain and Zimbabwe is important is because Britain specifically stipulated that the relations between Britain and Zimbabwe would continue to be open and cordial, only if Zimbabwe followed certain human rights protocols (stop the killings, and free and fair elections). Britain stopped its aid to Zimbabwe in 1996 also on the basis of human rights (part of the Labour Government's "ethical foreign policy"). Britain believed that the aid was being misused, and therefore, the people who needed help were not receiving it. This could be seen as a human rights violation. In light of this, human rights and the

implementation thereof definitely set the scene for worsening Britain – Zimbabwe relations.

It is obvious that good governance is imperative to Blair, and on the economic side, he refuses to invest money where there will be nothing to show for it, especially in light of Mugabe's threat to nationalize businesses and the mines.⁵² Even before Zimbabwe gained her independence the British government requisitioned United Nations economic sanctions against Rhodesia (1968), as well as instituting an oil embargo enforced by the Royal Navy hoping principles of good governance would follow.⁵³

The crisis in Zimbabwe has highlighted what influence, if any influence, Britain can actually exercise on the international stage when attempting to pursue democracy and the rule of law.⁵⁴ In terms of international relations discourse, Easton discusses an extra – societal environment in which the international community can affect a domestic political system.⁵⁵ “*Disturbances*” is the term Easton uses to identify those influences brought on by the international community that can change the internal environment of the sovereign state.

British foreign policy toward Zimbabwe has shown that the country has responsibility but not power.⁵⁶ This means that Britain feels it is its duty to impose *disturbances* on Zimbabwe, yet the power of the influence that these disturbances bring is negligible. This means that Britain has had little effect on Zimbabwe's internal environment. From 1997, Britain's foreign policy toward Zimbabwe needs to be understood within the context of New Labour's ‘third – way’ in Africa.⁵⁷ This refers to an approach that encouraged Africa's adherence to good governance and upheld human rights practices. It was a pro – democratic approach, as well as one that promoted new democracies. It also stood for the protection and implementation of human rights under the rule of law.

Taylor and Williams suggest four reasons why Britain's encouragement and influence has failed.⁵⁸ These reasons are Britain's encouragement of market – based solutions to Zimbabwe's land crisis, the Commonwealth, South Africa, and African elites. The market – based solution to the land crisis fails to address the legacy of inequitable

land ownership, because it changes the eligibility for land from all without land to those possessing the appropriate capability and productivity. A market – based solution will not work in Zimbabwe because many of the poor Africans who need the land do not possess the money or skills to attain it.

On the issue of the Commonwealth, the organisation is very limited when it comes to intervening in another country. It “can suspend member states that undergo military coups, yet it has few measures for dealing with other forms of state repression and human rights abuses.”⁵⁹ However, the Commonwealth has the ability to significantly influence investment. This is due to the power and influence held by its member states

In terms of South Africa, if it had spoken out against Zimbabwe, it would have given more weight to Britain’s *disturbances* by increasing the influence of the international community. At times, South Africa has come out in full support of Zimbabwe, for example, when the ANC stated that the 2000 elections in Zimbabwe were a sign of democracy taking root.⁶⁰ This was just false hope due to the fact that elections are a positive occurrence, but only if democratic. Without South Africa in full support of Britain, it will/has been hard to make an impact in Zimbabwe.

The issue of African elites is much the same as that of South Africa. British foreign policy has been frustrated by the unwillingness of some African elites to criticise Mugabe’s behaviour. This raises questions about the seriousness of regional projects like NEPAD (which Blair endorsed in 2002).⁶¹ The role of these regional organisations will be examined in the next section entitled “Regional Co – operation”.

RECENT RESPONSES BY THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Regional co – operation is an important factor in international relations and globalisation. It makes sense that countries close to one another should work together for the benefit of the region. Regional co – operation has expanded worldwide in the last ten years, and will continue to do so as countries are brought closer and closer together by technology.

This section of the dissertation will review the Non – Aligned Movement (NAM), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) the African Union (AU), and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Zimbabwe is a member of all these organisations except NEPAD, due to the fact that it disagrees with certain NEPAD principles, mainly the adherence to good governance and rule of law, but also the need to build strong relationships with the international community (this would mean that Zimbabwe would have to re – form a relationship with Britain).⁶²

One would assume that the Southern African Development Community (SADC), of which Zimbabwe is a member, would be more involved in the Zimbabwean crisis. This is because SADC has undertaken humanitarian interventions in Southern Africa in the past, for example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.⁶³ Unfortunately, due to lack of resources, SADC has often ended up not finishing the work started, or relying heavily on the United Nations for support.⁶⁴

It was not until August 2001 that a statement was issued by SADC that expressed concerns “that the spill – over effect of the Zimbabwe crisis” would effect the entire region.⁶⁵ Even though Article 4 of SADC protocol calls for member states to uphold the rule of law, democracy and human rights, SADC lack the means and resources to properly impose the protocol on Zimbabwe.⁶⁶ The subject of Zimbabwe dominated the 2002 SADC summit, yet the organisations still did not come out openly against Zimbabwe.⁶⁷ Some African leaders from the region even requested of the organization that Mugabe be given another chance to stabilize his country. Mugabe has received a list of democratic requests from SADC, yet that is where SADC’s involvement seems to stop.⁶⁸ Unless, one counts SADC’s push to get Zimbabwe accepted back into the Commonwealth, which meant it not only distanced itself from Britain, but it also seemed to be supporting a country with no rule of law or human rights protection.⁶⁹ In Rodney Chingono’s opinion, “the SADC region has, for the last couple of years, been debating events occurring in the country at their numerous conferences, but all this talk seems to be just that – talk!”⁷⁰

NAM, on the other hand, gave its full support of Zimbabwe. At the 2003 NAM Summit in Kuala Lumpur, NAM leaders condemned “the unilateral imposition of

targeted sanctions on Zimbabwe by several countries.”⁷¹ Zimbabwe continues to be an active member of NAM.

The AU stance on the subject of Zimbabwe is somewhat confusing. An African Union Report of 2004 condemned Zimbabwe’s flagrant human rights abuses.⁷² Yet, earlier in 2000, an AU observer team declared the Zimbabwe elections free and fair.⁷³

The world has looked to the Zimbabwean crisis as a test case for NEPAD. In this respect, NEPAD has failed. NEPAD is supposedly committed to development through democracy, yet its leaders too have failed to make a strong stand against Zimbabwe. Also, Mbeki is one of the pivotal players in NEPAD. Since he is following the ‘quiet diplomacy’ approach toward Zimbabwe through the foreign policy of his own country, one would expect his opinion as a NEPAD leader to be the same.

As discussed in the section entitled “International Law”, it is very difficult for organisations to intervene in a sovereign state when that state has ignored the organizational protocol. Additionally, these organisations have small resources, but by not doing enough to condemn Zimbabwe, these organisations undermine the integrity of regional co – operation in Africa. It means that Africa cannot unite against undemocratic practices and human rights abuses, and makes the work of these organisations futile. It also sends a message to the rest of the international community that Africa cannot be counted upon to fix African problems or address African issues.

When discussing the international community, regional co – operation is not the only factor to take into consideration. The rest of the international community also plays a role when it comes to the crisis in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, due to the example that the regional organizations have set in terms of their ineffectiveness in effecting any change in Zimbabwe, they have undermined themselves (not actively upheld the principles they stand for), and the rest of the international community has failed to take a ‘hands on’ approach.

The United States

At the end of 2001, the US Congress passed the Zimbabwean Democracy Act that allows the government to freeze the assets of top Zimbabwean officials, as well as

restrict their travel.⁷⁴ This is the only real action any country has taken, yet if one analyses the act it only serves to protect the US from undemocratic influence, yet it does not help change the situation in Zimbabwe at all.⁷⁵ The US has taken a strong stand against Mugabe due to his undemocratic principles, yet it has cited the same reason for intervention in Somalia and Iraq, yet they will not intervene in Zimbabwe. This is most likely due to unwillingness, the fact that there is no economic or political gain for the US in entering Zimbabwe, and the fact that US foreign policy is focused on protectionism at the moment (due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks).

The EU, on the other hand, imposed targeted sanctions on Mugabe and 19 of his close aides in 2002.⁷⁶ This was after Zimbabwe expelled the EU Electoral Monitoring Committee; the EU had attempted to oversee the elections in Zimbabwe, yet the sanctions were long overdue for a regional organisation of such size and power. The EU also pledged substantial monetary support over the years for aid to Zimbabwe, and support to displaced persons and children in the area. Yet, with less and less international presence allowed in Zimbabwe, it is hard to monitor where the money goes. Aid to Zimbabwe aside, the French did, however host Mugabe in Paris for a two – day Franco – African summit in 2003.⁷⁷ It seems rather contradictory for an EU member to impose sanctions on a leader in one year, and then host him in your country the next (especially considering the fact that the crisis in Zimbabwe did not improve from 2002 to 2003).

The UN, which has assisted Zimbabwe for years, has yet to ban Zimbabwe from the General Assembly. The United Nations has sent aid and observer mission to Zimbabwe to monitor the election process, yet nothing more has been done. The organisation has been critical of the Mugabe regime yet this has yet to change anything in Zimbabwe itself.⁷⁸

The example that the US and EU has set for the regional organisations in southern Africa is that they have taken a strong united stand against Zimbabwe have enforced this through legislation (US), sanctions against Zimbabwe, and aid to Zimbabwe's suffering population.

CONCLUSION

South African foreign policy toward Zimbabwe, like Zimbabwean foreign policy toward South Africa, needs to be examined in the context of the history of the country, and the country's relationship with the rest of the region (Southern Africa). This is because domestic politics in South Africa shifted dramatically when the country reached a negotiated settlement in 1994, which formally ended Apartheid.

South Africa's prior support of negotiations between white Rhodesians and African nationalists in Rhodesia (1970's) is important because it highlights a history of co-operation between South Africa and Zimbabwe. The fact that Africa was going through a process of decolonisation at the time is also significant because this changed the face of the region, and strengthened already existing regional organisations.

Mbeki so-called "quiet diplomacy" highlights a foreign policy change in South Africa from one of destabilisation during Apartheid, to one now based on subtle negotiation. This is significant, because much of this encouraged negotiation has been focussed on the issue of land in Zimbabwe.

Britain, on the other hand, has taken a strong line against Zimbabwe. It has enforced this through its involvement in the Commonwealth (Zimbabwe was suspended in 2002, and this decision was driven Britain), and through the withdrawal of monetary aid to Zimbabwe until human rights and good governance are upheld.

Britain and South Africa should be working together to help solve the situation in Zimbabwe. Britain stands at the forefront of international opinion, and South Africa has a good relationship with most other African countries. These two factors together could convince the entire international community to either intervene in Zimbabwe or create the pressure needed to produce change in the country.

The role that NAM, SADC, AU and NEPAD have played in Zimbabwe is significant because NAM, SADC, and AU are strong regional organisations that lead opinion in Southern Africa, and NEPAD is a concept based on good governance that Africa is looking to enforce. The US and the EU are also important because they provide an

insight into the actions and reactions of the rest of the world community in light of Zimbabwe and its land redistribution programme.

It is idealistic to assume that all the countries of the world would come together in defiance of Mugabe, and this would force him to abandon undemocratic principles. However, the regions ability to agree on the matter has so far not produced a positive result. Also, the first world should be more involved considering that they have more resources available to them than developing countries in the Southern African region.

As a leader in the region, South Africa's foreign policy toward Zimbabwe, considering its undemocratic principles and human rights abuses, is embarrassing. Since the rest of the region looks to South Africa for guidance, a solution for Zimbabwe does not seem likely or possible, at the moment.

Endnotes

¹ To better understand South African foreign policy:

“During the Mandela administration South Africa relations with Zimbabwe were affected by several sources of tension. South African anxieties about the impact of immigrants on local unemployment in 1996 prompted Joe Modise, the Minister of Defence to threaten to switch on the electric border fence. On several occasions Zimbabwean officials complained about delays in the renegotiation of trade agreements to provide Zimbabwean exports with less restricted access to South African markets. Within the Southern African Development Community, South Africa found itself at odds with Zimbabwe over the reform of the SADC security organ which Robert Mugabe had chaired in since its establishment in 1996 and which he had used to legitimise Zimbabwean military commitments in support of the Laurent Kabila administration in the Congo as a SADC undertaking. The South African government was publicly critical of Zimbabwe’s Congolese intervention.

However, since 1998 South Africa had also been active in attempting, with some success, to persuade western governments to provide financial backing for land reform in Zimbabwe, and in 2000 SADC mandated South Africa to set up an international fund for this purpose. South Africa itself agreed during a visit by Thabo Mbeki to Harare in February 2000 on an R800 million loan to Zimbabwe for the purchase of petrol and electricity. Later, the South Africans withdrew the loan proposal and instead offered to guarantee a Zimbabwean bond issue⁵. The South African minister of Land Affairs, presumably with presidential approval, visited Zimbabwe in April to identify lessons that South Africans could derive from Zimbabwe’s “fast track” programme. In August 2000 Thabo Mbeki attempted to secure IMF and World Bank backing for compensation for expropriations and was successful in obtaining an IMF undertaking to reinstate its loan to Zimbabwe provided the government ended land seizures, a condition that was subsequently rejected. South African economic support to its neighbour included the 25 per cent reduction of electricity tariffs in December despite the huge debts owed by the Zimbabwe Electricity Authority to Eskom, the South African parastatal. In April, in conjunction with Sam Nujoma and Joaquim Chissano at the Victoria Falls SADC summit meeting, the SADC presidents offered public support for land reform provided the violence ceased and the war veterans were withdrawn: Thabo Mbeki also asked Robert Mugabe to end attacks on Britain while he tried to secure British finance to facilitate a more orderly land redistribution.

With the SADC declaring itself in support of the Zimbabwean authorities’ takeover of commercial farms during 2000 and through 2001, though South African politicians, including President Mbeki, would express reservations about the treatment of white farmers they stopped short of unambiguous condemnation. As early as October 2000, Mbeki informed a business conference in Cape Town that he had twice informed the Zimbabwean public (during, presumably, visits to Harare) that land invasions would not be permitted in South Africa. The situation, he told delegates was “unacceptable”. By

February 2001, the director-general of the Presidency was expressing Thabo Mbeki's "deep concern" at Zimbabwean events. In March after a supposedly ground - breaking meeting between the ANC and the Movement for Democratic Change, Mbeki's "softly softly" approach was under review, members of his staff were telling journalists. Mbeki himself had complained to Welshman Ncube, the MDC secretary general, about Mugabe's "broken promises", Ncube claimed afterwards. Mbeki also spoke about his fears that an economic implosion in Zimbabwe would drive millions of refugees into South Africa. In May Dlamini-Zuma conceded that the situation in Zimbabwe was "very critical" and that South Africans were "worried both as neighbours and as people who do a lot of trade with Zimbabwe". In June Mbeki complained to Tim Sebastian on BBC's *Hard Talk*, that Robert Mugabe "didn't listen to me". At the end of the year, prompted by business consternation that accompanied the fall in the value of the Rand, Trevor Manuel urged investors not to confuse South Africa "with that country to the north". These occasional expressions of alarm were insufficient to check a growing chorus of criticism both inside South Africa and elsewhere directed at the Mbeki administration's reluctance to confront the Zimbabwean authorities and use South African economic leverage to induce a return to the rule of law. The generally supportive posture towards ZANU-PF adopted by the ANC during the violent preliminaries of the June 2000 parliamentary elections attracted especially fierce censure. ANC MP Tony Yengeni led a parliamentary team of observers to Harare. Yengeni apparently spoke to Thabo Mbeki every day on the telephone and after the declaration appeared on television with Mugabe to upbraid western observers for attempting to impose their values in assessing African conduct of democracy. Later that year the ANC hosted a meeting near Johannesburg of southern African liberation movements. Amongst the issues reportedly discussed was the question of how liberation movements could resist their electoral defeat by parties with close ties to former colonial powers.

Why has South Africa's political leadership been so determined to maintain its pursuit of affable and often supportive interaction with the Harare administration, a policy that has probably detracted from external business confidence in South African itself, that has engendered considerable criticism domestically, and, which at least since December 2003, no longer receives united African endorsement? At least three kinds of explanation have been offered for Pretoria's "quiet" diplomacy. The first is to understand Mbeki's responses to Zimbabwean events as reflecting popular admiration of Mugabe amongst black South Africans and strong sentiment within the ANC in favour of the Zimbabwean land seizures. The Zimbabwean journalist, Geoff Hill, recalls a conversation with a South African intelligence officer in 2002 in which he was told that Mbeki himself "might have welcomed an MDC victory in the election, but could say or do nothing that might be seen as steering the process of change". The officer went on to explain that the ANC's left wing was opposed to any South African effort to "steer the process of change" and that disagreements about the party's relationship with ZANU-PF "were strong enough to split the ANC"¹³. Much the same kind of logic informs Patrick Bond's assessment of the ANC's position: "electoral consolidation of Southern African nationalism is ... vital to Pretoria" and "ANC bias for Mugabe was the main political phenomenon"¹⁴.

In Bond's view, ANC bias is partly spurred by sentiment, comradesly fraternity ("relations sealed in blood" to quote Myakayaka-Mazini, the head of the ANC's international relations department) but it is also the consequence of alarm at the prospect of Zimbabwe moving into a post-nationalist phase of politics after the failure of neo liberalism. In this sort of vein, his critics view Thabo Mbeki's statements on the crisis are the consequence of his own propensity to view opposition to South African policy and indeed even Zimbabwean developments as motivated by racial and neo-colonial malice, in South African and abroad.

The second interpretation of South African official behaviour is that it springs from less politically sectional and more essentially pragmatic considerations. One justification for not using economic leverage that is sometimes cited in defence of the South African position is that refusing Zimbabwe economic support might bring about a simultaneous political and economic collapse. As the locally influential Centre for Policy Studies director Chris Landsberg has expressed it "a policy based on force will aggravate an already unmanageable situation and hasten a meltdown". In an especially cynical interpretation of the South African government's motives, Dale McKinley argues that South African economic support for Zimbabwe is prompted chiefly by concerns about the degree of Zimbabwean indebtedness to South African parastatal corporations, the main vehicles for the ANC's strategy of nurturing a black business class. However, a "meltdown" might well have been understood to threaten a broader conception of South African national interests. In the words of the British parliament's Select Committee on Foreign Affairs a collapsed Zimbabwean state would have "rebounded on Pretoria with disastrous effect via a mass influx of refugees, disrupted trade links ... and generalised chaos on the borders. Such considerations may be less compelling today than they were five years ago: South Africa already hosts a very large Zimbabwean refugee community, trade between the two countries has deteriorated sharply, and bad debts to Zimbabwean parastatals have increased exponentially.

The third way of explaining South African dealings with the Harare administration is to understand them as the corollary of South Africa's broader engagement with other parts of Africa and with particularly pan-African affairs. Here the argument proceeds on the following lines. Since 1999, a major goal of Thabo Mbeki's foreign policy has been the reconstruction and reform of African continental institutions in such a fashion that they in turn can help to foster regional forms of economic collaboration and institutional renovation and democratisation at a national level. The achievements in this project include donor support for the New African partnership for Development's Africa Actio - plan - in 2002 G8 pledges represented more than \$20 billion of "new money" - as well as the admittedly slow progress of African ratification of the African Union's founding principles of "democratic principles, popular participation and good governance". In pan-African structures South African advocacy of their reconstruction incorporating democratic principles has not been uncontested, particularly by a group of authoritarian governments including Libya, Zimbabwe and Uganda. South Africa's degree of success in obtaining acceptance of such principles within the new architecture of continental government and their subsequent translation into a new doctrine of intervention (as opposed

to the more traditional OAU maxim of non interference by continental bodies in the internal affairs of member states) has depended upon a very fragile alliance. In particular, SADC support for South African positions was crucial in building this alliance and most of South Africa's SADC allies would have reacted very negatively against any exercise of pressure or leverage by South Africa on Zimbabwe. Ineffectual "megaphone diplomacy", that is the kind of rhetorical confrontation with Harare that might have been calculated to reassure City of London investors and the "white Commonwealth", would also have weakened South Africa's status within SADC. In particular Zambian, Namibian and Mozambican leadership have stated unqualified support for Zimbabwean land seizures." – extracts from: Lodge, T., "Quiet Diplomacy in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of South Africa in Africa" (accessed from www.polity.org.za/pdf/QuietDiplomacy.pdf on 24 July 2005), pp. 1 – 10.

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