REGIONAL SECURITY INTEGRATION IN THE SADC REGION

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Abstract. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is one of Africa's most vivid examples of security integration. As the regional group aspires to promote political and economic independence, peace and security are considered indispensable for regional development, as instability in one member state could harm neighboring countries. *Methods and materials.* Relevant literature was critically analyzed, and the study adopted a secondary data collection method as an approach. Using the theory of security communities and theories of integration, this paper analyzed the historical security cooperation between the countries in the region as the first step towards regional integration in Southern Africa, that is, the restraining of the apartheid regime in South Africa. *Analysis.* The analysis further focused on establishing and evolving the Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security (OPDS) and its institutional relationship with the SADC Summit. *Results.* The findings showed that SADC faced more internal challenges than external ones, which led to regional integration. Leading factors in the lack of peace and security were armed conflict, legacy of violence, and poor governance, among others. SADC envisioned peace and security through the adopted Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO). The author concludes that the SADC Summit and the OPDS are the leading platforms for managing security issues in the SADC region.

Key words: SADC, OPDS, integration, security, community, Southern Africa.

ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ В ОБЛАСТИ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ В РЕГИОНЕ САДК

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Аннотация. Сообщество развития Юга Африки (САДК) является одним из наиболее ярких примеров интеграции в сфере безопасности в Африке. Поскольку эта региональная группа стремится к политической и экономической независимости, мир и безопасность считаются необходимыми для регионального развития, так как нестабильность в одном из государств-членов может нанести ущерб соседним странам. В ходе исследования был проведен критический анализ соответствующей литературы, а также использован метод сбора вто-

ричных данных. С использованием теории сообществ безопасности и теории интеграции был проведен анализ исторического сотрудничества стран региона в области безопасности как первого шага на пути к региональной интеграции на Юге Африки, то есть сдерживания режима апартеида в ЮАР. Далее анализ был посвящен созданию и развитию Органа по политике, обороне и безопасности (ОПОБ) и его институциональным отношениям с саммитом САДК. Полученные результаты показали, что САДК сталкивается с внутренними проблемами в большей степени, чем с внешними, что и привело к региональной интеграции. Ведущими факторами отсутствия мира и безопасности были, в частности, вооруженные конфликты, наследие насилия и неэффективное управление. САДК предусматривает обеспечение мира и безопасности в рамках принятого Стратегического индикативного плана для этого органа (SIPO). Автор приходит к выводу, что саммит САДК и ОПОБ являются ведущими платформами для управления вопросами безопасности в регионе САДК.

Ключевые слова: САДК, ОПОБ, интеграция, безопасность, сообщество, юг Африки.

Introduction. Regional integration aims to create peaceful, stable, and strengthened economic communities for markets to grow and flourish. However, the resulting institutional, structural, and capacity-building challenges remain a stark reality, a phenomenon described in and confirmed by the African Union Audit report [1]. In particular, the AU report identifies challenges to how these Regional Economic Communities (RECs), like the Southern African Development Community (SADC), have secured peace within the sub-regions.

Peace and security were a fundamental raison d'etre for regional cooperation in Southern Africa, the last African region to decolonize and liberate itself. To a large extent, security and political survival gave rise to the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980, a regional community with a mission to resist destabilization and reduce dependency on apartheid-era South Africa. With the prospect of democratization in the post-apartheid country, SADCC was transformed in 1992 into the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in which an elaborate peace and security architecture was designed to help prevent violent conflicts in the region.

As with other issues, such as state-building, traditional security theories are only partially suitable for understanding African affairs. In any case, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett's approach to security communities provides some valuable elements in the analysis of SADC [4]. Adler and Barnett described that Western Europe became a security community due to "desecuritization," a progressive marginalization of mutual security concerns in favor of other issues. They capture this transformation through the concept of a speech act – that security refers to the enunciation of something as security – and examine how the development of collective identity and community came through discursive self-formation.

SADC, a Regional Economic Community (REC) in Southern Africa, displays features of a security community still taking shape. However, it may be argued that SADC has evolved towards some common values, such as the preference for peace, democratic transition of political power, a common framework for the conduct of legitimate and transparent elections, a regional code for policing, standard protocols that govern security and development, and the existence of a common doctrine for Peace Support Operations (PSO). In addition, all 16 SADC member states subscribed to the political agenda and shared the values of good governance, democracy, and peace as laid out in the SADC treaty.

The nature of security cooperation in SADC takes many forms, such as a mutual defense pact (SADC Mutual Defense Pact 2003), common Peace Support Operations (PSOs) under the provisions of the SADC Standby Force (SADCFS), and arrangements within the African Union (AU), non-aggression pacts, and common collaborative Security Cooperation and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020–2030, which is anchored on a firm foundation of peace, security, and good governance in SADC.

The RISDP serves as a comprehensive development and implementation framework

that has guided the integration agenda of SADC since 2005. Under the peace and security and good governance foundational pillar, RISPD aims to enhance conflict prevention, management, and resolution mechanism with an effective early warning system capable of tracking and monitoring political, security, and socio-economic threats.

Methods and materials. The establishment of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defense, and Security (OPDS) was as a result of major threats to the security of people and states derive from internal rather than external [5]. It has been stated that Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe formed the SADCC towards economic liberation and integrated economic development. It was preceded by the Frontline States (FLS) (Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, and Tanzania) formed in the 1970s to support anti-colonial and anti-apartheid forces within the region. Namibia joined in 1990, South Africa in 1994, Mauritius in 1995, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Seychelles in 1997, and Madagascar in 2005 [7].

It has been submitted that the origin of SADC was due to external pressures like globalization, instability, and security, while other schools of thought observe it internally through geography, social and cultural context, colonial experience, alliance with Frontline States (FLS) and some enemies enforcing apartheid regimes in South Africa [13]. Hence, it was meant for political solidarity, economic cooperation, and to stand against instability in South Africa, which was the economic stronghold of the Southern region. Accordingly, the Windhoek Treaty of 1992 transformed SADCC into SADC, and the regional bloc came up with two frameworks: the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) for sound political, economic, and corporate governance and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO), responsible for peace and stability [17]. Outlined mission being, "The SADC mission is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance, and durable peace and security, so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective

player in international relations and the world economy [14].

The study was carried out through secondary data collection and relied predominantly on internet-based sources such as relevant theses, books, newspapers, journals, articles, reports prepared by research scholars and university publications. However, due care on reliability, suitability, and adequacy of the data was considered.

Analysis. The study unearthed compelling evidence showing SADC as a peace and security actor of the regional bloc since its establishment in 1992.

1. SADC was established in 1992 and is currently made up of 16 member states.

2. The SADC region experienced more internal challenges than external ones, which threatened peace and security.

3. The regional bloc objectives to promote peace and security in the region were achieved through the protocol on politics, defense, and security co-operation under SIPO.

4. The SADC Summit and the OPDS are the leading platforms for managing security issues in the SADC region.

The discourse here is guided by the research findings in the literature review. The emergency of SADC since 1992 is currently constituted with 16 member states as in, and the integrating factors being externally fighting against apartheid in South Africa, legacy of colonialism and Neo-colonialism within the rest of SAR. Internally, the uniting cause was to fight for economic liberation and integrated economic development, which were threatened by the instability of peace and security, the greatest enemy of sustainable peace and development in all diversities of human and societal dimensions. From the conflict transformation perspective, the SADC envisioned to promote peace and security in the region by creating the Organ for Politics, Defense, and Security (OPDS).

As observed, the region experienced instability characterized with armed conflicts, such as in the DRC as the legacy of colonialism and Neo-Colonialism. Armed conflicts necessitated domestic crises as well as neighborhood ones, resulting in unplanned regional migration. The challenge of the undemocratic governance of other member states was coupled with power

struggles, coup-d'état as well as poor electoral processes (DRC).

The emergence of security cooperation in the SADC region. Regional security integration has been crucial for all countries in Southern Africa for many decades. After the end of Western colonialism, the newly independent states in the SADC region formed a loosely institutionalized regional grouping for mutual assistance and defense against the common threat of the remaining Apartheid government in South Africa. The Realist theories on the formation of regimes argue that states choose to form a government because they realize that they operate in coordination and are usually confronted by the same challenges.

By pursuing a concerted strategy of deliberately destabilizing Southern African states that harbored liberation movements and fueling intrastate conflicts north of its borders, the apartheid regime in South Africa undermined peace and development in the regions. It prompted its neighbors to create a defensive alliance. As a political response to both apartheid in South Africa and colonial rule, the first security organization called the Frontline States (FLS) was established in 1974 by a coalition of African countries. The founding members were Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe [10]. The Frontline States were deeply concerned about the growing military budget of the regime in South Africa and the threat this growth posed to their security and independence [3]. In addition, apartheid South Africa's nuclear programs further aggravated the situation and created a sense of insecurity in neighboring countries.

The evolution and structure of Frontline States were profoundly influenced by pan-African influence. The activities of the Frontline States were often adopted after the activities of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) African Liberation Committee (ALC), whose main objective was to promote the process of decolonization in African countries [2]. Besides, the Inter-State Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC) was established by the Frontline States in 1975 as an essential structure of the security organization with a mandate to address various security issues, mainly related to the ideology of apartheid in South Africa, faced by member states in Southern Africa. The ISDSC played a crucial role in the liberation struggle against colonial and apartheid regimes and in maintaining the member states' national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Apart from operating on the ideological foundations of Pan-Africanism, the Frontline States' solidarity was based on three other factors. First, the decision-making was derived from the presidential summit. The summit was attended by heads of state, governments, and representatives of the liberation movements. Secondly, the self-consistent restriction of Frontline States on membership created a simplified governance structure. Thirdly, the informal nature of the Frontline States had given members the flexibility to pursue independent policies. Later, these factors significantly influenced the structure and the modus operandi of the Southern African Coordination Conference (SADCC) regarding a collective foreign decision-making policy. The SADCC was an intergovernmental economic organization created in 1980 to counter the economic dictates of apartheid South Africa in the region. It ensured broad economic, scientific, technical, and foreign trade cooperation between the member states and the expansion of their economies and finances to achieve financial independence.

The apartheid regime in South Africa was the main push factor behind the first attempts at security cooperation in the Southern African region. This security dynamic changed dramatically when the newly created Southern African Development Community (SADC) welcomed a democratic South Africa as a member in 1994. The SADC heads of state saw the opportunity to transform the basis for regional cooperation from mutual apprehension to mutual gain and set ambitious integration goals such as creating a common market and free movement of workforce, investment, and trade. In 1996, SADC established its political and security arm, the Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security. With these events of the 1990s, SADC showed its intention to leave behind a security system based on enmity and insecurity and to begin instead the construction of one based on amity and mutual trust.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC). The 1990s were a period of change in integration in Southern Africa. The early 1990s presented a new scenario for the entire international system, with the end of the

Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In turn, the global transformations propelled anti-colonial battles on the African continent and the abolition of the apartheid regime in South Africa. Consequently, political and security problems and the opportunity for greater regional cooperation arose.

In this context of change and new possibilities, on August 17, 1992, at a summit in Windhoek, Namibia, heads of state and government signed the SADC declaration and treaty that effectively transformed the SADCC into SADC. The SADC treaty redefined the basis of cooperation among the member states from a loose association into a formal organization with a legally binding agreement. According to Article 5(1) of the SADC Treaty, the objectives of SADC, which are also contained in SADC's common agenda, are to achieve economic development and growth, peace and security, poverty reduction, and to enhance the standard and quality of life for the people of Southern Africa. These objectives will be achieved through increased regional integration built on democratic principles, the rule of law, and equitable and sustainable development. In addition, the constitutive SADC Treaty established the Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government as the highest policy and decision-making body. Although the Summit's regular meetings provide resolutions on policies concerned with economic and political matters, it also serves equally as the highest decision-making body for resolving regional peace and security issues [11].

In the SADC region, peace and security are integral components of development planning in Southern Africa because economic cooperation and integration require a peaceful environment in which people can be successful and contribute to their full potential [15]. Instability in one member state may impact neighboring countries or cause regional integration setbacks. For instance, the instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for many years has been the leading cause of setbacks in security integration in the region. The security situation in the eastern DRC continues to be a significant concern. Regional efforts under the auspices of the SADC have been focused on securing a ceasefire, the withdrawal of the M23 Movement (an armed group operating in the DRC's North Kivu province that was dormant in the past decade and became active again in 2022) from occupied areas, the disarmament and cantonment of its combatants, and the search for political solutions through dialogue. Therefore, peace and security issues remain a top priority for the regional community. They are articulated and demonstrated in the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence, and Security.

As mentioned above, in the context of a new regional environment, SADC created its political and security arm in 1996. The critical blueprint governing SADC peace and security integration is the Revised Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO), a strategic plan for the organ. The SADC's core objective in the field was first elaborated in 2003 and revised in 2012. It is to be a peaceful and stable political and security environment through which the region will realize its social-economic development, poverty eradication, and regional integration goals.

The SIPO is, therefore, not an end but rather an enabling instrument for the implementation of other regional documents, including the Protocol on Politics, Defense, and Security, as well as the recently revised Regional Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap. The SADC RISDP 2020–2030 and SADC Vision 2050 are strategic plans seeking to deepen security integration and foster development in Southern Africa [8]. The 40th Ordinary SADC Summit approved the two Strategic plans in Maputo, Mozambique, for 2020. They are based on the foundation of peace, security, and democratic governance.

In addition, the Organ for Politics, Defence, and Security was incorporated into the SADC framework in 1996. The regional community has established a set of institutions that, together with the relevant structures of the African Union (AU) and other regional economic communities, form part of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) [18, pp. 37-53].

However, the development of SADC's peace and security institutions is faltering as they lack material and political support. As a result, the structures created thus far need greater political support, organizational capacity, and more resources. While SADC has responded to a series of intrastate crises since its formation in 1992, the outcome of these interventions, its record on promoting peace, and the democratic principles enshrined in its founding documents have been

mixed. Recently, SADC has responded decisively to military interference and government instability in Lesotho, sanctioning the deployment of troops. But SADC's muted response to the DRC's constitutional crisis, which rose from a failure to hold timely elections before President Laurent Kabila's term of office expired, the interference by the Zimbabwean army in civilian politics, which compelled President Robert Mugabe to resign, and several disputed elections signal both a continued inability and a willingness on the part of SADC to enforce its liberal democratic founding principles consistently [19].

In addition, criticism of the intervention in neighboring states remained a contested topic. This was the case when some SADC member states intervened in the DRC conflict in 1998; member states Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe deployed troops to the DRC to support Laurent Kabila's rebel government. This intervention was authorized by the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation (SADC Troika), which Zimbabwe then chaired. The intervention came shortly after Rwanda and Uganda's invasion of the DRC and the subsequent request by the then-president of the country, Laurent Kabila, for SADC to assist him with curbing the aggression from neighbors. Under the auspices of the SADC Allied Forces, the military intervention was codenamed "Operation Sovereign Legitimacy" (OSLEG). Its objectives were to ward off rebels (notably sponsored by Rwanda and Uganda), secure the DRC territory, and protect civilians. At the time, the other SADC member states abstained from intervening, as consensus still needed to be reached within SADC. This scenario led to implications, contestations, and increased disagreements. In general, the outcomes were not the result of collective action.

In addition, although there are mixed assessments of the efforts of the SADC Allied Forces' intervention in the DRC, the point of the agreement remains that the four years of troop presence and active military engagement in the DRC helped the country regain its authority and sovereignty. The intervention by the SADC Allied Forces was arguably concluded with the signing of the Lusaka Agreement in 1999.

The Organ for Politics, Defence, and Security (OPDS). SADC created its Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security in 1996 after recognizing that achieving its primary goal of eradicating poverty through economic integration was next to impossible while the region was riddled with instability and political conflict. In its original structural setup, SADC's (SADCC) institutional framework did not include a body dealing with peace and security issues other than the summit, nor was there a ministerial committee to develop regional peace and security architecture [11]. However, as mentioned earlier, the relationship between economic growth and peace had already been recognized in the 1992 declaration establishing SADC, which stated that an environment of peace, security, and stability was a prerequisite for the development and improvement of the standard and quality of life of the people of the region.

The Organ for Politics, Defence, and Security, alongside the Summit, constitutes the most critical SADC institution for managing regional peace and security. However, it did not suffer several setbacks at the outset. The Organ was created too hastily, without an explicit agreement on how it would function [9]. As a result, it quickly became caught in a deadlock between Zimbabwe and South Africa. While Zimbabwe, whose president, Robert Mugabe, chaired the Organ, wanted it to remain independent from the Summit, South Africa sought to subject the Organ to the authority of the SADC Summit. For the first five years of its existence, as Laurie Nathan highlights, the Organ, which lacked a protocol to give it a legal basis, operated as a competitor to the SADC Summit; this resulted in a situation where two forums of heads of state made decisions concerning matters of regional peace and security [12]. According to Matlosa, the SADC region failed to respond to multiple conflicts during this period because of the protracted dispute over the Organ status [13, p. 115]. For this study, it would be sufficient to note that the deadlock was broken at the SADC Summit in Malawi in August 2001, when SADC Heads of State signed the Protocol on Politics, Defense, and Security Cooperation and reached an agreement on several central issues concerning the Organ's leadership structure and its relationship with the SADC Summit.

Among the vital issues resolved were the following:

1) The Organ should be integrated into the SADC structure. It was supposed to report to the SADC Summit rather than remain an independent institution in the tradition of its predecessor, the Frontline States (FLS);

2) It was agreed that the chairmanship of the Organ should rotate annually. Instead of a single chairmanship, the protocol introduced a troika, with a rotating membership on an annual basis, to head the new Organ. This troika mechanism, which comprises the former, the current, and the incoming chairman of the Organ, aims to prevent misuse of the chairmanship to gain permanent control over the Organ. This brought Zimbabwe's dominating position as a "usurper" of the chair of the organ de facto to an end [9];

3) With the signing of the Protocol on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation, the Summit agreed on broad guidelines for the work of the restructured Organ. Under the Protocol on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation, the Organ, whose overall objective is to promote peace and security, shall:

– safeguard the people and development of the region against instability arising from the breakdown of law and order, intrastate and interstate conflict, and aggression,

– promote political cooperation, shared values, and institutions,

– develop standard foreign policies that are to be advocated in international forums,

– coordinate regional security and defense,

– prevent intrastate and interstate conflict by peaceful means and consider enforcement where peaceful means do not suffice,

– promote democratic institutions and universal human rights,

– encourage member states to implement AU and UN treaties on arms control and disarmament, and

– enhance regional capacity for peacekeeping, disaster management, and the coordination of international humanitarian assistance [16].

Combining the promotion of peace and security with democracy and human rights, as well as development and humanitarian concerns, the 2001 Protocol thus reflects, to a certain extent, the liberal peace and human security agenda advanced by the UN since the middle of the 1990s.

By mandating the Organ to respond to intrastate conflicts, the protocol also indicated a shift from a Westphalian concept of sovereignty toward the doctrine of responsibility to protect; this would also be reflected in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, which replaced the OAU a year later.

As Hendricks and Musavengana emphasize, integrating the Organ into the SADC structure markedly improved security sector governance and reduced the risks of contentious troop deployments, as during the Second Congo War. As they argued in their 2010 analysis, though there is a degree of transparency surrounding the work of the Organ, the decision-making processes are still not transparent to the public, and the SADC's engagement with civil society on security matters is minimal [6].

As stated above, peace and security are necessary for sustainable development and deeper regional integration. In this regard, one joint initiative in terms of peace and security is the SADC standby force, or Brigade, which SADC Heads of State and Government established through the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in Lusaka, Zambia, in August 2007. The Brigade is a regional, multidimensional, peace-support operations capability established under the African Standby Force (ASF) framework. The Brigade represents a commitment to purpose that ensures a collective approach to defense and security, protecting civilians, and safeguarding the stability of the SADC region. The brigade operates as a tool of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security Cooperation. It receives its direction and guidance from the SADC Committee of Chiefs of Defense Staff and the Committee of SADC Police Chiefs to provide peace-building efforts in the region.

The SADC Heads of State also signed another element of the region's security architecture at the Summit in Tanzania in 2003, the Mutual Defense Pact. The security pact had been provided for the Protocol Article 2. However, the signing of the protocol had been the object of complex negotiations between the member states, and this resulted in the signing of a significantly watered-down version of the pact, wherein SADC countries do not commit themselves to the principle that an attack on one is an attack on all, as is the case with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Instead, the pact leaves it

open for each member to decide how to respond if a fellow member is attacked militarily by external or internal forces. As a result, the defense pact does not add much depth to SADC's security integration effort. In addition, the Mutual Defense Pact was also instituted for member states to contribute to developing defense training, research, and intelligence matters [16].

In summary, the construction of the first Organ in 1996 was a hasty venture as it was an interim solution to the organization's need for a joint security institution. Moreover, its ambiguous role and unclear jurisdiction gave proof of a weak compromise that reflected the discord between Zimbabwe's and South Africa's interests. However, this changed with the adoption of the Protocol on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation in 2001 and the member states decision to reform their governing regional security institutions by re-launching the Organ. With the subordination of the new OPDS directly under SADC's control, South Africa achieved a major diplomatic victory. It influenced the institutional design of the SADC's regional security integration (cooperation) framework most substantially.

Conclusion. Peace and security for SADC are primarily about achieving security community at the regional level. The REC has initiated commitment and change through its treaties, policies, protocols, and agreements. This has led to more significant collective and conscious institutionalization and transformation linked to intent (policy, protocol, and agreements) and action (security institution formation).

The relative stability of the Southern African region at present is remarkable, considering its long history of violent, large-scale conflict. Not only was Southern Africa the last part of the continent to be freed from colonialism through armed liberation struggles, which continue to shape its politics and societies, but the region also suffered from intertwined proxy and civil wars that sometimes outlived the Cold War. However, while the area continues to experience isolated armed conflicts and developmental backlogs are significant to regional stability in the long run, the most acute source of instability stems from governance deficits, which have prompted crises in various SADC states in the past decade. However, although SADC has gradually established a peace and security infrastructure,

the institutions need more capacity; they need more material and political support, as member states are reluctant to cede authority to supranational structures or enforce SADC principles. As a result, the governance deficits highlighted and SADC's lackluster conflict management may arrest the development of the Southern African region in the long run.

Both SADC's peace and security architecture, which emerged from the historical alliance of the Frontline States, and the community as a whole, were put to the test in the late 1990s when several SADC states became embroiled in the war that raged in the DRC. While armed conflict continues in the DRC, nowadays the SADC region boasts several politically stable democracies and prosperous economies. Moreover, in the past 20 years, SADC institutions have been essential in managing regional peace and security matters, including crises in member states. In this regard, the SADC has temporarily contained constitutional concerns resulting from the undermining of democratic institutions by authoritarian regimes and the military through the formation of transitional governments in Zimbabwe, Madagascar, and the DRC. But the enduring governance crisis in Zimbabwe escalated into a coup d'état, and the authoritarian government has continued to resort to violence and repression against opponents. Notwithstanding a change of leadership, the legitimacy crisis of the DRC government could not be resolved either, as an interregnum culminated in disputed elections. Meanwhile, Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) remains an absolute monarchy with severe governance deficits, and Lesotho suffers political instability. Governance deficits, political conflicts, and electoral violence have also affected the Republic of South Africa's consolidated democracy and otherwise peaceful states like Malawi and Zambia. However, SADC has been more successful through high-level diplomatic mediation, which seeks to prevent regional conflict.

To sum up, there is a need for more peace and security efforts undertaken by SADC. In practical terms, the member states or actors involved should have the capacity for peace and security and political will and commitment, and cooperation among member states and with the international community remains crucial in terms

of attending to the emerging, broadly defined security threats. Regional integration transpires in various forms, such as through harmonizing security policies. Therefore, the SADC leadership must be more cognizant that policymakers must consider that an enabling environment of peace and security is required for regional integration and development. This means that action only occurs entirely if sound political institutions, stability, and the rule of law are present within the region.

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