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BRIEFS

Zimbabwe

How to salvage the CW initiative in Zimbabwe?

A year after the Commonwealth's (CW) suspension of Zimbabwe, the situation in that country cannot be said to have improved. Instead, things have worsened.

Not only has the rule of law broken down, economic growth has declined sharply at an estimated -11.1% in mid-2002. Inflation is well above 200%, more than half of the population is facing severe famine and the size of the debt is almost a third of the country's GDP.

The obvious question at this point is, Has the CW troika been successful in resolving the crisis in Zimbabwe? Clearly it has not. What has caused it to fail and what measures should be taken to revive the initiative?

The failure of the initiative was underpinned by two factors:

- The absence of a clear framework defined by the CW Heads of Governments that would have clearly articulated what Harare should have done during the one-year suspension to warrant its lifting. This would have served as a yardstick for the CW troika to monitor the improvement of the situation in Zimbabwe. The split in the troika could have well been avoided this way.
- The lack of convergence on a common position within the troika should have been avoided. Australia argued that the crisis in Zimbabwe had worsened since

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SADC Security Integration

It looks like the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation will finally enter into force in 2003, setting the stage for an ambitious political and security integration project in Southern Africa.

So far, seven member states have ratified the Protocol (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Tanzania and Namibia). The SA Parliament is debating the issue during this parliamentary session and ratifications from Zambia and Zimbabwe are reportedly also in the pipeline. This should mean that the Protocol will enter into force in 2003. But what are the chances of turning the Protocol from a promising piece of paper to an agenda for an 'ever closer union', to use the terminology of the European Union? While much has already been written about the intra-regional obstacles to the ambitions of the Protocol – insufficient political will, diverging political values and beliefs, lack of trust, lack of economic and human capacity to turn ideas into practice – it is also important to look at some more general impediments to SADC security integration. While these impediments do not doom the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) to failure, they indicate that SADC's strategy and timeframe for security integration is, at the moment, unrealistic.

While the 1990s were often characterised as a decade of regionalism, the optimism around the role of regional institutions in promoting peace and security has receded in the 21st century. The last few years have been a time of stress for international and regional organisations across the world. The UN has been dealt a serious blow by the events culminating with the American and British war on Iraq, and both the EU and NATO have been shaken by the disagreements surrounding this war. In Asia, there is no sign of regional security organisations taking a leading role in dealing with the regions' two most dangerous threats to security, North Korea and the Indian-Pakistani conflict. Furthermore, the global economic downturn, will leave many countries with little energy for expensive and time-consuming regional projects that do not relate directly and immediately to domestic social and economic problems. While the potential gains of increased stability and prosperity resulting from political and security integration may be great, these gains will only be noticed in the longer term.

Africa is going against the current trends in regionalism. In most parts of the world, the 21st century has so far been characterised by the consolidation of existing regional structures rather than ambitious plans. For instance, Europe is at the moment widening the membership basis of, and thereby in some ways also watering down, its two main institutions for political and security co-operation, the EU and NATO. The region is creating concentric circles of fast-track and slow-track integration processes within these institutions, allowing the different European states to integrate at their own pace depending on their political will and capabilities to do so. In contrast to this, Africa is seemingly going in the

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opposite direction with grand, pan-African schemes such as the AU Peace and Security Council, paying too little attention to the degree to which these schemes will work in practice on a continent where regional relations are often characterised by conflict, lack of mutual trust, and even inter-state warfare. The SADC Organ is in this context perhaps a more promising, sub-regional grouping, but even this smaller group of 14 countries will have to work very hard and apply a good deal of political will if it is to turn the goals of the OPDS Protocol into practical policies.

On a superficial level, SADC has followed the path of the EU, starting with lower level economic co-ordination and co-operation and moving towards integration in the 'high politics' sphere of foreign and security policy. However, when remembering that it took the EU around forty years before it reached agreement on a political union in Maastricht in 1992, SADC's timeframe is breathtaking. The organisation's predecessor, the SADCC, was only formed in 1980, SADC itself came into being in 1992, the SADC OPDS was prematurely launched already in 1996 but remained steeped in controversy until the signing of the Protocol at the Malawi summit in 2001. This still leaves only a decade between the birth of SADC and its formal agreement to embark on such projects as developing common foreign policy approaches, complete a mutual defence pact, and integrate the SADC member countries' armed forces to the degree that they are able to conduct common peace-keeping and peace enforcement actions in the region. When discussing the promise of the SADC Organ, it should be kept in mind that even after fifty years of a uniquely successful integration project, the EU members have still been unable to agree on most major foreign policy issues concerning the region. Just look at the diplomatic fall-out from the British-American war in Iraq.

Anne Hammerstad

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March 2002 and thus the suspension needed to be extended, whereas Nigeria and SA strongly pushed its lifting. This lack of convergence allowed Harare an opportunity to escalate state-sponsored violence against its citizens and drag the country deeper into economic turmoil.

How the initiative can be revived is a matter of clearly articulating the principles and norms that Zimbabwe should adhere to, to be readmitted into the CW councils. This should be coupled with benchmarks to measure progress and thus facilitate more agreement among the members of the troika and the other CW members. These principles and norms of adherence should include:

- A full and unconditional return to the rule of law, which would mean ending the arbitrary beatings and arrests by formal and informal organs of the state.
- The restoration of a legitimate, democratic government, which respects human rights, social and economic rights as well as the rights of freedom of expression (including freedom of the press) and assembly.
- A constitutional review.

These are the salient points to initiate economic and political recovery in Zimbabwe and which have been lacking as a backbone of the initiative, hence the lack of agreement within the troika on the progress or non-progress in Zimbabwe.

Nomazulu Mda

China & Africa

Will Africa continue to be a key market for Chinese engagement under Hu Jintao?

China under its new president will continue to pursue its relationship with Africa to gain access to its largely untapped resource market and to cement its own international standing as the leader of the developing world. Africa was identified as a key market for China in the early 1990s. Jiang Zemin stressed the guidelines of China's Africa policy as 'equality, sincere friendship, unity and co-operation, and common development'. In 1996 President Jiang visited a number of African countries to consolidate Sino-African relations. During the visit, 23 economic and technical agreements were signed to establish what Beijing saw as a foundation for long-term co-operation based primarily on enhancing trade links.

By the end of 2000, Chinese companies had established 499 companies in Africa with a total contractual investment of \$990 million. According to official statistics, the total trade volume between China and Africa increased by 63% in 2000. The privatisation policies adopted by many African countries since the late 1980s have led to the opening of African markets to external investment.

At the 16th Party Congress held in November 2002 Jiang retired as party leader and Hu Jintao took over. On 15 March 2003 Hu was handed the reins of the presidency, while Jiang has followed in the footsteps of his predecessor, Deng Xiaoping, by continuing to serve as the chairman of the Central Military Commission. In a country where 'he who controls the military controls the people' it is believed that Jiang's move to remain in control of the military will stabilise the morale of the armed forces and ensure a smooth transition from the old to the new generation. Hu is a fourth generation Communist Party member, one of the senior cadres to have grown up after the revolution. According to Hu's official biography, he is a 'staunch supporter of the policies of [economic] reform and opening [China's] door [to the world]'. Hu has been vice-president since 1998, and made numerous visits to Africa during that time.

Experts say that Sino-African economic co-operation is bound to increase under Hu. A joint follow-up meeting on the *Programme for China-Africa Co-operation in Economic and Social Development* due to take place in Ethiopia in November 2003 will reveal more about China's Africa policy.

Nuria Giralt

SA and Chile: Partners in the South?

Both SA and Chile are average-sized countries of the developing world, but the manner in which both have pursued their relationship with the key countries of the North – especially with trade agreements – has wider benefits for their respective regions. Moreover, they can strengthen their trade negotiating positions, and that of their regions by learning from each other.

Despite their size – SA has a total population of about 43 million and a GDP of about \$130 billion, while Chile has a population of just more than 15 million and a GDP of about \$70 billion – the ability to ‘punch above their weight’, and thus influence the international agenda through multilateral organisations such as the UN, NAM and WTO, has earned them the respect of the developing world.

They are also recognised as important contributors to economic and political stability in their respective regions. While both experienced modest GDP growth during 2002 (SA grew by 3% and Chile by 1.8%) these rates exceeded international and regional growth trends. The SA economy is expected to grow by about 4% in 2003 and Chile looks set to rise above 3%. Inflation rates and exchange rates are also expected to maintain stability throughout the year, and production and trade levels are consistently improving.

Both SA and Chile have advanced North-South relations through FTAs with countries from the North – most notably the EU.

SA and Chile have agreements that cover 90% (or ‘substantially all trade’) of goods traded with the EU. Both face serious restrictions with regard to access to the EU market for agricultural products, which are principal exports of SA and Chile. As a result, SA and Chile had similar disputes with the EU throughout the negotiations.

Chile was able to use the SA

experience to fast-track its negotiating process and concluded the agreement far quicker.

An even more significant achievement was the conclusion at the end of 2002 of an FTA between Chile and the US, which is to be signed soon.

The US is Chile’s most important individual export partner, absorbing close to 20% of total exports from the country. Between 1974-2002 the North American region (predominantly the US) accounted for 45.3% of foreign investment flows into Chile.

SA is following a very similar course. Having concluded an agreement with the EU, it is in the process of finalising an FTA with Mercosur and is discussing bilateral agreements with the US, India, Nigeria and, perhaps, even China.

In many ways an SA-Chile FTA may provide SA with an ideal springboard for the rest of Latin-America. Chile can serve as an ‘incubator’ for SA businesses looking to operate in Latin America.

More importantly, Chile is an undisputed world leader in terms of FTAs concluded. Apart from the EU and the US, it has also signed bilateral agreements with most Latin American countries and South Korea. There is room to exchange knowledge and expertise with Chile as SA enters into its trade negotiations with the US.

The EU, Chile and SA

In terms of trade, whereas the EU is the number one destination for both SA and Chilean exports (as individual countries, the US is the number one destination for Chilean exports, but a combined EU is a larger market), they are only 19th and 38th, respectively, on the EU’s list of importing partners. European trade figures indicate that SA has a larger and more integrated portion of the EU market than Chile. In 2000 SA provided 1.4% of total EU imports against Chile’s 0.5%.

However, SA exports to Europe have grown by 50% since the agreement came into effect in January 2000. In 2001 exports to Europe grew by 11%, placing SA ahead of Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Singapore in the EU trade rankings. During this time European exports to SA grew by 26%, increasing SA’s trade deficit with the EU to approximately \$3 billion. The EU accounts for 40% of SA’s trade and contributes 70% of foreign direct investment into the country.

While Chile is likely to experience similar growth in trade with the EU, there is little chance that the agreement signed in May 2002 will facilitate trade flows of a capacity remotely close to that of SA’s with the EU.

However, like the agreement signed with SA, the EU has emphasised that its relationship with Chile is not simply about ‘trade talks’. There is a very strong development dimension included in the agreement, which provides scope to extend the original bilateral partnership to broader North-South co-operation.

Transparency International’s most recent Corruption Perception Index ranks SA 36th and Chile 17th out of 102 countries. Chile is ahead of Germany, Japan and France reflecting growing business confidence and economic freedom in both countries.

Gender Sensitivity in the AU

Can SA facilitate greater gender sensitivity in the new body?

After SA's second democratic elections in June 1999, eight women were appointed to ministerial positions, double the number in the first democratic government. SA ranks seventh in the world in terms of women parliamentary representatives, while the SA constitution and the African National Congress (ANC)-dominated government have entrenched gender equality as a key political value, a significant achievement in a continent where women are all too often regarded as secondary citizens.

While the African Union (AU) promises an 'African Century' held together by a common vision of unity, women in many African countries continue to face institutional and social discrimination, which renders them unequal partners in political debates, leadership roles and decision-making processes. One example is Swaziland. In March 2003, King Mswati passed legislation, which excludes women whose husbands have died within the past two years from standing as candidates for this year's parliamentary elections.

Prior to the launch of the AU, several efforts were made to prioritise women's issues. These issues were discussed under the topic *Mainstreaming African Women's Vision and Effective Participation in the AU*, at a meeting in Durban from 28-30 June 2002, organised by the African Women's Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPD) in partnership with Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). The Durban declaration included the following recommendations to the AU:

- An AU Commissioner with an exclusive mandate on gender issues, equipped with adequate financial, human and material resources, to make gender issues a priority in the AU, should be

appointed.

- A specialised technical committee on gender should be established in accordance with Article 14 of the Constitutive Act of the AU.
- The AWCPD established by the OAU in 1998, should be given operational powers since it has a strategic role in peace and security in Africa.
- A pan-African women's network should be included in the Working Group for the elaboration of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) Protocol.
- A gender balance in all the organs (that is, 50% of women in all AU structures) should be established within a reasonable timeframe.

The Durban Declaration is to be formally adopted at the AU summit in June 2003 in Mozambique. The contents of the declaration appear to be in line with international values and norms on women empowerment. However, the most important element in the adoption of all declarations is the ability of governments and role players to

'AU processes are still new, but at least there has been a lot of commitment from African leaders. They have spent time and resources on trying to achieve the predetermined goals of the Union... However women activists, gender experts and civil society groups need to assist in the processes. SA has already forwarded the name of Mary Maroboke to assist the AU in the gender mainstreaming processes.'

Susan Nkomo, CEO in the Office of the Status of Women

implement them.

It remains to be seen whether SA can play as positive a role in furthering gender issues as in its pursuit of peace in the DRC, Burundi and Lesotho.

SA's own attempts to address gender inequality could aid the AU process. Its SADC commitments and its constitution, assist to define SA's stance on gender matters within the AU. Under the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development member states are required to achieve a 30% target of women in political and decision-making structures by the year 2005. Only SA is close to achieving that in parliament with 29.8%, followed closely by Mozambique with 28.4% and Seychelles with 24%.

Although the Durban Declaration is not an end in itself, it is the start of a process. African governments will need to adopt appropriate measures in their respective countries to ensure the participation of women in the AU—especially since most African governments have serious disparities in gender equality throughout all government structures.

Women in political decision-making structures in SADC		
Country	% Parliament	% Cabinet
Angola	15.1	14.3
Botswana	9.0	6.6
Lesotho	10.3	8.3
Malawi	8.3	9.0
Mauritius	7.6	8.0
Mozambique	28.4	2.7
Namibia	14.1	9.5
South Africa	29.8	29.6
Seychelles	24.0	21.4
Swaziland	7.3	13.3
Tanzania	16.3	13.0

Princess Tabata