

Mozambique's Foreign Policy: Pragmatic Non- Alignment as a Tool for Development



RESEARCH QUESTION

- Over-arching question: What factors influence Mozambique's foreign policy?
 - What are the themes emanating from the implementation of Mozambique's foreign policy?
 - How is its role in the region likely to change in the medium to long term?
- SAIIA sought to address this by unpacking what Mozambique's foreign policy is, and how it makes use of diplomacy to advance its own domestic imperatives.
- While there is a plethora of information on Mozambique's history and its economic potential given the resource discoveries. Not much is known about the contemporary dynamics of its foreign policy.
- **UNDERLYING ASSUMPTION:** Mozambique's ability and willingness to assert itself in the region will increase as it becomes more financially autonomous.



METHODOLOGY

- Desktop research
- Fieldwork research in Maputo and Pretoria
- Government officials
 - DIRCO in South Africa
 - NPC in SA Presidency
 - DTI
 - Department of Mineral Resources in Maputo
 - Ministry of International Relations in Maputo
 - Department of Planning and Development Maputo
- Diplomatic Missions of the G19 donors and African representatives
- Civil Society
- Academia
- Various businesses from SA and the region operating in Maputo





BACKGROUND

- Nearly two decades of civil war, with the Rome General Peace Accords in 1992 and a democratic election in 1994.
- One of the poorest countries in the world and considered a LDC.
- Now, the country has amazing prospects with the discovery of vast resources in Tete and the Rovuma Basin.
- Along with these resources, it has an ability to provide access for the hinterland, and has competitive advantage in clean energy and food security



MOZAMBIQUE'S DOMESTIC SITUATION

- Mozambique is coming off a very low base and faces massive post-war reconstruction challenges
 - 4th LDC in the world
 - 11.7 million people live below the poverty line; HDI Ranking 184 out of 187
 - While Mozambique experiences high levels of unemployment (27%), it also suffers from a severe skills shortage
 - Nevertheless 7% growth over the past decade
 - Massive stores of mineral and energy wealth
- Key focal areas for growth: Agriculture (25% GDP; 78% employment, Tourism, Minerals and Energy
- Key is development of infrastructure
- FRELIMO dominant political actor (3.5 million members, grew 100%)
- Large portion of its budget is still supported by the G19 group of donors (39% in 2012)
- Challenges for Civil Society
 - Foreign Policy discussions not held openly
 - Prevalence of FRELIMO members in civil society organisations means that debate is often skewed
- Relative media freedom
- Challenge to improve the robustness of institutions to combat corruption and



MOZAMBIQUE'S FOREIGN POLICY

- Donor dependence, proximity to SA and post war reconstruction have influenced the ebb and flow of Mozambique's FP evolution.
 - Possible to discern 3 phases:
 - Foreign Policy of War: Seeking Legitimacy
 - Foreign Policy of Peace: Consolidation and 'Normalisation'
 - Foreign Policy of Prosperity: Unlocking Wealth
- In all these phases, FP has been pragmatic and has been informed by changing domestic needs and the mobilisation of support for those needs.
- FP articulation almost exclusively in the domain of the Presidency: disciplined communication
- Mozambique operates on the motto of "making more friends, promoting more partnerships".
 - Appearance of 'pacific' aspirations, but also driven by realpolitik realities of diffusing dependence
 - Small size and stature works to its advantage: Membership to the Commonwealth.



SEEKING LEGITIMACY

- Foreign Policy of Civil War: FRELIMO securing support for its campaign against RENAMO.
 - Natural allies in Russia and China: Marxist-Leninist underpinnings
 - Few countries to navigate the Sino-Soviet Split
- Establishment of relationships with other liberation movements: Conferencia das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas (CONCP) which had strong affiliations with ZAPU and ANC
 - Notions of 'brotherhood' established during this period, informs tone and temperature of regional relations
- FLS and founding member of SADCC (transport mandate – current feature)
- Turning point: 1979 – exclusion from Council for Economic Assistance: Mozambique forced to seek alternatives. Began looking West. Lesson on the need to diversify its partnerships; strong feature today.



CONSOLIDATION & NORMALISATION

- Focus on securing domestic climate and addressing long-term socio-economic challenges.
- General Budget Support: decreasing trend. Critique:
 - Skews accountability
 - Reduces autonomy
- Region offers huge potential for Mozambican growth. Shared challenges and opportunities
- Continued the focus from SADCC on transport through development corridors: one of the lowest cross-border trading costs in the region (60% of average costs for imports and exports) – opening up the hinterland to Mozambican ports
 - Nacala, Beira, Maputo, Mtwara
- Development corridor diplomacy – Spatial development hubs; nexus of development engagement with neighbours
- Trilateral security agreement with SA & Tanzania on piracy: finalisation of a White Paper on Security
- Former head of SADC
 - Mediation role in Madagascar; Chissano in Malawi-Tanzania



CASE STUDY: RELATIONS WITH MALAWI

- Malawi relationship has been an anomaly in its regional relations
 - Malawian support for RENAMO and implicated in death of Samora Machel
- “The problem with Malawi is Bingu wa Mutharika”
- Mozambique blamed for Malawian fuel shortage
- Tensions escalated in 2009 at Caloca Border Post
 - Accusations that Malawi ‘invaded’ Mozambique
 - Negative impact on wa Mutharika’s state visit a few days later
- October 2010 Zambezi- Shire Waterway project
 - Prestige project for wa Mutharika
- Stalled other important projects like the Interconnector Project
- Relations resuscitated with assumption to power of Joyce Banda
- Mozambique arguably has a role to play in the border dispute between Malawi and Tanzania. It certainly has an interest. But so far they have not spoken on this issue publicly



THE SA / MOZAMBIQUE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

South Africa and Mozambique have a long history spanning back to the apartheid era.

- This has led to a rhetoric of brotherhood.
- But relationship functions best at Presidential level – needs to be deeper engagement between the bureaucracies
- Our democracies have developed in tandem and we run a on streamlined political calendars.
- Important to each other as trade partners –
- Exports to SA grown from R29 mil in 1994 to R951 mil in 2012; imports R321mil '94 to R2 billion in 2012
- SA one of two countries that Mozambique has a BNC with
- Considerable investment from SA into Mozambique: Mozal, Sasol (R11bn total); Eskom R12.6 mill investments in wind turbines, as well as investments in hydropower. SA sees Mozambique as an important partner in addressing its food and energy security needs
- A large number of migrant workers have worked in South African mines, accounting for substantial remittances to Mozambique.
- Mozambicans come to South Africa to shop.
- South Africans have long favoured Mozambique as a tourist destination.
- These strong ties have often brought South African's to perceive Mozambique as another 'province' of South Africa.



UNLOCKING WEALTH: LOOKING SOUTH?

- Until 2010 six of the top 10 investors in Mozambique came from the G19
- Portugal, Italy, UK, Belgium, Spain ; Norway and Switzerland
- This year, Belgium, Netherlands and Spain stopped GBS contributions (largely due to their domestic situation; but there are growing concerns about corruption in Mozambique)
- Trend now to move towards emerging players: particularly China and Brazil. Interestingly in first quarter of 2013 UAE was largest investor: EUR 152 million in investment in Nacala Corridor to Vale: Tax incentives of Dubai and Mauritius
- Resource discoveries pushing Mozambique to pursue a stronger 'economic diplomacy' agenda in its Foreign Policy: securing access to resources.
- Interesting that President engages directly with companies on overseas visits.
- Emerging power engagement is focused on extractive industries: but development assistance is different from G19. Policy of non-interference. While it may be better received by Mozambicans because its couched in language of 'partnerships and equality' – there's a greater expectation of 'reciprocity'.



OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT

- Key challenges remain for Mozambique to address its poverty and unemployment. 11.7 million live below the poverty line. Development has not been inclusive
- Food riots indicate vulnerability of people.
- Corruption, transparency, robustness of institutions and the watch-dog role of civil society
- Links between business and political party members is still prevalent.
- Electoral violence: suppression of opposition parties.
- What does the deadlock between RENAMO and FRELIMO mean?



KEY FINDINGS

- Non-alignment has been a key feature of Mozambique's foreign policy
- Region is instrumental in unlocking Mozambique's bottlenecks to development
- Emergence of 'corridor diplomacy' – 2-pronged strategy to increase access to ports from the hinterland, but to also address developmental challenges. Led to increases in agricultural activities in the areas, and cross-border trade
- Deeper regional engagement has the potential to be expressed through greater integration of social services like health and education.
- Potential for Mozambique to play a stronger role in the region, as it grows. Mozambique enjoys a considerable amount of 'moral authority' in the region and in the world as a 'donor darling'

