The undiscovered country
Essays in honour of Maxi Schoeman
Edited by Vasu Reddy and Heather Thuynsma
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Contents

Preface ........................................................................................................................................ iv
Notes on contributors ................................................................................................................. v
Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................... vi

Chapter 1
The undiscovered country: re-imagining the world we make ............................................. 1
Vasu Reddy and Heather Thuynsma

Chapter 2
A foreign policy fit for the future ......................................................................................... 15
Jakkie Cilliers

Chapter 3
‘A foreign policy to die for’ and other tales from the southern tip of Africa ....................... 35
Chris Alden

Chapter 4
Global governance and human rights: South Africa and the United Nations .................... 49
Henning Melber

Chapter 5
Deconstructing security and the critical dimensions ......................................................... 67
Garth le Pere

Chapter 6
Sandy Africa

Chapter 7
Maxi Schoeman’s worldview of African regional security in a global context .................. 95
‘Funmi Olonisakin and Sonja Theron

Chapter 8
Concluding note ...................................................................................................................... 113
Deon Geldenhuys
Preface

My friendship with Maxi Schoeman has spanned more than 25 years and has been momentous and enriching. I have had the privilege of working with Maxi (around 2009) on the DIRCO-appointed panel tasked with analysing Chapter 9 of the National Development Plan (NDP), and more recently during her service as Deputy Chair of the South African Council on International Relations (2014–2018). I have enjoyed her intellect and pointed counsel in such fora, and her sense of humour has tended to lighten otherwise weighted deliberations.

This collection of essays is a fitting tribute to a woman of Maxi’s stature. It draws together perspectives from a range of formidable International Relations academics, many of whom also happen to be her close colleagues and friends. And while her research has taken her to all five continents, her interests remain firmly rooted in home soil. From debating the merits of South Africa’s role in continental peacekeeping initiatives to teasing out the specifics of our foreign policy, Maxi has asked key, although sometimes uncomfortable, but challenging questions. Never afraid to voice her intellectual discomfort, Maxi has spent the last few years studying the country’s foreign policy constraints and challenges, especially as South Africa asserts itself as an emerging power on the world stage. She has pushed for the country to act as a bridge/bridge-builder in an effort ‘to make Africa and the world a better place’.

It is a pity that such a talent will retire in 2019 from official academic duty. It is a loss to international scholars and practitioners. I look forward to her next chapter, where she will no doubt be as feisty as ever!

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Acknowledgements

Our sincere gratitude to all our colleagues who helped to research, write and edit this volume. We would like to specifically acknowledge the work of Jakkie Cilliers, Anton du Plessis, Antoinette Louw, Amelia Broodryk, Rina Wilken, Yolanda Sadie, Siona O’Connell, John Kotsopoulos, Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, Michael Bongani Reinders and Francois Gilles de Pelichy.
Chapter 1
The undiscovered country: re-imagining the world we make

Vasu Reddy and Heather Thuynsma

‘You can make yourself clever by reading’
Maxi Schoeman

It is usually the case that publications that celebrate and interrogate a scholar’s contribution to the academy depict it as the end of a chapter, or the conclusion of a journey. We offer, in part, a counterview, borrowing a central idea from Francis Fukuyama’s *The end of history and the last man*,¹ an expansion of his earlier essay ‘The end of history’.² In fact, the subject of Fukuyama’s thesis directly converges with the discipline and scholar who is the framing point of this volume.

If the end of history in Fukuyama’s project was about the ascendancy of Western liberal democracy at the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union (which was fundamentally about the end of a particular period of military conflicts and the emergence of market capitalism and liberal democracy) then the end of history is less about a turning point and more about how ideas and events take on new life and meaning. In similar ways, our intention is that this volume honouring a colleague marks a semicolon to Maxi Schoeman’s scholarly enquiry rather than a full stop.

The *Festschrift* as a concept is well established in academia as a volume of learned and scholarly essays serving as a tribute to a noteworthy scholar on their retirement.³ This *Fest* (meaning ‘festival’) and *schrift* (meaning ‘writing’) is dedicated to Maxi Schoeman’s commitment to a socially just world where every person, everywhere, can live with dignity and have his or her human needs and rights fulfilled.

It is clear to those of us who know her well (represented by the contributors to this volume) that such a world is possible, and that we have agency to create it.
In collating this volume, our purpose is to bear witness to the stimulating effect that her work, teaching and insights have had on a wide area of International Relations (and its animation by a deep humanistic ethos).

The essays in this collection are not hagiographic (this is always a risk when honouring a colleague). In fact, the nuanced and critical perspectives engage dialogically with the interests, ideas and topics pertinent to the discipline Schoeman has represented for many decades.

For those of us who know Maxi as a person and her arguments and scholarly work, it is evident that she has focused much energy on challenging received opinions. This Festschrift illuminates through the appreciative essays contained here, either directly or tangentially, a dialogue between her work, insights and other major contributions to the field. The volume raises the inevitable relationship between the political and the strategic and assembles a range of notable scholars (and colleagues) with whom Schoeman has worked over time.

In this chapter we emphasise that some of the defining features of Schoeman’s academic and scholarly career lies in the relationship between life and fiction – showing the entanglement of the (auto)biographical and the connections between art, life and her scholarly work. It is in no way a reductionistic summation, but in fact an act of reading some attributes in respect of her person, politics and profile as a scholar.

For this reason, this chapter – and indeed the volume’s title, The undiscovered country – is deliberate, capturing in direct and circuitous ways the project of life, ideas, thinking and interventions. The chapter’s subtitle, The politics of re-imagining the world we make, is equally appropriate when read against the grain, as it directs us to the project of meaning-making, reinterpretation, creative problem solving, redesigning and indeed agency.

If the structure–agency conundrum has been a standing debate in the social sciences, it is clear Schoeman opts for the latter. To return to the volume title: this literary metaphor, framed as it is, is less about the insularity of specific geopolitics and more about the prospects of the epistemological (nature of knowledge and ways of knowing) and the ontological (existence and being).

Ways of being and knowing have also had relevance to the people who have influenced her. Beyond family, friends and many colleagues, intellectuals such as Ken Booth, Peter Vale, Claude Ake, Ali Mazrui, ‘Funmi Olonisakin and Susan Strange stand out.

The undiscovered country shows an almost direct reference to the Tom Stoppard play, written in 1979 about upper-class codes of behaviour and social values, with a key intertext the famous soliloquy ‘To be, or not to be’ from Hamlet in which Prince Hamlet, beyond the contemplation of death, also meditates on pain and the unfairness of life.
But perhaps even more famously, the title also invokes the literary genre of science fiction (notably the *Star Trek* franchise, and in particular the 1991 film) because it means to shape a future full of prospects and unknowns — a stark contrast to how Shakespeare framed the phrase in *Hamlet*.

If fiction is about the imaginative, then science fiction further augments the depiction of possible futures where belief, history, politics, mythology, theology, social memory and power push the boundaries of both genre and the imagination. This re-interpretation allows scholars, such as those who have contributed to this volume, to pursue the key moments of Schoeman’s scholarly past and present to re-imagine ideas and concepts for a better future.

This question of imagining, or indeed re-imagining, the future has driven much of Schoeman’s intellectual and maternal concern. Possible questions that surface include: Where do we stand? What path are we on? How do we think we know? What perspectives/alternatives can be offered to resolve problems? What leverage do we have?

Beyond or perhaps because it addresses these complex political questions, science fiction was not encouraged in the South African political context of Schoeman’s youth. It was perceived to be an ‘untasteful’ engagement about races of peoples and worlds unimaginable, potentially blasphemous and presumably transgressive.

Films such as *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and books such as Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* were banned in South Africa because the authorities feared they would expose audiences to ‘obscene’ and ‘indecent’ material. Indeed, some governments across the world have viewed the genre as subversive because its fantasy mirrors our reality, and its authors have used their literary prowess to prick our consciences in a deliberate attempt to provoke new answers.

While Schoeman is a voracious reader of fiction (she has over 500 books on her kindle and bookcases brimming with paperbacks), her reading of science fiction has been much more selective. *Remembrance of Earth’s past* by Liu Cixin is one of only a few titles. She would do well to read more, since most of these authors dwell on key themes that interest international relations and security studies scholars.

And so, as a novel (pun intended) way to introduce a text that celebrates a maverick political scholar, this chapter introduces the discourses she has debated throughout her career and perhaps puckishly proposes future areas for Schoeman to explore. Here we discuss how her work, like that of science fiction, depicts the past,
represents the present, and foregrounds some future possibilities in an effort to explain issues and states of being in other ways/forms.

But there is another key aspect that is relevant to the scholarly field we motivate in this volume. The trajectory of South African political sciences and its two popular domains of knowledge (security studies and international relations) cannot be complete without acknowledging the contributions by Schoeman. While Schoeman will be the first to recognise, given her humility and forthrightness, that her written contributions are modest, it is undoubtedly her readers, her colleagues and her students who are possibly best placed to offer an evaluation of and engagement with her ideas.

On the one hand, her scholarship and contributions demonstrate a freshness and intimate knowledge as an insightful ‘native’ to the broad developments, complexities and dynamics of the international relations knowledge field. On the other hand, her varied contributions have been relevant also because she has been an intelligible reader of the conditions of possibility that shape the political landscape, her discipline and field of expertise.

**International relations**

In 2019, her retirement year, Schoeman’s discipline of International Relations (IR) marked 100 years (see also the forthcoming monograph by Thakur & Vale, 2020, who offer alternative readings of the origins of the discipline) with the founding position, the Woodrow Wilson Chair of International Politics, established at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth in 1919, the very university from which Schoeman received her doctorate (for a more extended discussion see Bull).

In the same period but in very different geopolitics, the University of Pretoria, the institution she retires from, formally established the Faculty of Humanities (27 May 1919) with, nearly 70 years later in 1988, the Department of Political Sciences being one of its stalwart departments.

Originally, the department was part of the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences but under a succession of strong departmental heads it has entrenched IR as a central subject area while weathering many local and global developments – Jakkie Cilliers highlights some of the more recent examples in Chapter 2.

Maxi, we claim, has played a formidable leadership role as head of this department ([HOD] since her appointment in 2000) for over 16 years, building on the formidable work of her late predecessor, Marie Muller (first female professor and HOD in 1996).

IR as a discipline (sometimes called a fuzzy and ill-defined field) has, in the 20th century, grappled with a number of key questions, notably sovereignty and power as issues central to ‘international relations’ (in its lower-case usage we mean the object of its study). Whatever the case, thinking politically and political thinking about the nature, attributes and interrelations between nations, states and
communities is deeply influenced by insights from political science, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology and law.\textsuperscript{9}

We are intensely aware that the world of international relations is deeply influenced by multifaceted factors: social, cultural, economic, political and technological (aspects which Schoeman actively deploys in her writing). At another level the very discipline and object of study is fundamentally global and influenced by ‘globalisation’.\textsuperscript{10}

Central among the concerns is whether the world is ordered and how to manage and engage order in international relations between states and the structure of the international system.\textsuperscript{11} At a crude level, the relationship separation between the ‘domestic’ and the ‘international’ (as distinct spheres) has also meant that the ‘problem of order’ has had to turn to solutions at the level of the international.

The world of international relations is deeply influenced by social, cultural, economic, political and technological factors

If the foundations of the discipline at the University of Aberystwyth were to counter and prevent the reoccurrence of war,\textsuperscript{12} then it is a discipline beyond theory, of relevant practical and pragmatic intent with specific epistemological utility. It is a field of knowledge that, despite critique, has been aloof from wider debates in the human sciences, and has in our view remained dedicated to resolving human challenges in a world riddled with wicked problems (for example, the ‘interparadigm debate’ by scholars in the 1970s captured in Booth & Smith).\textsuperscript{13}

Decentring IR in respect of Westphalian and on Western and Northern normative frameworks is a growing area of critical intervention in the uneven geopolitics of knowledge production.\textsuperscript{14} Recent research on interventions suggests that IR could consider approaches to the discipline as ‘global’\textsuperscript{15} and ‘worldist’\textsuperscript{16} regarding the Eurocentric history of international theory.

Indeed, the chapters in this volume attempt to bring into purview strategies, insights and perspectives of scholars who offer propositions that are plural and multi-perspectival that engage either directly or indirectly some of the themes in the field.

Exploring theories of state action

Schoeman has, to paraphrase a Chinese proverb, lived in interesting times. Born in 1954 in Brakpan, she has lived through turmoil and tumult in her native South Africa and within the global politic. From reading banned books such as Es’kia Mphahlele’s \textit{Down Second Avenue} and being personally sanctioned for it, to watching live music in a township hall and being spirited home to evade searching apartheid police, Schoeman has fed and nurtured her intellectual curiosity at every turn.
Reading titles that span cultures and contexts, from Margaret Craven’s *I heard the owl call my name* (which celebrates life’s lessons amid the tensions of a modern world) to Melvyn Bragg’s *Love without end: a story of Heloise and Abelard* (whose timeless and layered love story is full of philosophical and feminist meaning) to Hilary Mantel’s *Cromwell trilogy* (a historical series that tells of the brutish nature of politics and power) to anything by Chinua Achebe and his depiction of the clash of eras and cultures in postcolonial Africa. As a librarian and then academic scholar she has used, semiconsciously for the most part, her literary fascination to colour and texture her concern for humanity and to grapple with the larger questions of life and socio-political problems.

Along the way, Schoeman has acknowledged the human desire (hers included) to shape and control all outcomes, often at our own peril. International relations scholars, for example, have tried to predict future events, much like their scientific colleagues, but humanity and its ability to work outside of carefully formulated equations have caught many scholars by surprise and shaken others’ beliefs to the core.

Schoeman has used her literary fascination to colour and texture her concern for humanity.

The unfolding impact of the 2016 US presidential election is a case in point, with leaders scrambling to balance a president who flouts norms and conventions to provoke often-unseemly results in the global arena.

Perhaps it is their inability to see beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries that has blinded such theorists to the insights others have to offer, perhaps too many rely on positivistic methodologies or perhaps others’ ‘rejection of the ahistorical, rationalist foundations’ have provided incomplete explanations. Whatever the cause, events still surprise, and theorists, like their fictional interpreters, have redoubled their efforts to see how we can do better.

Several authors in this volume mention Schoeman’s theoretical leaning towards a constructivist ontological and epistemological openness.

Constructivists, as a theoretical grouping, tried to bridge the rationalists (who believe, among other things, in the primacy of the nation-state, whose actions reflect a certain rationality, and whose power depends on its coercive material capacity) and the reflectivists (who generally consider international relations to be based on ideological constructs driven by dominant powers and not natural phenomena), but without much success.

A state’s behaviour, constructivists hold, relies on its ‘social meanings’ or depictions of military power, trade relations, international institutions or domestic
preferences\textsuperscript{25} – meanings that are constructed from a specific combination of history, norms, and beliefs.

By focusing on the social context of international relations, constructivists stress that issues of identity (and its relation to human dignity)\textsuperscript{26} and belief underscore a state’s actions – two themes that recur throughout Schoeman’s research and to which authors in this volume such as Chris Alden (Chapter 3), Henning Melber (Chapter 4) and Sandy Africa (Chapter 6) refer in their respective appraisals.

The notion of a constructed identity\textsuperscript{27} is also an issue that science fiction authors have used to characterise good and evil, or the us vs them dynamic that will be picked up later in this chapter. It is also a golden thread that has tied Schoeman’s favourite pastime to her academic work to her role as a mediator on the boards of non-profits she has mentored, such as the Institute for Global Dialogue and the Institute for Security Studies.

Another key aspect of constructivism, and one which Garth le Pere (Chapter 5), ’Funmi Olonisakin and Sonja Theron (Chapter 7) feature, is the role social norms\textsuperscript{28} play in international politics, especially in terms of realising an effective peacekeeping agenda.

This normative focus highlights her need to elevate ‘appropriateness’ in which specific norms underpin a state’s rationality rather than simply measuring the ‘consequences’ based on a state’s so-called rational preoccupation with maximising wealth and power.\textsuperscript{29} It is this normative foundation that is reflected, although perhaps unwittingly, in Schoeman’s work and more deliberately in her favourite fictional reads from Pollyanna to Things fall apart.

**Science fact or fiction?**

To date only one science fiction title has grabbed Schoeman’s fancy, which is a pity because the genre has so much to offer an international relations scholar.\textsuperscript{30} Fiction in general, once you suspend disbelief and are able to draw parallels to enable multiple perspectives, is an important vehicle to learn about and critique key socio-political topics.

Science fiction is particularly significant for international relations and security studies specialists, especially from a constructivist perspective, given the discipline’s preoccupation with concepts such as identity, location, geography, power, violence and differing social constructs. The genre’s purpose is to blend truly scientific discoveries – much of the technology featured by such authors form the bedrock of the global information technology industry – with the express mission of exploring ‘the unknown possibilities of existence’.\textsuperscript{31}

The renowned international relations scholar Ali Mazrui’s novel The trial of Christopher Okigbo, for instance, creates a new world called After-Africa to critique a clash of cultures and the norms they engender. Incidentally, Mazrui has remained a key influence on Maxi Schoeman whom she met on several occasions.
Scholars and authors alike have spent much of their time measuring and describing the destructive nature of human survival, effectively conjuring dark predictions of a select group of survivors who eke out an existence long enough for spacefaring technology to develop, allowing them to jump to another planet where they can again wreak havoc and, in realist terms, ‘let loose the dogs of war’.\(^{32}\) Humanity, and the political states people form, is uncertain and seemingly doomed to repeat the choices of its forefathers and, as illustrated in novels such as George Orwell’s \textit{1984} or \textit{Animal farm}, consume itself.

This dire plot embeds imagined universes and temporal shifts and is one that is reflected in a range of science fiction artefacts, to use the cultural studies term, but it has also shaped how people see our very real future unfolding.\(^ {33}\)

Nonetheless, international politics is constantly searching for a balance\(^ {34}\) and, as any good novel depicts, for every particularly evil villain there emerges a hero to counter him/her. So while some authors have used current scientific findings to narrate the end of days, others have used the opportunity to explore a future that chooses differently, thinks and behaves differently, and ultimately debates what it means to be human – all key themes contributors in this volume pick up in Schoeman’s work.

Scholars have studied the intertextuality of world politics by using fiction, and specifically science fiction

Since the end of the Cold War, humanity and its need to survive at all costs has created a succession of pressing problems, forcing the discipline of IR to renew its somewhat contested study of the role of culture.\(^ {35}\) Recent years have seen, particularly on the African continent, a rise in ethnic, national and religious conflicts that echo Huntington’s ‘clash of civilizations’.\(^ {36}\)

Scholars have also, possibly as a result, used culture as an object of analysis, studying world politics and the interstate power play through the lens of cultural factors such as norms and ideas. Yet popular culture, as Weldes points out, has done much to popularise the ‘official policy discourse and thus state action’.\(^ {37}\)

Reflecting this trend, scholars have studied the intertextuality of world politics and international relations by using fiction, and specifically science fiction.\(^ {38}\) In the process, they have interpreted a range of themes and theories, including the formation of particular meanings and identities, and used their findings to critique mainstream representations.

The \textit{Harry Potter} novels, for instance, have been used as an exemplar of religious politics, a study of nation-state dynamics, as well as a depiction of conflict, imperial power and geography.\(^ {39}\)
For security studies specialists, recent research has tracked how the ‘war on terror’ has been depicted, with scholars such as Clymer examining literature from the late 19th to early 20th century to show how terrorist threats have shifted identities from being ‘anarchists from Germany, Russia or Bohemia’ to being ‘religious zealots of Middle Eastern descent’, a clear reflection of a society’s specific social construct.

And scholars such as Dixit have highlighted how fiction, in her case the televised series of Doctor Who, is able to shift how we imagine ‘our relations with those considered different or alien, rather than seeing them as threats to be eliminated’. She also describes how academics have used fiction as a pedagogic tool, while she herself explores themes such as location of violence, threats and identity shifts.

Gendered representations of leaders have also been critiqued in serials such as Star Trek, and the role of women in world politics more generally has been evaluated in episodes of Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Firefly.

Feminist discourses interested Schoeman as a young scholar, with the works and insights of Carol Gilligan, Mary Daly and Sandra Harding grounding her research. Beyond some of the foundational texts of these authors the work of African feminists, in particular Patricia McFadden, has had a major influence on her thinking.

More specific to the field, feminist perspectives have critically engaged state-centric frameworks and dominant narratives of the Classical Realist school, where the state is usually foregrounded as a central actor in international politics. Central here, and neglected in realist approaches, is the shoring up of foreground ideas at the expense of background for a distinction between background and foreground. In contrast, constructivists have turned to background ideas by moving beyond narrow social contexts and analysing the exploitation and inequality in relation to various actors.

Such theories have also deepened, developed and enriched women’s visibility in IR, the location, position and experience of the ‘security of women’ and the masculinist frameworks within which women have been interpreted. This is so because international political systems demonstrate more dynamism and integrate more nuanced complexities that transcend states as primary actors.

As a counter to essentialist views, the impact of social structures and practices such as race, gender, religion, etc. plays a far more pronounced role, including the militarised definition of security, motivating to close the gap between security studies and feminist security theories where it is assumed that women have little to say.

Building on this, Grayson, Davies and Philpott found that postcolonial and cultural scholars have similarly used popular texts to trace evolving social interactions and identity formation. For most, aliens, largely characterised as nonhuman or
‘other’, are threats to be eliminated, usually by violence – a familiar refrain that echoes throughout the international relations and security studies scholarship and reverberates in current events from xenophobic attacks in South Africa to global characterisations of rhino poachers.

Fictional tales allow authors to question this binary distinction of *us* and *them*. They allow us as readers and scholars to re-imagine our world and our choices, specifically the political ones, to help people embrace and examine difference.

For scholars who study fiction and its political import, science fiction authors interpret events in ways that shape an audience’s ‘common sense’ understanding in much the same way as political parties use their printed newsletters and social media platforms. Indeed, the impression is that political leaders can use popular fiction to reinforce a strategic worldview and shape public opinion accordingly. And although Schoeman would definitely bristle at such a deliberately manipulative insinuation, it is an area worthy of study.

Perhaps we are reading too much into Schoeman’s embrace of the fictional, but at some level it has affected her academic conceptualisation and personality, and therefore shaped her study. And perhaps we are just simply trying to ease her conscience by wrapping her fictional indulgence up in overly scholarly grammar. Deon Geldenhuys (see concluding note) would no doubt disagree, given his eloquent appraisal of Schoeman’s role as a scholar, a mediator, a teacher, a mentor, and a person keen to re-imagine the world we make.

Reading, Maxi, does indeed make you smart! And this is why we simply offer a reading that does not foreclose discussion of you as the scholar, friend, colleague and teacher we have come to know.

**The next frontier**

If *The undiscovered country* is one way of analysing Maxi Schoeman as a ‘text’, as an object to be read, then there is possibly much more to be said about further investigation of her thinking, ideas and character that is yet to be explored.

Our framing, initiated at the start of this chapter, recognises that there is much more to Schoeman at the level of biography and her scholarly curiosities that possibly hinges into the future. The ‘next frontier’ is also in our view about further deep thinking. As her former doctoral supervisor and recognised scholar Ken Booth recently stirred, the IR disciplinary problematic needs to explore its transdisciplinary potential – an area to which Schoeman has increasingly been attracted, especially as a deputy dean within the humanities.

Perhaps finally a disclaimer. We are aware that most edited volumes suffer the usual critique of a lack of cohesiveness, but if the linking thread is the retirement of a scholar and teacher in Maxi Schoeman, then this collection is impressionistic to a degree insofar as the varied contributions resonate topical concerns appropriate for the study of international relations in its rich diversity by offering, in
alignment to the volume’s title, roots, routes, pathways and prospects to navigate ideas and personality.

Characterised by its diversity in respect of theoretical and methodological approaches, the volume represents symptomatic readings by scholars in the field. Certainly Schoeman’s work has been marked by a deep intellectual curiosity and sensitivity in which political scientists shape the meaning of knowledge.

As we have repeatedly emphasised, her scholarship, teaching and personality is marked by an enduring interest in the social, the political, the strategic, the human, coupled with attention to norms and values that mobilise and deploy efforts to remake, perhaps refashion the world into a better place. In this sense also, Fukuyama’s project contained in the phrase the ‘end of history’ equally has bearing on the ideas project pertinent to Maxi Schoeman.

It is unfinished business.

Notes


32 Phrase spoken by Mark Antony in Act 3, Scene 1, line 273 of William Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*: ‘Cry “Havoc!” and let slip the dogs of war.’

33 See the protest movements advocating for environmental policy to acknowledge climate change; the most recent one was the September 2019 Climate Strike led by teenager Greta Thunberg, the UK Student Climate Network and the Future Coalition.


43 Ibid., 290.


Chapter 2
A foreign policy fit for the future

Jakkie Cilliers

Introduction
Maxi Schoeman has made an immense contribution to foreign policy and international relations in South Africa – as a teacher, author and thinker. I particularly enjoyed a classic contribution she wrote in 2007 titled ‘South Africa in Africa: behemoth, hegemon, partner or “just another kid on the block”?’ Other articles discussed the relationship between identity and politics and that between security, governance and development.

Indeed, her writings have followed various trajectories and covered a broad range of issues, reflecting the breadth and depth of her scholarly contribution. Many are about how South Africans see themselves and their values, and how others, particularly in the rest of Africa, see them.

For example, in a much-read contribution to The Conversation in 2017 co-authored by Maxi Schoeman, Asnake Kefala and Chris Alden, the authors noted ‘the extent to which … perceptions were at odds with South Africa’s self-declared role on the continent’ and how, in the wake of xenophobia and the revelations of the extent of corruption under former president Jacob Zuma, ‘a sense of disbelief and continued incredulity pervaded discussions.’

The research for the piece sampled diplomats in Addis Ababa, where the Commission of the African Union (AU) is located, and reflected the remarks of former director general of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) Sipho Pityana earlier that same year: ‘Nobody knows where we stand, what our vision of our international system is.’

By April 2019, when Cyril Ramaphosa gained his own mandate at the polls, South Africa’s star had faded and its foreign policy direction was unclear. There are, however, as the economists like to characterise it, promising ‘green shoots’ in foreign policy, including the appointment of an inspiring new foreign minister in the form of Dr Naledi Pandor. Pandor was previously the Minister of Higher Education (and thereafter of Science and Technology).
Pandor is widely respected for her no-nonsense approach to her portfolios and pursuit of evidence-based policy rather than ideological or factional agendas. There is a lot of lost ground that has to be recovered and the new minister has her work cut out for her.

Although DIRCO remained generally functional during the intervening years, other departments are in a state of disrepair – the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), for example, does not appear to be able to serve the country’s foreign policy objectives such as sustained participation in peacekeeping. In this domain there has, ironically, been a degree of innovation that Maxi Schoeman has written about, such as an increased component of female peacekeepers, as well as an evolution in thinking and praxis in the development of mandates that is particularly evident in the deployments in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where South Africa pioneered a robust stance in the role of its forces.⁶

On the one hand, we can question how we got here. On the other, we need to shape a foreign policy able to claw back some of the standing we have lost – one that is attuned to our long-term national interests in a rapidly changing world.

**Constitutional imperative**

South Africa’s transition from apartheid was made possible by the end of the Cold War; the leadership of Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak, FW de Klerk, Nelson Mandela and many others; economic pressure; and the shared interests of a sufficiently powerful group of South Africans from different political persuasions, who all believed a different future was possible.

The African National Congress (ANC), under the leadership of Oliver Tambo, played a critical role in this process, although less important than its revisionist history seeks to set out.⁷ This is also the period when Maxi Schoeman started her academic career in earnest, and these events and associated debates inevitably shaped her research and academic perspectives.

For instance, liberal democracy and a constitutional state was an outcome that had not been envisioned by either of the major negotiating parties and yet South Africa was blessed with a constitution premised on very specific Western values, including ‘(a) Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms. (b) Non-racialism and non-sexism. (c) Supremacy of the constitution and the rule of law. (d) Universal adult suffrage, a national common voters roll, regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness.’⁸

During this period Maxi Schoeman mainly focused her research both on the involvement of external actors in South Africa and on the values that underpinned subsequent policies.⁹

When Mandela assumed the presidency, the North–South divide appeared to have replaced the Cold War East–West chasm as the most intractable of global challenges. The interregnum allowed for new thinking and fresh efforts to respond to poverty.
and underdevelopment in the global South, such as the agreement on the eight Millennium Development Goals at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 2000 and its goal to halve extreme poverty within 15 years.

That, in turn, set the scene for the Sustainable Development Goals, now with a target date of 2030 to, among others, eliminate extreme poverty globally. If we look at Maxi Schoeman’s writings on foreign policy during this period, she touches on some of these responses to seemingly intractable problems.

The West had triumphed, or so it appeared, and commitments to free trade, democracy and a liberal international order where states had to accept that sovereignty came with responsibility, were hailed as the start of a new era.

Schoeman’s writings on foreign policy during the Mandela presidency touched on some responses to seemingly intractable problems

In *Of BRICs and mortar: the growing relations between Africa and the global South*, Maxi Schoeman wrote about this: ‘The post-Cold War era has [been] hailed to be inaugurating a new global order of peace, stability, and the triumph of liberal democracy with large parts of the world remade in the image of the West.’

**Mbeki’s legacy**

After a single term and a decidedly mixed foreign policy tenure, Mandela handed the presidency of the ANC (and consequently that of the country) to Thabo Mbeki, who was elected as the president of the Congress at its 50th conference at Mafikeng in 1997. Mbeki was elected president of South Africa on 14 June 1999 after the ANC gained an unprecedented 66% of support at the polls, and was inaugurated two days later.

Mandela’s towering moral persona set the stage for Mbeki to pursue his South–South and Africanist agendas. In doing so Mbeki necessarily looked towards the West, represented by the G7 countries, to support Africa’s renewal since these countries dominated in the distribution of wealth and global power, and also played an important role in Africa. In 1997 the G7 countries represented 57% of the global economy and around 60% of global defence expenditure in spite of being home to only 12% of the world’s population.

In seeking to promote South–South cooperation and global governance reform, Mbeki launched IBSA, consisting of India, Brazil and South Africa – an alliance of democracies that pointedly excluded China, a permanent member of the UN Security Council and the purported leader of the global South.

Maxi Schoeman has, among others, written quite extensively about IBSA and the shared values among them. Indeed, the inaugural Brasilia Declaration of 6 June
2003 mentioned the shared democratic credentials of the three countries, their condition as developing nations and their capacity to act on a global scale, and included a call to reform the UN, especially the Security Council.

Under Mbeki South Africa’s policy orientation developed into a frenetic engagement on an amazingly broad range of issues in Africa and beyond. These ranged from seeking to deter the impending invasion of Iraq by United States (US) President George Bush and the lack of progress and resolve on the issue of Palestine.

South Africa became a foreign policy superstar, engaged in the 1997 Ottawa Process on the banning of landmines, the 1998 adoption of the Rome Statute to set up the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Kimberley Process to regulate conflict diamonds, and more. South Africa, a regional leader in sub-Saharan Africa but globally a relatively small economy, clearly punched above its weight – such was the apparent miracle of the transition from apartheid, the iconic status of Mandela and the foreign policy energy invested by Mbeki.

In the process South Africa hosted a series of international summits on issues of importance to the developing world, including the ninth UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1996, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1998, the World Conference against Racism in 2001 and the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002.

In many of these roles South Africa served as an intermediary between the developed and developing worlds, although it consistently proclaimed solidarity with the rest of Africa as the cornerstone of its efforts and gained a reputation for advancing progressive internationalism. Mbeki expanded South Africa’s international relevance through, among others, its active multilateralism, also as part of the G20 where the country remains the only permanent African member.13

He adopted a similar partnership approach in his efforts to reform the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and infuse it with new thinking. Thus South Africa played an important role in the transition from the OAU to the AU from 2000 to 2002, during which Mbeki championed the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and conceptualised the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). Today, both secretariats are located in Midrand and have been joined by the Pan African Parliament.

South Africa also played a key role in hosting peace talks on the crises in Burundi and the DRC. It sent troops to both these countries to support the peace deals.
and pushed for the development of a blueprint for other mediation efforts by the AU in Africa that drew heavily on South Africa’s own experience – sometimes with decidedly mixed results.

Drawing upon the partnership that he established with Nigeria, Senegal, Algeria, Egypt and Ethiopia, Mbeki doggedly proclaimed and pursued the concept of an African Renaissance, culminating in the G8-Africa (the G7 plus Russia) Summit hosted by then prime minister Tony Blair in Gleneagles, Scotland in 2005.

Essentially, Mbeki offered a deal with the West: instead of imposing structural adjustment programmes that had wrought significant suffering, Africa would assume ownership and self-regulate – NEPAD and the APRM – to unlock ongoing aid and debt relief.

In all of his engagement, Mbeki was motivated by his keen awareness of the extent to which the global order was heavily skewed against the developing world, and the extent to which South Africa was deeply integrated into the Western-dominated global system. China was, for Mbeki, largely a sideshow.

Foreign adventures, however, led to national neglect. Eventually developments around corruption in a large arms deal, Mbeki’s denialism on the HIV/AIDS pandemic and his paranoia would play itself out with substantial consequences for South Africa and its global standing.

Mbeki’s dismissal of his deputy, Zuma, over corruption allegations in 2005 and rivalry between the two candidates intensified, culminating in Mbeki himself being defeated in his bid for a third term as ANC president at its December 2007 National Conference at Polokwane. He was then ousted as national president by his party in September the following year, two years before the end of his second term and mid-way during South Africa’s first term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

After a brief interregnum during which Kgalema Motlanthe served as interim president, Zuma assumed the South African presidency after an April 2009 poll when the ANC experienced a drop of 3.8 percentage points in support.

**Zuma: throwing a BRIC**

Moving into the Union Buildings in the wake of the worst global recession in almost a century, the Zuma administration was keen to find new sources of economic growth and distance itself from the legacy of Mbeki. Growth was clearly not going to come from the West where Mbeki had largely placed his trust, as it was particularly badly hit by the economic downturn. South Africa shed 1.1 million jobs in the two years after the global recession hit home in the fourth quarter of 2008. It took the economy nearly five years to regain those lost jobs and reach pre-recession employment levels.

Only China appeared to offer economic growth opportunities for a country that remained a large exporter of commodities at the time of a Western recession.
In addition, a pivot to China and Russia had the added advantage for Zuma of charting an own course, different to that of Mbeki, which was reflected in the decision to change the name of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO).

In August 2010 Zuma undertook his first state visit to China, during which the countries announced a comprehensive strategic partnership, reflected in the Beijing Declaration on elevated bilateral ties. In 2011 South Africa was invited to join the Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) group at their third summit meeting in Sanya – a development that largely put paid to Mbeki’s IBSA partnership.

Two years later, in March 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping paid a state visit to South Africa and the leaders ratified the establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Joint Working Group on China–South Africa Cooperation.

South Africa’s successful campaign to join the BRIC grouping presented Zuma with a huge diplomatic coup – matched domestically only by the early reversal of Mbeki’s disastrous policies on HIV/AIDS. Membership of BRICS, on top of South Africa’s existing membership of the G20 group of major economies, is the most important foreign policy achievement of the Zuma administration. It cemented South Africa’s position in the big league, where the country rubbed shoulders with the purported alternative club of global leadership to the G7.

During the intervening years power shifted decidedly eastward. In 1997, when Mbeki became president, China only represented 4% of the global economy versus the 24% of the US. By 2018, when Zuma reluctantly agreed to step down as president, China represented 14% of the global economy versus the 21% of the US. In 2010 China became South Africa’s largest bilateral trading partner although, as a group, European Union (EU) trade is significantly larger.

Whatever the reasons, Zuma had managed, through South Africa’s membership of BRICS, to partly compensate for the lack of foreign policy activism – a lack that would otherwise become a hallmark of his presidency when compared to that of Mbeki.

Membership of BRICS also came at the cost of South Africa’s ability to continue with its efforts to reform global power relations (including agitating for a possible permanent seat on a reformed Security Council). Mandela and Mbeki had done so by positioning South Africa as an honest broker between the developed world and the global South. Whereas Mbeki presented his ideas on the African Renaissance and NEPAD first to the G8, although careful to retain South Africa’s primary orientation towards Africa Zuma now leant unashamedly towards China and Russia while the country steadily lost coherence in its engagement in the rest of Africa.

Instead of a foreign policy run tightly from the Union Buildings, DIRCO under newly appointed minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane was, after this initial spurt of activism, effectively rudderless. DIRCO also had to accommodate a stream of former
politicians in senior foreign postings who had fallen foul of domestic politics. In the process the president, who appoints heads of mission, squeezed out competence and opportunities for career diplomats. Morale plummeted.

The lack of interdepartmental cooperation and coordination between DIRCO and other government departments and state-owned enterprises such as the Department of Trade and Industry is marked, as is the lack of economic competency among diplomats.

In effect, DIRCO was, for many foreign diplomats, a closed book that failed to respond to requests for briefings and meetings. When these occurred, they were often ill-prepared and perfunctory events. The absence of a focus on trade and investment by DIRCO was sharply pointed out in the 2012 National Development Plan, the broad development vision drawn up during the early years of the Zuma administration.\textsuperscript{14}

Beyond his interest in distancing himself from the legacy of Mbeki and a rapprochement with China and Russia, Zuma had little understanding of or interest in foreign policy. Like Donald Trump, his views emphasised the importance of bilateral rather than multilateral relationships and appeared to be orientated towards support of particular business contracts and dealings. South Africa also appeared to pay a hefty BRICS membership fee to China and Russia.

China–Africa trade has increased year-on-year from the beginning of the century and continues to grow. It peaked at US$215 billion in 2014, declined but then resumed its previous upward trajectory. It is, however, always important to temper these oft-quoted numbers (as mentioned earlier) with the fact that Africa’s trade with the EU and its members still vastly exceeds that with China (36% versus 16%).

Similarly, the stock of foreign direct investment from the EU and its member states constitutes around 40%, whereas that from the US is at 7% and that from China only at around 5%. A similar story holds when it comes to development assistance.\textsuperscript{15} The difference, of course, is the trend – the rapid increase in the trade partnership between China and Africa compared to the decline in the trade partnership with Europe and the US.

China is clearly very important for Africa. However, Chinese imports and the dumping of Chinese steel and other products, as well as intense competition in Africa, have undercut South Africa’s competitiveness in Africa and arguably accelerated its deindustrialisation and economic stagnation.

For South Africa, its relations with Africa have always been particularly important given the fact that this is the only region with which it runs a consistent trade
surplus, as well as being the destination of value-added products as opposed to commodity exports. According to the Trade Law Centre:

[i]n 2018, South Africa exported and imported goods to and from the rest of Africa to the value of US$25 billion and US$11.5 billion [mostly crude oil from Nigeria and Angola], respectively. Intra-Africa exports account for 26% of South Africa’s total exports and imports for 12% of total imports for 2018.16

Chinese competition has squeezed South Africa’s traditional market.

**Going nuclear with Russia**

When the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) of the Department of Energy for the period 2010–2030 was gazetted in May 2011, it called for the construction of 9.6 GW of new nuclear capacity, intended to supply 12.7% of the country’s electricity by 2030. The first reactor was projected to come online by 2023 and the full six-plant project completed by 2029.

In 2013, it was later revealed, Zuma apparently promised President Vladimir Putin that Russia would be allocated the entire nuclear energy project well ahead of any call for tenders. Without having been presented with a plan on how this was to be funded, Cabinet decided to proceed. In fact, in 2014 the Russian nuclear agency, Rosatom, announced that it had secured the contract for the entire build.

Later it also became known that Zuma’s friends, the Gupta brothers from India, had hurriedly purchased the loss-making Shiva uranium mine (through the company Oakbay Resources & Energy that included the president’s son Duduzane Zuma as a director). Nuclear would require large amounts of uranium. Had the nuclear project proceeded, it would have increased their already substantial wealth several-fold, saddled South Africa with an unaffordable project and intensified inequality.17

Eventually the Western Cape High Court essentially scuppered the nuclear deal when it ruled that the bilateral agreement that had been signed with Russia (among others) was unlawful because the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) had not followed the legal prescripts with regard to public participation. Effectively, the process needed to start again although it had, in the meanwhile, cost the careers of several ministers of finance who had resisted the madness.

Zuma was forced to step down before the nuclear build could be concluded. Although South Africa may still need nuclear power at some point in the distant future, the country has dodged a very expensive bullet.

**Scourge of repeat xenophobia**

Beyond a general lack of coherence in its external relations, the single most serious setback to South Africa’s stature in Africa under Zuma has been the impact of the widespread and repeated incidents of xenophobic violence, although these had already started under Mbeki. The first reported assaults on foreign immigrants by
armed gangs were in Alexandra in the mid-1990s and appeared to be motivated by
the belief that foreign nationals squeeze out South Africans in the informal sector
and the formal job market.\textsuperscript{18}

According to the African Centre for Migration and Society, threats and attacks
against, and killings of, foreigners in South Africa peaked dramatically in 2008 and
then again in 2015.\textsuperscript{19} For a country that, a few scant years previously, had advocated
the African Renaissance and that primarily trades with other African countries
the repeat attacks and protests against foreign migrant communities remain an
acute embarrassment.

Many African countries feel they contributed to the fight against apartheid and
believe that, not only were they not thanked enough for this, but their citizens are
now being killed by the supporters of the ANC government they argue they had
helped bring to power.

One of the worst incidents occurred in Gauteng in May 2008 when 62 people were
killed and several thousand displaced.\textsuperscript{20} Following these events, the attacks were
placed on the agenda of the AU’s Peace and Security Council for discussion and
civil society groupings in several countries called for punitive measures against
South Africa, including boycotting South African businesses and goods.

The repeat attacks and protests against foreign migrant
communities remain an acute embarrassment

It is not that South Africa is unique in this regard. Many African governments face
the same challenges, but the extent to which the ANC government is perceived to
be in denial or keeping quiet for political reasons is troubling.

It is in this context that the decision to allow then Sudanese president Omar
al-Bashir to attend the 2015 AU summit in Johannesburg should be viewed. The
invitation was extended to al-Bashir despite an ICC arrest order – an important
accountability structure that Mbeki’s administration had helped to establish. To
some it appeared an effort to demonstrate that South Africa under Zuma ‘stood
with Africa’ irrespective of the consequences, to counter the growing negative
impact that the xenophobic riots were having on the country’s image.

It is highly unlikely that Cabinet was unaware that its decision to invite al-Bashir
to South Africa was in contravention of the Constitution and South Africa’s
legal commitments to the Rome Statute on the ICC. Therefore, a government
purportedly committed to a constitutional state and the rule of law effectively
chose to undermine its own Constitution and conspire against the judicial system
by smuggling al-Bashir out of the country while simultaneously appearing in the
Pretoria High Court on this matter.\textsuperscript{21} Few other single events better illustrate the
extent to which South Africa’s foreign policies during these years were often at odds with the key values espoused in the Constitution.

The ANC internal policy document on international relations released in 2017 ahead of its policy conference reflects repeatedly on the need for state sovereignty, but is silent on ‘the rights of people against excesses by the very state elites who use the cover of sovereignty against state powers’.  

The result is a government that is often not even-handed in its commentary and engagement on African and international developments and that undermines international rule of law to its own long-term detriment. For much of Africa, South Africa rapidly became a foreign policy disappointment, as Schoeman’s research confirmed in 2017.

**BRICS and the future**

South Africa’s membership of BRICS has served as a global disrupter, for it has changed the stark developed–underdeveloped world divide, led to greater flexibility within the global financial system and opened the opportunity for a greater balance of power and, hopefully, stability.

However, its future is uncertain, as new leadership is in place in all of its member states except China. Whereas the original leadership in India and Brazil was left-leaning at the time of the grouping’s establishment, India’s Narendra Modi (elected in 2014) is from a much more conservative party, the Bharatiya Janata Party. And then in 2019 Jair Bolsonaro, from the far right, was sworn in as president of Brazil.

For much of Africa, South Africa rapidly became a foreign policy disappointment, as Schoeman’s research confirmed in 2017.

China too appears to have moved beyond BRICS. Its orientation is now focused on the Integrated Belt and Road (IBR) Initiative, where Africa plays a marginal role. China has also endorsed the idea of BRICS Plus, aimed to extend membership to other developing countries, which would inevitably dilute South Africa’s position. The reason for this potential dilution is not difficult to fathom. South Africa’s contribution to the combined BRICS economies is set to decline from 3% in 2010 to 2% in 2030 and 1% by 2050. In fact, the Chinese socialist market economy adds the total size of the South African economy to its gross domestic product every eight months.

The Chinese economy already constitutes 60% of BRICS and will, by 2030, comprise 65%. It is unlikely that South Africa will be able to remain relevant to the BRICS grouping given this expected development trajectory unless it is able to unlock significantly higher rates of growth and substantively recapture its leadership role in Africa. BRICS is, of course, not much of a trading bloc except for the extent to which
trade with China lies at the core of relations. Trade among the BRICS nations is less than 5% of their total global trade.\textsuperscript{25}

Despite South Africa’s strong trade relations with Europe, North America and Japan, its ‘Western’ partners have gradually lost profile and traction with successive ANC governments. The West features only to a limited extent in South Africa’s current foreign policy narrative and the sense of unease, distaste even, among many in the ANC for the US and its European trading partners is sometimes palpable.

This dichotomous relationship is well captured in the distinction between high and low politics. Whereas, under Zuma, South Africa’s high politics were avowedly pro-China and pro-Russian, low politics of trade, investment and aid relations often told the opposite story where the EU, United Kingdom (UK) and others continue to play an important, even dominant, role.

South Africa therefore has something of a split personality, with some groupings within the government and the business community agitating for relations with the West and others with China.

\textbf{Foreign policy fit for the future}

Maxi Schoeman now owes us, her many admirers, colleagues, and current and former students, a new contribution – helping to learn the lessons from the past and to shape South African international orientation under the leadership of Ramaphosa. The beliefs and orientation of each successive president have been a determining factor in shaping South Africa’s foreign policy. That will also hold for Ramaphosa.

New opportunities present themselves and South Africa’s regional and global position is quite different from what it was a decade ago.

There have been some efforts to shape a coherent foreign policy. In 2011, as the Zuma disaster was gathering momentum and concerns about the lack of coherence in foreign policy became widespread, DIRCO released \textit{Building a better world: the diplomacy of ubuntu}.\textsuperscript{26}

It pointedly noted that ‘in terms of South Africa’s liberation history, its evolving international engagement is based on two central tenets, namely: Pan-Africanism and South–South solidarity’, the latter drawing upon the 1955 Bandung Conference. It is perhaps this reference, together with those relating to the Freedom Charter of the same vintage, that is indicative of the extent to which the governing party appears to be trapped in a time warp – unable to recognise the extent to which the world has moved beyond the ideological trappings of yesteryear.

That said, the White Paper is arguably the most serious attempt at formulating a coherent approach to South Africa’s foreign policy since 1994, wrapping that intention in the appealing principles of ubuntu (humanity) and batho pele (putting people first). Many of its conclusions remain valid, such as the statement that South Africa’s foreign policy ‘promotes cooperation over competition and collaboration over confrontation’.\textsuperscript{27} In this context:
... it draws on the spirit of internationalism, pan-Africanism, South–South solidarity; the rejection of colonialism and other forms of oppression; the quest for the unity and economic, political and social renewal of Africa; the promotion of poverty alleviation around the world; and opposition to the structural inequality and abuse of power in the global system. South Africa further pursues democracy within the international system of governance.\textsuperscript{28}

It even set out a ‘vision for 2025’ (strangely not in line with the government’s 2030 timeline for the National Development Plan) ‘to be a successful and influential member of the international community, supported by a globally competitive economy on a sustained growth path that has made significant inroads in addressing unemployment, inequality and poverty in South Africa, and contributing to the development of our region and continent.’\textsuperscript{29}

Little of substance has come of the specifics announced in that White Paper, however — for instance, the intention to establish the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA) and the South African Council on International Relations (SACOIR). SACOIR was actually launched in July 2015 and touted as a ‘consultative forum on South Africa’s foreign policy [that will] also advise the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.’\textsuperscript{30}

In 2015 Maxi Schoeman was appointed as one of two vice-chairs of SACOIR but resigned in March 2018.

Nkoana-Mashabane had a close relationship with Zuma. She was appointed to head foreign affairs in 2009 and served in that position throughout the Zuma presidency. In February 2018 Zuma reluctantly stepped down as president but only after being threatened with removal from office by the ANC in Parliament.

Given the importance that South Africa accords its foreign relations it was no surprise when, on 27 February 2018, the newly elected president, Ramaphosa, moved to bring in someone more closely aligned with his faction within the ANC. He moved Nkoana-Mashabane first to the position of Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform and then, after the April 2019 elections, to the relatively junior position of Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities.

The previous minister of defence and close ally of Ramaphosa, Lindiwe Sisulu, briefly took over the foreign relations portfolio but also only served for a limited period before being moved to Human Settlements (where she had previously served). She was replaced by Dr Naledi Pandor in May 2019.

In 2015 Maxi Schoeman was appointed as one of two vice-chairs of SACOIR, but resigned in March 2018.\textsuperscript{31} ‘It became clear to me,’ she wrote to the author
in a private e-mail, ‘especially after the appointment of a new minister (Sisulu),
that SACOIR had run its course and would not play any further role in terms of
foreign policy.’ The mandate of the council expired shortly thereafter and was
not renewed.

Indeed, when the Ramaphosa administration released its Review in April 2019 it
did not mention the White Paper at all; such is the sense of distaste with which that
period is apparently now viewed.

Diplomatically South Africa is probably over-extended. In 1994 the country had
only 65 foreign missions. By 2004 there were 105 missions in 91 countries and by
2008, 121 missions in 105 countries. South African missions in Africa grew from 17
in 1994 to 33 in 2004 and 45 in 2008. When she rose to present her first budget
vote in July 2019, Pandor would note that South Africa had 125 missions in 108
countries, consuming 68% of the department’s total budget.

Shortly after the narrow election victory of Ramaphosa at the ANC’s elective
conference in December 2017, in May 2018, DIRCO’s Sisulu announced that she
was establishing a Ministerial Review Panel to ‘respond to changing domestic,
regional, continental and global politics and socio-economic issues, challenges and
demands.’ The election of Ramaphosa, the Review subsequently noted, ‘marked
the beginning of … a moment of renewal … to ensure a refocus … particularly [on] 
statecraft and governance as well as policy recalibration.’

A summary of the Review, largely written by officials who had been prominent in
the foreign policy establishment of Mbeki, was released a year later. It lamented
the ‘missteps which have reversed earlier gains that the country registered’ and
generally harked back to that era. The Review did not break new ground and was,
perhaps appropriately, touted as a ‘strategic reflection and critical appraisal’ rather
than setting out new priorities and directions.

The Review did not fully address the very obvious challenges in internal cooperation
within government (such as with the Department of Trade and Industry) but did
note the need to adopt new technologies, made passing reference to the Fourth
Industrial Revolution (once), and noted the tendency within DIRCO to work in silos
and the need to adapt to a rapidly changing external environment.

It offered no guidance as to how this common sense advice was to be achieved,
however – something that Maxi Schoeman is now well placed to contribute. Beyond
the standard references to Western domination and support of Palestine, the clear
and central desire evident from the Report is simply to ‘reconnect with the African
Renaissance orientation’ and its associated components.

In comes Naledi Pandor

It is clear that the decision by Ramaphosa to appoint Pandor as head of DIRCO
was made long before the April 2019 elections. Speaking in Parliament in February
2018 Pandor, then still minister of science and technology, summarised the essence of an emerging foreign policy under Ramaphosa.

‘Africa lies at the heart of South Africa’s international cooperation policy,’ she said. ‘Our commitment is to deepen integration and cooperation through increased trade, shared markets, and the development of strong institutions.’ She said it was time to return to a foreign policy that prioritised human rights, and with international rule as a foundation.38 To many it was the first coherent statement on foreign policy in more than a decade.

Some of the opportunities to give effect to such a new direction almost came too soon. In July 2018 South Africa hosted the BRICS summit, chaired the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and waged a successful campaign for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council in 2019 and 2020. South Africa is also to assume the chair of the AU in 2020.

Looking to the future, South Africa’s foreign policy priorities should be clear and are probably a bit different from the Mbeki era, namely how foreign policy can facilitate economic growth and jobs and reduce inequality at home, good relations with all our important trading and investment partners (not only the BRIC countries), global reform and the advancement of a rules-based system (as indeed nominally reflected in the White Paper on South Africa’s Foreign Policy).

To facilitate economic growth, South Africa should actively pursue regional integration in Africa and the development of regional value chains as its most important foreign policy priority. Africa is and should remain the focus of our foreign and economic policy, as our development and security depend upon a stable and growing Southern Africa. These are matters that Maxi Schoeman has touched upon in the past but that deserve additional focus.

Already, in announcing his plans for the amalgamation of the departments of trade and industry and economic development into a single Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, newly appointed Minister Ebrahim Patel placed particular importance on the potential for South Africa in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).39

The implementation phase of AfCFTA comes into effect on 1 July 2020 and in a forthcoming book based on long-term modelling I find that the implementation of AfCFTA has the largest long-term potential for facilitating rapid economic growth in Africa and South Africa.40 Patel pointedly noted that ‘exports to other African countries [are] the fastest-growing part of our manufactured exports’.41
The early signs are positive. In her remarks on the occasion of the budget vote speech on 11 July 2019, Pandor placed the emphasis squarely on economic diplomacy:

We expect our missions to focus increasingly on economic diplomacy, through making sure they facilitate more foreign direct investment in support of the President’s drive to attract US$100 billion to South Africa. We want more opportunities for the export of South African goods and services, more tourist arrivals and more opportunities for South African youth to acquire skills.\(^{42}\)

**Importance of partners**

Networks and partnerships augment a state’s power, and South Africa’s diminishing multilateralism has detracted from its ability to translate power capacity into influence by working with other like-minded states. Key among these is to rekindle South Africa’s strategic leadership and partnership in Africa.\(^{43}\)

Whichever metric one uses (regional influence, economic size or even population), the key countries in Africa with regional influence are, apart from South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria and Egypt. A next tier of rising powers would include Angola, Morocco and Ethiopia. Due to its size and location, the DRC is key in Central Africa – if only because it radiates insecurity into such a broad region. Côte d’Ivoire is the most important country in francophone Africa and Egypt and Algeria the most important in North Africa. If South Africa aspires to lead Africa’s resurgence it is with these countries that it needs to build relationships.

From a trading perspective our most important trading partners are Nigeria and Angola (from where South Africa sources its crude petroleum and oils), and then those countries with which we trade most, namely Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique, eSwatini and Zambia.\(^{44}\) Zimbabwe used to be important given its strategic location as a potential transport hub in the region, but ZANU PF practices have decimated the country’s economy.

A short analysis that the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) published in May 2018 sought to identify potential middle-power partners for South Africa.\(^{45}\) The 11 countries that emerged were: Mexico, Turkey, Indonesia, Israel, Sweden, Pakistan, Argentina, Iraq, Malaysia, Ireland and Nigeria.

Other countries that could easily be added, since their relative decline in international power capabilities would be similarly modest to that of South Africa by 2030, would include Australia, Algeria, Austria, Norway, Denmark and Poland. Brazil, the largest and most important country in Latin America with a clear interest in Africa, also needs to be considered as a potential partner. The final line-up provided an interesting, if unexpected, list of potential middle-power countries with which South Africa could explore future peer partnerships.
Conclusion: the missing element

But when all is said and done, the crucial element is still missing. In addition to the need to rebuild global respect and trust as a reliable and responsible partner, South Africa needs to complete its national healing and decide what it actually stands for beyond broad anti-Westernism.

The challenge is an obvious one. Only one faction in the governing party appears to share the values reflected in our Constitution. These should orient us towards countries that generally focus on the wellbeing of their citizens in an open and democratic manner, respect the rule of law and globally pursue a rules-based system. Neither China nor the US does this. And few of South Africa’s favoured international friends such as Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Cuba and Iran meet these criteria.

The loud pursuit of causes, such as that of Palestine and the Saharawi Republic, serves no practical purpose but to irritate South Africa’s main trading partners and potential allies, including in Africa. It is not that the ANC can or should step away from its deeply held convictions, but a degree of balancing these with its constitutional values and economic self-interest would serve the country well.

South Africa needs to complete its national healing and decide what it actually stands for beyond broad anti-Westernism

Many external factors will affect South Africa’s future, but there is also considerable evidence that the general direction of causality is from inclusive domestic politics to improved economic performance. That relationship cascades into the international domain and how a country is perceived by others, including as a potentially attractive investment destination.

Domestically inclusive political systems lead to a more equitable distribution of opportunity that unlocks long-term growth, since society benefits from the potential of all of its peoples, not only from a small segment.46

At the time of writing this chapter, South Africa seems more divided than ever before – the ruling ANC is riven with factions. To be sure, that development was sharply accelerated by the incompetence, corruption and wastage of the Zuma administration. It will take years to undo the damage and is only possible if we can turn the economy around, grow more rapidly than our population and maintain that rate for several decades.

In 2018 Maxi Schoeman argued that even though South Africa’s foreign policy:

... should be conducted against the background of continued economic stagnation in the country, growing inequality, rising unemployment, and
continuing civil unrest amid poor and often non-existing service delivery … South Africa also needs to reflect on its role on a bigger canvas and whether it can find a role that will enable it to recover lost ground.

If it is to do that, South Africa needs “to define what kind of international order would best serve its interests and values.” As she heads for quieter times, Maxi Schoeman should add her voice and considerable capacities in designing a South African foreign policy that is fit for the future.

Notes


6 This was acknowledged by Defence Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula in her May 2019 budget speech. For the role of female peacekeepers see M Schoeman, South African female peacekeepers: an exploration of their experiences in the Democratic Republic of Congo, New South African Review, 1, 2010, 241–250.

7 Until 1979 it was largely the Pan African Congress (PAC) rather than the ANC that was externally most prominent, also in providing the ideological grounding of black consciousness that informed the Soweto uprising of 1976. During the late 1980s the main front in the anti-apartheid struggle shifted to the domestic front, where it was led by a broad-based social movement under the umbrella of the United Democratic Front and labour (COSATU) that both shared the then non-racial ethos of the ANC. The Free Mandela campaign and the inability of the PAC to benefit from the hundreds of youth who had fled the country eventually cemented liberation era power dynamics in favour of the ANC, which has since assuming power become increasingly black nationalist in its ideological orientation.


9 M Schoeman, External involvement in South Africa’s transition process, 1992, is about the importance of allowing eternal actors to participate in the negotiation for the transition to a new democratic South Africa to save South Africa’s economy. In M Schoeman (ed.), Building a new South Africa: the role of the international community, 1992, Maxi argues that ‘assistance in the building of such a South Africa in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter does imply a set of goals to be formulated’. Later, she argues that ‘South Africa is extensively penetrated by the outside world, not least insofar as socio-economic and less tangible forms of ideas and philosophies are concerned. The existence of such comprehensive penetration in fact created the possibilities for intervention, isolation and mediation which have been used extensively by the international community to exercise influence in South Africa’. In Factors influencing development prospects for Southern Africa, she argues that ‘development theory and practice have generally come to reflect and to be influenced by events and trends in the world economy, mainly because development is, in essence, largely determined by and also the product of economic activities’.
10 M Schoeman, Of BRICs and mortar: the growing relations between Africa and the global South, The International Spectator, 46:1, 2011, 33. In South Africa as an emerging middle power, African Security Review, 9:3, 2000, 52. Schoeman states, ‘South Africa is widely touted as an example and model to other countries in transition. Its continued existence as a democratic and stable society supports the dominant global value system based on democracy and a free market economy.’

11 Data from the International Futures forecasting system v7.36, University of Denver.


13 For a critique of South Africa’s G20 membership, see C Alden and M Schoeman, South Africa’s symbolic hegemony in Africa, International Politics, 52:2, 2015, 241–2. The article argues that Pretoria’s leadership position is symbolic representivity and ‘poses [a] continuing set of foreign policy dilemmas for South Africa’.

14 The political purpose of the National Development Plan was to find a suitable soft landing for Trevor Manuel, Mbeki’s powerful minister of finance.


17 See the analysis of this in J Cilliers, Fate of the nation: three scenarios for South Africa’s future, Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2017, 154–161.


21 In subsequent litigation initiated by the Southern Africa Litigation Centre (SALC), both Pretoria’s High Court and the country’s Supreme Court of Appeal found that the failure to arrest al-Bashir was unlawful due to South Africa’s Rome Statute membership, its domestic ICC Act, and the Statute’s cornerstone provision on the irrelevance of official capacity. In late 2016, ICC judges summoned South Africa to explain its failure to arrest al-Bashir but eventually did not refer South Africa to the Assembly of States Parties (ASP), the court’s governing body made up of 124 member states, to be useful to obtain cooperation from South Africa. Coalition for the International Criminal Court, ICC panel confirms: South Africa legally required to arrest al-Bashir, 6 July 2017, http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/news/20170706/icc-panel-confirms-south-africa-legally-required-arrest-albashir.


25 As noted at the October 2016 BRICS Trade Fair by India’s Commerce and Industry Minister.


27 Ibid., 10.
28 Ibid., 10–11.
29 Ibid., 18.
32 Dated 23 July 2019.
35 DIRCO, A better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world, Media briefing on the Ministerial Panel Report, 17 April 2019, 1.
36 Ibid., 2.
37 Ibid., 9.
44 According to Tralac, 50% of South Africa’s intra-Africa imports are crude petroleum oils, 87% of which are imported from Nigeria and Angola. Tralac, South Africa: Intra-Africa trade and tariff profile, https://www.tralac.org/resources/our-resources/13142-south-africa-intra-africa-trade-and-tariff-profile.html.
45 The analysis was done using the Global Powers Index (GPI), part of the International Futures (IFs) forecasting system. It proceeded in three steps. First we identified countries in roughly the same ‘power category’ as South Africa. Then we then reduced the list to countries that, at least nominally, shared South Africa’s democratic values and commitment to human rights. Finally, countries on the list had to have at least US$200 million bilateral trade on the basis that it would be difficult to build relationships without a minimum flow of goods, services and finance.
46 A recent popular addition to this school of thought is by D Acemoğlu and JA Robinson, Why nations fail: the origins of power, prosperity, and poverty, London: Profile Books, 2013.
Introduction

It is difficult to remember, mired as we are in the depths of despair born of nine gruelling years of Jacob Zuma’s control of the commanding heights of South African power, how high expectations were for the country’s post-apartheid foreign policy. Everything, from the many perversions of ethical purpose in the pursuit of South African foreign policy to outright personal enrichment and callous neglect under Zuma, has inured us to any debate that examines a seriously structured, intellectually grounded approach to international affairs.

Aziz Pahad, former long-serving deputy foreign minister under Thabo Mbeki and participant in a panel convened in 2018, declared in an uncharacteristic use of understatement ‘in the recent past South Africa has not lived up to its earlier promise’, while Cyril Ramaphosa’s first foreign minister, Lindiwe Sisulu, bemoaned the fact ‘we were once a giant in the world and our reputation was well known.’

Even the more committed and competent members of the diplomatic corps, speaking soto voce, are despondent over the absence of any policy direction from Zuma and wonder whether (and when) its standing will be restored under his successor, Ramaphosa.

High hopes

On that momentous day when Nelson Mandela took the oath of office at the Union Building on 10 May 1994, the expectations of the international community ran high. To cite but one example from that time: then UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali attended the inauguration and reportedly asked Mandela to field an armed contingent to send to Rwanda, then in the midst of the brutalities of a genocidal campaign. Mandela, surprised and undoubtedly conscious that dissident
elements within the South African Defence Force had even considered conducting a coup at the time of the elections, demurred.²

Gross domestic inequalities, the institutional legacies of apartheid and enduring animosities were at that propitious moment all seemingly manageable; indeed, with exertion, enough time and goodwill democratic South Africa would be able to overcome these problems.

The incoming power-sharing government led by the African National Congress (ANC) launched a consultation process aimed at re-orienting and legitimising foreign policy as well as its practices after decades of apartheid rule.³ A proliferation of foreign policy experts and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) joined in the public consultations that embraced the idealistic aspirations articulated in Mandela’s declaration that ‘human rights is the light that guides our foreign policy,’ in a much-cited Foreign Affairs article published in late 1993.⁴

Newly enfranchised citizens joined longstanding critics and even some former regime apologists in a series of national discussions around the purpose and direction of foreign policy in the post-apartheid era.⁵ Gone and forgotten were the statutory endorsements of the Soviet Union that characterised the ANC’s diplomatic position on international questions from the late 1960s and through to the late 1980s.⁶

Much of the first decade of South African foreign policy was focused on the transformative role the country could play.

Yet, significantly, these were not disavowed. It was this legacy of exile and solidarity that has subsequently come to exercise an increasingly prominent influence as the memory of the democratic transition has faded. Notably, this could be seen in the outpourings on international affairs by the ANC party congress in 2017, which categorically affirmed its opposition to the Western-dominated international order and looked to authoritarian regimes as sources of transformative aspirations.⁷

In any case, the first generation of academics working on international affairs in the aftermath of the lengthy transition to democratic elections in 1994, some of whom had played a key role in the formulation of a post-apartheid foreign policy, grappled with the challenges of re-orienting its diplomacy in the wake of the ending of the Cold War.

The vigorous debates of the transition period between 2 February 1990 and through to the end of the government of national unity in 1998 reflected these high aspirations. Much of what constituted the first decade of South African foreign policy was focused on the transformative role that the country could play on the continent and internationally.
Lessons in realpolitik

While expectations were still soaring, there were indications on the ground that the new post-apartheid foreign policy, with its moral compass firmly set on human rights, was not always in step with the events unfolding on the African continent. Chief among these was the contentious military rule of General Sani Abacha in Nigeria.

Abacha had engineered a military coup in 1993 under the pretext of cleaning up the corrupt practices of the previous civil government. Unrest in the oil-rich Niger Delta region had led the military to crack down on the protest movement there, arresting nine activists from the Ogoni community including noted author Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was sentenced to death.

Mandela had made a personal appeal for clemency to Abacha at the Commonwealth Summit in Auckland in November 1995 and believed that clemency would be granted. However, once he discovered that the military ruler had ordered the Ogoni 9 hanged, he was apoplectic and sought to mobilise the member states of the Commonwealth to impose sanctions on Nigeria, which suspended Abuja, followed by appeals to African and then Western governments.

While reluctantly invoking Western government ‘toothless sanctions’, even Southern African Development Community (SADC) states, where Pretoria would be expected to have influence, refused to follow South Africa by withdrawing their ambassador or impose other punitive measures.8

The end result was that South Africa found itself isolated from the continent it sought to embrace in the aftermath of apartheid. Its claims to African leadership foundered on its inability to stitch together a coalition of support for human rights policies among African governments. It was a harsh lesson in realpolitik and solidarity politics in Africa, one that rendered academics and policy communities in the country virtually mute at the time, despite the yawning gap between principle and practice.

This wall of uncomfortable silence was broken in a stroke with the publication of an article by a doctoral student from the Rand Afrikaans University (renamed University of Johannesburg) in early 1996. The publication African Insight was at the time one of the sites of independent critical thinking on contemporary events and issues during the transition to democracy.

In a piece that reflected a distinctive voice – one which we became all too familiar with in years to come – Maxi Schoeman (then published as Maxi van Aardt) asked unremittingly if South Africa’s foreign policy was hostage to:

… the unwritten law [of African solidarity] … that African states do not turn on each other in international fora, such as the UN, but close ranks when attacks are made against them.9
Even the title itself – ‘A foreign policy to die for: South Africa’s response to the Nigerian crisis’ – is pure unvarnished Schoeman; scholarship employing a dry sense of humour, a diligent pursuit of the data and an argument with a bite that forces you to sit up and chew it over. In it, she laid out the stated case for South Africa’s ethical foreign policy and, through a detailed description of the decision-making around the Ogoni 9 and subsequent foreign policy debacle, picked apart the arguments put forward by the Mandela government. It was an outspoken position, scathing in its critique and one that no academic up to that point had publically broached.

Analysts of South African foreign policy point to the Nigerian crisis as a turning point in the debates among scholars examining South African foreign policy. David Black suggested that the Nigerian crisis:

… can be characterised as seminal because it stimulated a good deal of rethinking and ‘lessons learning’ on the part of this [South African foreign policy] community and was an important influence in shaping contours of the new government’s emerging foreign policy.\(^1\)

According to Jeremy Youde, academic assessments of South African foreign policy were affected as well, with a pattern of addressing the country’s international conduct through a framework that balanced ethical considerations drawn from the anti-apartheid struggle with the politics of solidarity and anti-imperialism.\(^2\)

**State of the nation**

If critically deconstructing the foreign policy of post-apartheid South Africa became an increasingly common academic pastime, Maxi was nonetheless not one for just knocking down the edifice of policy institutions (a favourite pastime – and sometimes lifetime career – of some South African academics).

In another seminal article, this time in the *African Security Review*, she explored the idea of South Africa as an emerging middle power and the implications for its foreign policy ambitions in the continental and international system. A more in-depth version was produced three years later for the highly regarded *State of the nation*.\(^3\)

For Maxi, though the concept of middle power had been employed to explain South Africa’s position in the international system by others like Donna Lee and James Hamill, and that of an emerging power by Garth le Pere, the changing role of the country’s foreign policy required a more rooted sense of the international political economy.\(^4\)

Following from Janis van der Westhuizen’s work, as well as the seminal conceptual studies by Andrew Cooper, Richard Higgot and Kim Nossal, Maxi interrogated the idea of ‘middle powerdom’, finding it ill-suited to describe the position and conduct of countries like South Africa, Brazil and India.\(^5\)

Pinpointing the gaps between established theories on middle powers and the empirical conditions on the ground, she put forward an interpretation of the concept
that more readily integrated a broader sense of security than was conventionally ascribed to middle powers. She wrote: ‘[South Africa has] demonstrated that security is not only about military matters and threats of war. Rather, security is a broad concept, encompassing various dimensions, which should also be treated and implemented as such in practice.’

Her identification of how South African foreign policy sought to realise ‘non-traditional security’ concerns through preventative mediation, disaster relief and peacekeeping support around the southern and central part of the continent provided a fuller understanding of the meaning of an emerging middle power. It deliberately went beyond the ‘hub and spoke’ model that many scholars adopted in the shadow of unipolarity whereby the United States sought to manage the international system through the mechanism of subsidiarity, i.e., legitimising the role of regional powers to lead on addressing local security concerns.

How South African foreign policy sought to realise ‘non-traditional security’ concerns helped shape the meaning of an emerging power

Given apartheid South Africa’s employment of hard security measures to ‘discipline’ the region into acceptance of the pariah regime, the pursuit of conventional security measures would send the wrong signal as to the post-apartheid government’s continuities with the past. Security, Maxi told us, as practiced by emerging middle powers like South Africa (and Brazilian academics would subsequently concur) was not just about imposing traditional policies but also about rethinking the basis of security and introducing approaches that reflected this expanding understanding. It was, in other words, as much about confidence building as it was about stability building.

At the same time, this sensibility in the security sector cohered in some respects with the idea of South Africa as a ‘benevolent hegemon’ put forward by Fred Ahwireng-Obeng and Patrick McGowan and related work by Philip Nel, Ian Taylor and Janis van der Westhuizen done in the neo-Gramscian tradition. South Africa’s putative hegemony over the continent was a topic she would turn to in the coming years.

If Schoeman’s articles changed the direction of the academic discourse on the ‘new’ South Africa’s foreign policy after 1996 and joined the discussion on the country as an emerging middle power, it was a few years later that she produced a critique of the ongoing and assured debate about South Africa as regional hegemon.

South African foreign policy’s growing reach into the African continent and, in particular, the expansion of South African corporates into economies in Kenya, Zambia and Nigeria had prompted scholars like Roger Southall, John Daniels,
Varusha Naidoo and Sanusha Naidu to declare that the seeds of continental hegemony were being sown.\textsuperscript{18}

Coupled to Mbeki’s articulation of an African renaissance and the seminal role that the South African government played in reconfiguring the moribund Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU), the expression of its power and new-found ability to act on the continent raised hackles in some circles and declarations of hegemonic intent based on a neo-Gramscian reading of South Africa in the international system.\textsuperscript{19}

Armed with its neo-pan-Africanist ideology – the first consistent public expression of the ‘Africa rising’ narrative – and the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) articulated by Mbeki, the South African government was intent on building a coalition with leaders from Nigeria, Algeria and Senegal that would transform Africa’s relationship with the G7 countries while simultaneously altering the political economy of individual African states towards neo-liberalism through the innovative African Peer Review Mechanism.

It was wildly ambitious and reflected once more the transformative streak of idealism reproduced in South African foreign policy, as well as a lack of introspection or appreciation of the ambivalence felt by other African countries towards South Africa. Ultimately, the Mbeki agenda was overtaken by events like the global financial crisis and ANC politics at home a few years later.

Into this debate she (and I) jumped, with a study of South African foreign policy towards neighbouring Zimbabwe. This relationship, we reasoned, had all the earmarking of the kinds of hegemonic conditions – historical dominance of the economy by South African capital, the promotion of neo-liberalist policies, including human rights, through NEPAD, competition for leadership in Southern Africa – that would argue for a strong response to the egregious conduct of President Robert Mugabe.

Tensions between Zimbabwe and South Africa had gradually built after 1994, partially as the superior economic position held by South Africa became unleashed from apartheid-era constraints and partially due to policy differences on questions like regime support in the conflict-ridden Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – though some observed that there was an element rooted as much in personalities as Mandela’s international acclaim came to outshine Mugabe’s own standing. As Youde points out, ‘Nowhere is the South African foreign policy paradigm emphasizing pan-Africanist solidarity more apparent than in the country’s response to the crises in Zimbabwe.’\textsuperscript{20}
The result was ‘The hegemon that wasn’t: South Africa’s policy towards Zimbabwe’ published in the Strategic Review for Southern Africa in 2003 – again Schoeman’s voice ringing out loud and clear on the assumptions of the prevailing scholarship on South African foreign policy and challenging it through detailed research and reflection.21

Perceptions of hegemonic power (a subject we addressed some years later in another academic article) residing with Pretoria created expectations that, commensurate with its position as a traditional middle power acting as a ‘good international citizen’ and/or an emerging middle power within the ‘hub and spoke’ system, it would respond forcefully to the crisis in Zimbabwe. But this simplistic materialist reading of hegemony, one which ignores the consensual component necessary for its effective and sustained exercise, led to a misunderstanding by analysts of the dynamics at play in shaping the South African position towards the Mugabe regime.

Confronted as it was in the Nigerian case by accusations that its foreign policy was not ‘African’ enough, South African officials understood the material and ideological constraints it faced in exercising regional power:

South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour towards Zimbabwe is based on the fact that South Africa is not in a hegemonic position and that it needed to appease its continental neighbours in order to win support for NEPAD … The country has not yet developed the confidence, nor, it would seem, the commitment necessary to at the very least remain true to its stated principles through clear and constant public voicing of its disagreement [with Mugabe’s rule in Zimbabwe].22

These sentiments were borne out in an interview in March 2001 with the ANC’s head of international affairs and policy, Mavivi Myakayaka-Manzini, who declared:

South Africa, when led by Nelson Mandela acted as a ‘bully’ against the military dictatorship in Nigeria, making a ‘terrible’ mistake. But the country is not going to repeat that mistake with Zimbabwe.23

In fact, there were countervailing factors that ultimately exercised a determining influence over South African foreign policy choices, including the ideological and experiential proximity of the ANC and ZANU PF, their shared critique of white dominance over the post-liberation economy and fears on the part of the ANC that, given the trade union origins of the Movement for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe, South Africa’s trade union movement could mount a similar and unwelcome political challenge to its own authority.

Avoiding the ‘contagion effect’ of the Zimbabwean land issue in South Africa (a well-founded concern, as contemporary events demonstrate) was another important consideration for the governing party.
The influence of this article was to play out in a reassessment of the Daniels, Naidoo and Naidu argument regarding the limits of expansion of South African economic power across the rest of the African continent. Other analysts like Laurie Nathan dug deeper into the contradictions and pressures on South African foreign policy operating within the normative framework of solidarity politics across much of the continent.

**Search for leadership**

Schoeman’s subsequent contributions on South African foreign policy were often collaborative, occasionally again with me, and it is sometimes difficult to untangle the warp and weft of such combined academic endeavours. But the underlying themes that she consistently drilled down into when approaching this topic were questions of leadership, perceptions and the relationship of identity as their formative impact on policy questions.

For many analysts and commentators, South African leadership on the continent seemed at this juncture to be largely uncontested, even in the aftermath of Mbeki’s unceremonious departure from the presidency in 2008, and moving from strength to strength as Pretoria clocked up a number of international achievements.

Its tenure as a non-permanent member of the United Nations (UN) Security Council from 2007–2008 created the conditions for an unprecedented institutionalised relationship between the UN Security Council and the AU’s Peace and Security Council, putting cooperation on a firmer basis and allowing another avenue for African interests to shape internationally mandated efforts at peace and security on the continent. South Africa was subsequently designated the only African member state of the G20 in November 2008, and followed this with a second, more controversial term at the UN Security Council.

The election of Zuma to the presidency in 2009, and the invitation by China to join BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India and China) in December 2010 quietly subsuming the democratic cohort of IBSA (India–Brazil–South Africa), marked another step towards the assumption of global status for the country. South Africa’s prospective hosting of the BRICS Summit in 2013 led to a kind of fever pitch of excitement across the country, gripping most of its government officials, academics and research institutions which, with a few notable exceptions such as Mzukisi Qobo and Mills Soko, scrambled to be the first to proclaim the dawn of a new global order of the South.

It was at this point, the pinnacle of achievement of international recognition of South Africa’s global standing by many accounts, that Schoeman and I wrote our article ‘South Africa in the company of giants: the search for leadership in a transforming global order’ in *International Affairs*.

Our attempts to critically unpack the context and trajectory of South Africa’s ascendency to the global stage focused first on historising South African foreign...
policy ambitions towards the continent and, through that, a place on the global stage. We then considered how, in the aftermath of the 1994 democratic elections, Mbeki’s campaign to restructure continental norms and institutions had fostered greater recognition of South Africa’s status as a leading power on the continent by the international community. This had enhanced its ability to secure positions of substance on the UN Security Council, the G20, and BRICS.

This in turn seemed to feed the hubris informing the Zuma presidency, which gave rise to the unprecedented campaign to oust the then chair of the AU Commission, Jean Ping, and replace him with a South African official, ex-foreign minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

South Africa’s position as Africa’s leading state seemed unassailable but, as the article points out, by digging a bit deeper into the domestic challenges of unemployment, a narrowing tax base and widening social inequality, as well as continuing institutional weaknesses confronting the state, major questions arose as to its capacity to perform at a regional and global level.

The bungled policy response to the Libya crisis in 2011, which was confounded by confused and contrary diplomacy by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and the South African presidency, divided the ANC and forced a public rebuke of its own support for the UN-sponsored intervention by NATO. Zuma’s subsequent enthusiastic embrace of China stems from this point in time, tilting away from the Mandela-era orientation towards liberal (read Western) values.

If questions of leadership preoccupied her scholarship on foreign policy, Schoeman soon returned to the issue of an ascendant South Africa.

Most importantly, the article underscored how South Africa’s leadership was far from accepted in African circles and, in fact, the very act of exercising it in crises in West Africa, Sudan and at the AU had served to alienate African elites further. The end result was a South African leadership position that had garnered far more recognition in Washington and Beijing than it had in Addis Ababa or Abuja.

If questions of leadership preoccupied her scholarship on South African foreign policy, Schoeman soon returned to the issue of an ascendant South Africa and its degree of power through a comparative study of like-minded emerging powers.

Working again collaboratively, we critically examined the shallow basis of South Africa’s international standing and the question of its hegemonic intent and capabilities. ‘South Africa’s symbolic hegemony in Africa’ was part of a comparative study published by International Politics in 2015, examining the case of emerging
countries like Brazil, India, China and South Africa, and their relations with their respective regions. Challenging again the presumptions of power, we wrote:

The key feature that is inhibiting South African foreign policy is less a material one as such but rather resides in the realm of the structured characteristics of its designation as a regional leader. In short, it is a product of international needs for African representation on the global stage together with its own ambitions, rather than any regional consensus on South African leadership.29

As subsequent events were to demonstrate, the hollowness of South Africa’s foreign policy claims were exposed as the Zuma presidency and its cronies worked tirelessly to recast the state as an apparatus for personal gain and rent-seeking behaviour, undermining the material and ideological basis for regional leadership.

**New furrows**

In a departure from the conventions of her analysis of South African foreign policy, Maxi approached me to work with her on developing what would ultimately be a constructivist take on the country’s foreign policy. Building on her interest in role theory and its relationship to leadership, we broached the subject of how the South African government has over time sought to use global summitry to give expression to its international aspirations and, concurrently, to communicate to its divided domestic society:

Since its inception in 1910, South Africa’s multicultural societal composition has produced continual fragmentation and reconstitution of identity-based sovereignty, whether rooted in the politics of ethnicity or in transcendent ideologies of liberalism and solidarity. We argue that the contradictions which have featured in this historical processes of South African identity formation and reformation, whether from its position as a colonial bastion of white power or that of a beacon of African liberation, are both motivated by, and manifested through its foreign policy activism in global summitry ... Engaging in global summitry provides South Africa an opportunity to present a coherent purpose to audiences at home and abroad on key issues that emerge out of the country’s divided diversity.30

Published in 2015 in *Global Summitry*, the article ‘Reconstructing South African identity through global summitry’ ploughed a new furrow in the study of South African foreign policy and its meaning for the constitutive politics of national identity.

Embracing, albeit with some reluctance, the changing landscape of academic and policy communication, Schoeman took to writing for *The Conversation* as an outlet for her work on South African foreign policy. Skewering South African presumptions based on a battery of interviews at the AU, she suggested (along with Asnake Kefele and myself) that it was high time that South Africa’s policymakers and its
sincerely community recognised that ambivalent or negative perspectives of Zuma’s foreign policy held in African foreign policy circles.31

Contributions to the International Relations (IR) published scholarship on foreign policy, of course, represent only one dimension of her work in this area. Schoeman has been a singularly active and supportive figure in all the key institutions that shaped the academic study of the discipline in South Africa and, crucially, those policy institutions that served as a bridge between the university, policymaking communities and the public at large.

When I worked at the IR Department at Wits University, it was commonplace to go to the talks put on by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) and find Maxi in the audience. She was a member of the regional council and in that capacity helped shape the programme, whose primary focus was engaging with the public on foreign policy issues.

In that capacity she was also one of the early supporters and promoters of SAIIA’s Model UN programme for high school learners. This has subsequently grown into the youth@SAIIA initiative, which involves some 6 000 learners, teachers and students. Its success and resonance was sown in those early years when Maxi was involved and provided support to some of the young SAIIA researchers who would draw up the topics and arrange the adjudicators.

Schoeman was one of the early supporters and promoters of SAIIA’s Model UN programme for high school learners

She was appointed to the board of the Foundation for Global Dialogue, later renamed the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), and served tirelessly for many years. Her commitment to these organisations is part of the reason they remained engaged and relevant. The same spirit brought her to take up a role in the South African Council for Foreign Relations, another body that owed a debt to her commitment.

Finally, Schoeman’s impact on the lives and careers of students and colleagues is of course legendary. From future IR scholars to numerous diplomats in the South African diplomatic service, she listened to their struggles to make sense of the concepts in the discipline, to reconcile pressures from home with those of work and other permutations on the ordinary travails that all of us face, and shared her wisdom in the form of practical advice.

She also opened up the Department of Politics at the University of Pretoria to visiting scholars from around the African continent and the world. Her generosity with students and colleagues alike – not to be confused with being nice, mind you!! – has benefitted all of us in this eclectic gathering of people we sometimes call an academic community.
Notes


2. As an indication of how tense things still were at the time, the low flight of a SAA plane that was part of the ceremony was, for a brief moment, thought to threaten the inaugural crowd and the pilot was subsequently fired.


7. African National Congress (ANC), The ANC in an unpredictable and uncertain world that is characterized by increased insecurity and the rise of populism: an ANC NEC International Relations Sub-Committee Discussion Document, 12 March 2017, https://cisp.cachefly.net/assets/articles/attachments/68015_anc_2017_international_relations_0.pdf


22 Ibid., 22–23.

23 M Myokayaka-Manzini, cited in ibid., 19.


Chapter 4
Global governance and
human rights: South Africa
and the United Nations

Henning Melber

Introduction
Over decades, Maxi Schoeman has analysed South Africa’s security and foreign policy in a global and continental context. She continues to question and track ‘the impact of South Africa’s identity on its foreign policy’, reflecting ‘on the two identities that South Africa has claimed since 1994, that of being an African country and being an emerging power.’ These roles are not always compatible.

During the first decade into democracy Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki ‘were masters at utilising contingency to position South Africa as [a] continental leader in the eyes of the world, and to put Africa back on the global agenda.’ South Africa also achieved as a ‘second-tier power’ more of a ‘symbolic representivity rather than substantive hegemony over Africa.’

While South Africa ‘has variously styled itself as a “bridge” between the North, the global South and Africa as well as a “gateway” into the continent,’ there remains a striking difference between self-perception and ‘how the rest of the continent perceives them.’ There are also – as in most other states – huge differences between the proclaimed ideals and the policy practised.

This article looks at a foreign policy that balances particularistic interests and universal norms by scrutinising the degree of (in)coherence regarding the normative values (not) promoted. After all, seeking global recognition as a champion of liberal democracy and the human rights mantra risks ‘accusations of being un-African and pro-Western.’ Comparing the pragmatic realpolitik with a principled, rights-based approach, it suggests that the latter creates more social capital and adds to the reputation of a state as a global player.
As long as double standards prevail by seeking to reconcile the contradictory identities of an ‘African’ or ‘Southern’ position with that of a normative universal human rights-based approach, which reflects the commitments in the country’s Constitution, South African policy as a global player remains – as its claimed domestic identity of a ‘rainbow nation’ – at best incoherent and selective, if not opportunistic.  

**South Africa and the United Nations**

The United Nations (UN) as the primary governance institution has executed its authority with mixed results. But despite manifold obstacles, and at times against all odds, it remains the only legitimate body to negotiate global matters with the involvement of all stakeholders, which is why sovereign states join.  

In the shadow of the Holocaust, the adoption of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights became markers of global governance. The normative frameworks adopted since then have created a compass and navigation kit for measuring the policy of states – both domestically and internationally – and providing them with demarcations in terms of rights-based values and principles.  

Not that strict adherence to such normative frameworks would be the order of the day: UN member states are tempted to make selective use of paradigms and norms to which they officially subscribe. Applying the power of definition, they prefer and preach what suits their own interests and dismiss or ignore what they consider to be an unwanted nuisance.  

Notwithstanding such limitations, the UN often provides relevant diplomatic and political support in struggles for the application of international law. Its interpretation and subsequent implementation can and has made a difference – the assistance provided to those fighting for the right to self-determination on the African continent is a notable example. And it is no coincidence that the South African government’s policy of apartheid was finally declared a crime against humanity by a resolution of the General Assembly of the very same UN the country co-founded, and even the UN Security Council (UNSC) finally adopted limited sanctions.  

Not surprisingly, therefore, the late former permanent representative of South Africa to the UN praised the role of the global institution:  

> It serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for the poor, disadvantaged, and marginalised peoples of the world. It is also a centre for the political co-ordination of liberation efforts, and the font of many of the international laws and norms on which those who are involved in struggles for liberation and independence can draw their strength and legitimacy.
Which priorities?

The foreign policy of democratic South Africa was fundamentally influenced by the experiences and views within the African National Congress (ANC) as the party elected to take over government. Since then, the ANC leadership’s orientation has shaped the priorities pursued in the country’s external engagements. And given their, in some cases very personal, experience to secure support at the UN for the anti-apartheid struggle, they understood the consequences of a human rights-based approach to conflicts, including interference in domestic affairs when violating global norms.

Mandela’s presidency (1994–1999) reflected this imprint. For South Africa, human rights officially remained a core issue in international relations – ever since Mandela declared in 1993, with ‘a heady mix of idealism and messianic aspirations’, that ‘human rights will be the light that guides our foreign policy’. As a critical observer suggests, however, ‘this lofty statement of principles has been hampered by a series of factors’ that cast doubt on the coherent application of these principles. While the primacy of the UN remained an integral part of the subsequent Mbeki era, it added more emphasis to the African basis: ‘Mbeki built African structures and used South Africa’s emerging power status to promote the continent’s interests globally.’

Its third term as a non-permanent member of the UNSC within 12 years (2007/8, 2011/12 and 2019/20) is renewed evidence of the country’s continued engagement in global policy matters. But since the turn of the century, South Africa has produced a mixed record compared to the noble goals declared as pillars of the country’s post-apartheid foreign policy. Since the Mandela era the priorities have shifted towards a greater emphasis on economic policy and strategic alliances.

Views and judgements on the country’s performance differ accordingly. While for the first time a member of the Security Council (2007/8), South Africa was recognised for having successfully contributed to ensure the sanctity of the UN Charter and ‘that its rules are observed and promoted.’

During its second term (2011/12), South Africa joined Brazil and India as non-permanent members of the Security Council, united with permanent members Russia and China as their fellows in BRICS. Sharing this level of global governance authority was a unique opportunity to see if the role played by emerging powers in this constellation would make any difference. As critical observers from Human Rights Watch concluded, however, the record showed merely more of the same: Rather than reshape the Council, these Southern leaders seemed content to settle for business as usual and failed to make a significant mark. They seemed unable or unwilling to harness their historical experiences to act as leaders in combatting today’s abusive regimes.
The tension between a rights-based policy and the primacy of economic and geostrategic interests is of course not a specifically South African one but in a varying degree inherent in most if not all governments’ domestic and foreign policies. Such ambiguity and discrepancy also applies to South Africa’s actions as a UN member state. Indeed, the country’s policy to promote the rule of law as a rights-based approach both at home and abroad ‘is inconsistent at best’.17

South African foreign relations since the turn of the century have displayed a growing discrepancy between the unreserved recognition of fundamental principles in the spirit of the Charter of the UN and the strategic pragmatism that purportedly guides the country’s international policy.18 For instance, the administration’s stance during the dispute over international intervention in Libya was explained as ‘norm subsidiarity’, suggesting that ‘states … often stick to their own interpretation of norms’ with South Africa being ‘no exception in this regard’.19

As a result, its voting behaviour as a UN member state during the first 20 years of democracy produced a mixed record vis-à-vis human rights issues. It evolved from one unsure how to deal with human rights issues ‘to one firmly … nurturing solidarity with its Southern partners in Africa and the rest of the world.’ As a consequence, certain principles were sidelined, ‘human rights promotion in specific countries most especially’.20 While a comprehensive study suggests a fair commitment to declared principles in the overall voting patterns – it measured a one-fifth inconsistency as a minor deviation – the nature ‘of this inconsistency (for the most part failing to act against human rights abuse) is not’.21

Rather, the inconsistency ‘reflects South Africa’s negative votes for resolutions that favour human rights promotion in specific countries where human rights are severely lacking or non-existent’.22

The case of the ICC23

As a result of the Rome Diplomatic Conference in June/July 1998 and international buy-in to the ‘responsibility to protect’ principle, the International Criminal Court (ICC) with its executive legal powers to prosecute was institutionalised with the support and subsequent ratification of many African states. However, the ICC was challenged for a lack of even-handedness, reflecting the selectivity so characteristic of the most influential states’ setting the agenda in global governance matters.

At the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union (AU) on 12 October 2013 in Addis Ababa the ICC was taken to task for the role it has played in Africa. Ironically, the campaign for the withdrawal of African states from the ICC was mainly initiated and promoted by governments and heads of state who, in some cases, had earlier referred cases to the ICC when it suited their own interests but were now themselves under scrutiny.

The AU’s dismissal of the role of the court initially did not have major consequences for the South African stand, until the government ignored the indictment of Sudan’s
President Omar al-Bashir when he attended the AU summit in Johannesburg in mid-June 2015. The government argued that as a head of state participating in the summit, al-Bashir was covered by diplomatic immunity.

While a South African High Court entertained an urgent appeal by a human rights organisation to extradite the Sudanese president, he was allowed to hastily leave the country from a military airport, pre-empting the court’s ruling that obliged the government (as a signatory to the Rome Statute) to comply with the ICC arrest warrant. The North Gauteng High Court further refused the government leave of appeal on 16 September 2015. In October, news leaked that the ANC, as the largest political party in the government, had recommended leaving the ICC.

In what was widely considered a bombshell, South Africa’s then foreign minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane signed an Instrument of Withdrawal on 19 October 2015, declaring South Africa’s own obligations to international human rights ‘incompatible’ with the ICC’s interpretation.24

In October 2015, news leaked that the ANC, as the largest political party in government, had recommended leaving the ICC.

The decision has since not been approved by Parliament, which had originally endorsed the ratification. This invites legal arguments on whether such a withdrawal by an executive is valid – not the first controversy about how laws and the Constitution in South Africa are interpreted. As Justice Minister Michael Masutha argued at a press conference on 21 October 2016:

The implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Act, 2002, is in conflict and inconsistent with the provisions of the Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, 2001. Heads of state enjoy diplomatic immunity against arrest. But because of signing the statute, South Africa waived such immunity and was thus obliged to arrest people wanted for crimes against humanity. The problem was identified and needs to be addressed.25

The reasoning suggests that suspected perpetrators of crimes against humanity are protected from investigations by immunity, purely based on the official status they hold and notwithstanding any aspects of how they entered or managed to stay in such office.

By joining sides with those regimes now dismissing the ICC, South Africa again missed an opportunity to live up to its declared noble goals. Notably so, however, in the wake of its campaign for another term as member of the UNSC, South Africa did not pursue the matter further.
The exit from the ICC, it seems, remains a dormant matter for the time being, most likely subject to further considerations inside the Ramaphosa government. Immediately after his election as ANC president and subsequently resuming office as head of state, there are hopes that a new era might replace the narrow-minded definition of solidarity:

   By re-engaging constructively with the ICC, South Africa would display a recommitment to principles that have been lost or threatened over the past decade, including accountability. While [Cyril] Ramaphosa campaigned domestically on a ticket of accountability and respect for the rule of law, the obvious parallel – and resounding confirmation of this commitment globally – would be to emulate that commitment at an international level. There can be no easier or more profound means of doing so than by re-dedicating to the work of the ICC, and by withdrawing the notice of withdrawal.\textsuperscript{26}

\textbf{The case of sexual minorities rights}\textsuperscript{27}

In 2011, as a member of the Human Rights Council (HRC) South Africa, with the support of Brazil, lobbied for a decisive initiative to adopt a resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity.\textsuperscript{28} While human rights advocates welcomed such initiatives towards promoting the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities as ‘gateways for progress on a range of issues,’ they stressed that these should not replace ‘action to address abuses by particular governments.’ For them, the current mantra of ‘cooperation, not condemnation’ is not sufficient.\textsuperscript{29}

South Africa remained committed to the cause when voting for the next pioneering resolution adopted by the HRC on 24 September 2014,\textsuperscript{30} though already then showing signs of reluctance.\textsuperscript{31}

On 30 June 2016 the 47 HRC members adopted another landmark resolution – this time without the support of South Africa. The resolution on Protection against Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)\textsuperscript{32} was a milestone in elevating LGBT rights to the level of human rights.

For the first time an independent monitor was to be appointed and mandated to identify root causes of discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. In an effort to protect gay and transgender people, the expert – similar to other special rapporteurs – would also be tasked to talk with governments to protect LGBT rights. The specialist appointed had the power to document hate crimes and human rights violations, but no mandate to recommend sanctions.

The main initiative for this breakthrough came from a core group of seven South American states (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Uruguay). A total of 41 additional countries co-sponsored the text (including
Albania as the only country of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, with all other members opposing the resolution) and a record 628 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from 151 countries supported the effort – notably, some 70% of these NGOs were from the global South. The resolution was drafted before the homophobic massacre of 49 people in an Orlando nightclub took place on 12 June 2016.

Notwithstanding this constellation, the resolution was adopted by a narrow margin: 23 members voted in favour (Albania, Belgium, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Georgia, Germany, Latvia, Macedonia, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, Panama, Paraguay, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Venezuela, Vietnam), 18 voted against (Algeria, Bangladesh, Burundi, China, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Morocco, Nigeria, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Togo, United Arab Emirates) and Botswana, Ghana, India, Namibia, Philippines and South Africa abstained.

The final text was considerably softened and watered down after a controversial and at times heated debate.\(^{33}\) A last-minute amendment stressed that ‘the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind.’ But the resolution also states that ‘[i]t is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.’

The strongest resistance to the SOGI resolution came from the Muslim and the African member states of the council.

As the International Commission of Jurists clarified: ‘Although a number of hostile amendments seeking to introduce notions of cultural relativism were adopted into the text by vote, the core of the resolution affirming the universal nature of international human rights law stood firm.’\(^{34}\)

The strongest resistance to the resolution came from the Muslim and the African member states of the council. After all, half of the over 70 countries that still criminalise same-sex relationships and behaviour are in Africa.\(^{35}\) While 10 of the African council members voted against, the other four (including South Africa) abstained. The latter argued that the resolution – despite several far-reaching amendments curbing the power of the expert to be appointed – remained divisive and would impose cultural-specific (implicitly: Western) values.

Ironically, South Africa was the first country in the world that included in its Constitution protection on the grounds of sexuality. The abstention now sent shock waves through the LGBT communities at home and abroad. As observed by a directly affected South African legal expert, South Africa’s approach:
… was focusing on maximum unity within the Council … Thus, our lives as gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, intersex and transgender people are less important to the government than maintaining maximum unity within the UN Human Rights Council … it appears as if our government believes that our lives are pretty worthless. Who cares about LGBTI people being assaulted and murdered across the world if caring about it will upset the unity within the Human Rights Council?36

As he pointed out, homophobia is a historical construct of (19th century) Western imperialism and missionary zeal in Africa, imposed and legally codified in the colonised societies. Or put differently: while those opposing the freedom of sexual preferences argue that these are Western values and a form of ideological imperialism, true decolonisation would actually – just as in the case of South Africa’s Constitution – require governments to abandon homophobic legislation. After all, countries voting in favour of the resolution such as Bolivia, Cuba, Mexico, Venezuela and Vietnam could hardly be classified as neo-colonial agencies of the West.

Again, as in the case of the ICC, human rights advocates follow South Africa’s foreign policy under the Ramaphosa government with expectations: promoting LGBTI rights both at home and abroad can be considered as another litmus test to measure the extent to which the human rights agenda is reinvigorated. The fact that Ramaphosa extended words of welcome to the Mr Gay World delegates attending the 2019 event in Cape Town might be seen as an encouraging signal.37

**The sovereignty gospel**

South Africa’s initial entry to the UNSC, measured by its voting behaviour, could not have been more disturbing. Non-interference in domestic affairs served as the ultimate reasoning for withholding support from the US-sponsored draft resolution presented to the UNSC on 12 January 2007 condemning human rights violations in Myanmar – South Africa voted with China and against the Russian Federation. The South African representatives argued that this should be a matter for the HRC and not the UNSC, and that the situation in Myanmar could not be considered a threat to peace and security in the region.38

Similarly, South Africa actively participated in blocking a Security Council briefing in March 2007 on Zimbabwe’s deteriorating situation and subsequently also voted (this time with China, Libya, the Russian Federation and Vietnam) against imposing sanctions on the Mugabe regime on 11 July 2008. This time it argued that one should avoid a negative impact on the climate for dialogue between conflicting parties.39

Generally, South Africa raised concerns that dealing with the human rights violations of certain individual member states in the UNSC would be a selective singling out of culprits, while other perpetrators with similar dismal track records
had not provoked the moral consciousness of the Western governments acting as human rights proponents.

If this stance was a result of deliberate policy reflections, it was badly communicated and did little to enhance South Africa’s reputation for promoting human rights. Rather, it created bad publicity, suggesting that South Africa would play the role of a spoiler. As a critical analysis of South Africa’s voting behaviour during the first two years as a non-permanent member of the UNSC suggested: ‘South Africa seemingly subordinate human rights to broader goals intended to increase her influence and standing amongst the majority of the developing world.’

In retrospective it is also a somewhat sad irony that a seminar in December 2012 suggested that the criticism levelled against South Africa during its first term in the UNSC seemed unwarranted given subsequent developments in both countries, in that Zimbabwe’s situation had stabilised and in Myanmar important political reforms had taken place. Looking back today, we know better.

South Africa’s lukewarm position on Mugabe was a worrying indication that quiet diplomacy risks compliance with perpetrators.

South Africa’s lukewarm position (more accurately described as inactivity) in dealing with Mugabe’s abuse of authority through state terror, his shelving of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Tribunal and Zimbabwe’s blatant contempt of court, was a worrying indication that so-called quiet diplomacy holds the risk of compliance with perpetrators. In the end ZANU PF, with the indirect support if not open complicity of other SADC states, including South Africa, managed to re-consolidate its political rule despite its appalling record of human rights violations.

The deafening silence with regard to the purge of the Rohingya in Burma, re-named Myanmar under the military dictatorship, was another embarrassment. As late as November 2018 South Africa refused to vote in favour of any condemnation of the regime’s genocide.

Only a last-minute intervention by Foreign Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, instructing the Permanent Mission to change its position, saw it support a resolution that condemned the mass violence that unleashed devastating consequences for the minority group. The change of mind was hailed as ‘a new dawn in South Africa’s foreign policy.

This reluctance to act on matters of such a nature created the misleading impression that cooperation requires abstaining from voicing critical views or condemning abuses and betrayals for the sake of ‘quiet diplomacy’. If this kind of diplomacy remains too quiet for too long, however, it actually turns into complicity.
In line with the logic guiding the refusal to act on these ‘internal’ affairs, statements condemning Zimbabwe or Myanmar need not be made within the UNSC. But the complete absence of any critical observations suggests a lack of concern and a similar bias to that of other countries with specific interests – which often deserve to be blamed for their selectivity.

It has been suggested ‘that South Africa’s refusal to name and shame in situations of human rights abuses in countries (preferring instead to abstain or vote against and rarely sponsoring resolutions on these situations at the HRC), is a testament of its history’. According to this reading, South Africa:

… came through the transition period to democracy via an internally negotiated political settlement. It is plausible to suggest that South Africa would not try to impose on another’s sovereignty when it had enjoyed the fruits of its own negotiations relatively untouched by the outside world, and therefore would want others to be afforded the same opportunity.45

This is of course a totally misleading perception, since it eliminates the external international pressure on the apartheid regime and support for the ANC as an important factor bringing about the negotiated transition to a democratic state. One could speculate for a long time if and how long the white minority governments not only in South Africa but also in Zimbabwe and Namibia would have lasted without such foreign influences in support of the liberation movements. After all, both condemnation of apartheid and the sanctions imposed were also interferences in domestic affairs.

In addition, if one speaks out over the constant violations of fundamental human rights in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories and the continued occupation of Western Sahara, one ought to also speak out on similar matters of concern.

Pragmatism or principles?

A review undertaken at the end of South Africa’s first year in the UNSC generously suggests that the country’s role in global governance matters was executed ‘within an overarching framework of solidarity, social justice and democratic participation; and on the basis of a diplomacy that recognizes the importance of rules and principles.’46

The importance of rules and principles is, however, credibly underlined by even-handed action, which provides coherence and legitimacy. Such commitment through action should document that these rules and principles are indivisible and a guiding compass to be applied in any given situation. They are an integral part of the UN Charter and subsequent normative frameworks adopted, but require steadfast and uncompromising implementation to live up to the proclaimed ideals.

What is needed is a more principled engagement on human rights, which would ‘demonstrate that human rights concerns are universal, not just the product of
“western agendas’. This would put ‘more pressure on governments that rely on that excuse to avoid addressing serious human rights abuses.’\textsuperscript{47}

It would also allow states like South Africa to take credible and pro-active positions when it comes to violations of the UN-anchored norms and principles by those established powers that dare to claim the power of definition when it suits them. It would certainly enhance and strengthen South Africa’s credibility if those accusing Western states of a selective approach to human rights would not use this as a convenient excuse to close eyes, ears and their mouth when it comes to such violations.

They hide behind the old notion of sovereignty dating back to the Westphalian order, one that provides a shield protecting against any kind of foreign interference. Rather, ‘[a] foreign policy favouring sovereignty over human rights underlines the disengagement of South Africa’s foreign policy from the human rights values espoused in her constitution.’\textsuperscript{48}

South Africa’s post-1994 foreign policy was inspired by values rooted in people’s own struggle against a minority regime

Officials close to South African foreign policy have argued that South Africa pursues, despite contradictions and inconsistencies, a foreign policy indicating ‘an overarching desire to challenge established power in pursuit of a more democratic international order,’ which for them represents ‘a rights agenda in itself.’\textsuperscript{49} One hopes that this policy is indeed anchored in convictions guided by rights-based action.

Undeniably, South Africa’s post-1994 foreign policy was inspired by values rooted in the history of the people’s own struggle against a minority regime that denied human dignity for the majority of those governed.

The then deputy minister of international relations and cooperation, Ebrahim I Ebrahim, ended his public lecture on the occasion of celebrating 19 years of foreign policy under a democratic government on 4 July 2013 with this programmatic confirmation: ‘It is the very character of our history that should place us firmly as champions of democracy, good governance, human rights, development, peace and justice.’\textsuperscript{50}

As he reiterated, South Africa’s foreign policy is rooted in ‘events that formed the rich tapestry of our historic struggle for freedom’ and is ‘informed by our experience of international solidarity, our values and principles … to build a nation that would be free from oppression, segregation and discrimination.’ Such openly declared commitment creates obligations against which its purveyors must expect to be
measured. However, the deputy minister also carefully sought to curtail such high expectations, as he cautioned scholars:

… to recognise the realities that limit and sometimes even inhibit the conduct of an active foreign policy … given our limited resources and the immediate pressing needs and expectations of the majority of our people during this relatively short period.\textsuperscript{51}

The need for effective local socio-economic transformation to eliminate poverty and other forms of destitution is indeed a priority, and carries great costs. But the incentive to pursue a rights-based foreign policy, which unreservedly pursues goals as identified by the deputy minister, lies inter alia in the fact that one can live up to values and principles in the international arena through taking principled stands, creating social capital without spending a great deal of money.

If, however, foreign policy is considered as an integral part of direct economic interests, the approach and impact change. Given that the deputy minister points in the very same speech to the fact that his country is promoting the national interest through foreign engagements while giving priority to Africa in its role as ‘the top investor on the continent,’ he visibly mixes business interests with policy in a way that gives business a say. Such blending of imperatives, however, might undermine a rigorous pursuit of the noble ideals proudly proclaimed.

\begin{quotation}
South Africa’s declared aspirations to lead on the continent are guided by power-related deliberations
\end{quotation}

At the same time, one can observe a somewhat misplaced patriotic pride among office bearers over the relative importance of South Africa as a middle power, giving preference to playing the role of an aspiring hegemon in Africa, basing foreign policy on strategic interests for building alliances not with like-minded human rights advocates but with BRICS or with African leaders who use anti-imperialist rhetoric to protect dictators.

Using unqualified generalisations these leaders generally ignore the much more nuanced political and economic realities and hierarchies, which suggests that they share, at least on one level, a common agenda. Of course, alliances differ from issue to issue, as interests differ. South Africa’s declared aspirations to lead on the continent, for instance, are guided by power-related deliberations.

When entering the international arena as a democratic global player from the mid-1990s onward, South Africa had all reason to strengthen the capacity of the UN as a broker for peace and security based on the creation and protection of human rights for all. The UN’s support for the struggle against a racist minority rule in violation of fundamental principles is among the evidence on why the UN matters.
The commitment to its values implies, for the sake of one’s own credibility, the need to transcend narrow self-interests and to translate them into the interests of wider humanity, beyond particular alignments (be it the AU, the Non-Aligned Movement, BRICS or the G20, for that matter). It is in line with this commitment to defend the interests of wider humanity, which does not generally occupy the commanding heights of societies, and hold the power of definition over the direction of international relations and the efficacy of global institutions.

In this spirit, South Africa’s White Paper on Foreign Policy was released in May 2011 under the programmatic title ‘Building a better world: the diplomacy of ubuntu’. But comparing the underlying idealistic notions and claims with subsequent realities, Garth le Pere reaches the sobering if not damning verdict ‘that there has been a drift away from the ethical foundations of South Africa’s foreign policy into a crude instrumentalism characterised by diplomatic ceremonialism and unprincipled pragmatism.’

Divided lines seem to be by nature an integral part of the battle for human rights and dignity. After all, the promotion and protection of human rights has been divisive throughout history: the campaign to abolish the slave trade was divisive; the ongoing fights to recognise the equal rights of women and promote children’s rights remain divisive; so are the campaigns for the rights of indigenous people. Fighting racial and other forms of discrimination, including the fight for religious freedom, remains divisive. Advocating human rights and dignity will remain a contested matter.

States have to make choices and abstaining from promoting human dignity is a choice too, although one that is inconsistent with South Africa’s constitutional tenets. It should, therefore, not come as a surprise that an assessment of South Africa’s role in the HRC until 2014 reached the sobering conclusion that its actions ‘have deliberately obstructed international progress on human rights.’ While human rights are to a large extent respected in line with the Constitution at home, ‘there is a disjuncture between South Africa’s domestic commitments and its foreign policy.’

Which way?

Promoting a human rights-based agenda is in itself a powerful and comprehensive framework for any foreign policy. At the same time, a diplomacy advocating the interests of people who otherwise would continue to remain victims of the abuse of power should not be confused with a ‘façade of action.’

A rights-based foreign policy in recognition of the fundamental values enshrined in the UN Charter and subsequent normative frameworks would require the courage to dissociate from otherwise preferred bedfellows if these are inconsistent with these criteria. What better way to enhance the international image of a country, and therefore to increase social capital, than to be under a government that walks in the footsteps of Mandela?
At the speech delivered for the budget vote in May 2018, the foreign minister reconfirmed the determination to return to ideals initially guiding democratic South Africa’s foreign policy:

We want South Africa to be once again a *moral compass* and a *voice of reason* in a world increasingly overcome with *selfish, narrow interests* … The fundamentals of our foreign policy are based on *human rights, peace, equality, freedom from oppression and racism, freedom from poverty.* [own emphasis]

Ramaphosa used the Rockefeller Lecture on 24 September 2018 to sketch the pillars of South Africa’s next round as a member state of the UNSC by echoing his foreign minister’s core statement: ‘We will dedicate our tenure on the Security Council to continue the legacy of Nelson Mandela, whose values of peace, reconciliation, and respect continue to inspire Africa and, indeed, the whole world.’

There is nevertheless reason to adopt a wait-and-see posture. After all, the current administration also emphasises its economic policy as a core element in its external relations. In his first State of the Nation Address Ramaphosa stressed that realising his declared policy priorities of growing the country’s economy to create jobs and reduce poverty ‘cannot be achieved without a robust foreign policy that focuses on economic diplomacy.’ How the two can best be reconciled remains an open question.

Ramaphosa stressed that growing the country’s economy needed a ‘robust foreign policy’

Most likely, the noble goals declared remain linked to a strong element of *realpolitik* when it comes to rogue states offering business. South Africa’s non-condemnation of human rights violations under the pretext of not wanting to interfere in domestic affairs might well be cultivated further, while commercial ties and old alliances guided by notions of solidarity with governments rather than people are prioritised.

Knee-jerk responses dismissing criticism of human rights violations under authoritarian regimes considered to be in the own camp of Southern or ‘anti-imperialist’ states do not improve credibility and reputation. Rather, ‘Pretoria must show greater diplomatic finesse and less ideological inflexibility.’

Quite revealingly, the case of apartheid South Africa can be considered a precedent for human rights-oriented global governance interventions into the domestic affairs of member states. As suggested at the dawn of South African democracy:
... the fact that South Africa was the only country which the United Nations severely punished for its human rights violations, particularly in light of the number of other examples of oppression and cruelty prevalent in the global community, detracted from the bona fide nature of the United Nations effort. However, a solid legal foundation has now been laid for action on country-specific human rights issues and the East-West conflict is history, there is reason for hope that the United Nations will be prepared to take on the task of dealing with human rights problems in a manner which seeks solutions rather than merely engaging in rhetoric in a setting in which the case of South Africa provides a solid precedent.61

Halfway through its third term as a non-permanent member state of the UNSC, we will see if, under the Ramaphosa presidency, the country will offer a different track record than during the first two rounds. The challenge is to rebuild ‘the country’s reputation for respecting the law and good governance,’ both at home and abroad, and a seat in the UNSC the third time around provides a window of opportunity ‘to resuscitate South Africa’s global brand.’62

The Zuma presidency left considerable damage not only domestically but also to the country’s image internationally. As Maxi Schoeman and Chris Alden diagnosed, South Africa entered the post-Zuma era ‘greatly reduced in international stature.’ The task now includes reconciling an economic with a foreign policy agenda. South Africa ‘needs to reflect on its role on a bigger canvas and whether it can find a role that will enable it to cover lost ground.’63

Notes
5 The notion of ‘social capital’ is made a reference point applicable to international relations and foreign policy too. Originally coined within a domestic, in particular civil society context (including associational life), it is a term that relates at its core to the notion of trust and reliability through the consistent adherence to a set of values. It refers to inter-personal interactions and social networks, which through their connections bring norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness to life. Such behaviour could be translated into and applied within the arena of international policy too. The pioneering scholars introducing and promoting the term as a key notion include most prominently Robert D Putnam, but also Pierre Bourdieu. See for a comprehensive overview on the term and its meaning: M Smith, Social capital, The encyclopedia of informal education, 2000–2009, http://infed.org./mobil/social-capital/.
8 South Africa was not only a member of the League of Nations but also a founding member of the UN.


17  N Fritz, South Africa’s role in global promotion of rule of law: ‘neither here nor there’, South African Foreign Policy Initiative (SAFPI), SAFPI Policy Brief 12, September 2012, 1.


21  Ibid., 40.

22  Ibid., 39.


26  M Du Plessis, Ramaphosa can renew South African leadership by recommitting to the ICC, Chatham House, 6 February 2018, www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/ramaphosa-can-renew-south-african-leadership-recommitting-icc/


29  Ibid.; see also Human Rights Watch, ‘World Report 2011: Events of 2010’, 6, where UN Human Rights Council members in Geneva are quoted as calling for ‘cooperation, not condemnation’. This clearly illustrates the latent to open conflict between a morally and ethically guided human rights advocacy and the realpolitik justified as legitimate pragmatism by governments.


K Roth & P Hicks, Encouraging stronger engagement by emerging powers on human rights, Open Democracy, 20 June 2013.

Ibid., 107.


Ibid.


Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Republic of South Africa, Speech by LN Sisulu, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation on the occasion of the budget vote of the


Chapter 5
Deconstructing security and the critical dimensions

Garth le Pere

Introduction
Since South Africa’s transition to democracy in 1994 there has been great intellectual, academic, and policy ferment about a range of issues relating to the transformative complexity of its domestic and foreign policy. South Africa had to confront the legacies of apartheid, especially about how to address the inherited legacies of racialised poverty, inequality, and unemployment. At the end of the Cold War there were tectonic shifts that inaugurated a radically changed terrain of global politics, whose hallmarks are increased volatility, insecurity, uncertainty, and ambiguity.

In short, South Africa had to come to terms with an array of contradictory realities by engendering policy, institutional, and political changes that were normatively defined and strategically driven and were in line with the imperatives of civic freedom, democracy, and liberation. It was against this backdrop that South Africa represented a fertile arena for knowledge building and debate about types of discursive interventions that were relevant to the challenging interface between domestic and foreign policy.

The South African Association of Political Studies (SAAPS) – where Maxi Schoeman played an active and leading role – was quick to respond to the need for a different discursive approach that was Foucaltian in mood and spirit in the sense of establishing bases for uniquely South African-inspired forms of enquiry that were at once emancipatory, reflective, and innovative. This was an invitation to develop a broad community of social thought that was sensitive to the requirements of South Africa’s transition at home and demanding challenges abroad.

Maxi Schoeman was and remains a seminal figure in guiding our thinking in this regard, most profoundly as it related to the influential formulation of Robert Cox: discursive interventions and analytical platforms had to simultaneously respond to the challenge of problem solving and critical interpretations.¹
In her teaching and writing, Schoeman has helped us to impose theoretical and conceptual order on a diverse and eclectic range of themes and topics that derive from the dialectic of change and continuity in the study of international relations and foreign policy. This was very much predicated on the search for what approximates a Kantian locus of ethical obligations, on one hand, and promoting the Hegelian equivalent of political community on the other. In this quest, Schoeman was emphatic about not excluding any voice or privileging any point of view.

It was precisely in this context that Schoeman was a pioneering spirit in her contributions about human security thinking. For her this was important since it provided an opportunity in terms of ontology and epistemology to interrogate how and why conventional and realist-driven security thinking was short on moral scrutiny because of its exclusive focus on state-centric ideas of security.

Schoeman’s contributions to human security were grounded on two continua: one was conceptual and normative in explicating and challenging realist accounts of security and its interface with power; and the other contextual and substantive in highlighting how governance and welfare in Africa could be improved by a concentrated focus on human security. Let us examine each in turn as a basis of her thinking.

**Thinking about security: the theoretical debate**

Schoeman’s research and writing were very much anchored on contesting the post-war realist synthesis based on the assumption that the state is the key or unitary actor in international relations; that the strategic and diplomatic relations of states constitute the core of inter-state exchanges and interactions; and that states pursue their interests defined in terms of power in an anarchic environment.²

A further concern in challenging the realist synthesis was its revitalisation by Kenneth Waltz and the extent to which the pluralist rebuttal of complex interdependence provided a different pathway of thought and critique.³ This brought in non-state actors as opposed to the unitary state assumption of realists; it reduced the salience of force, which was a dominant theme in realist accounts; and crucially, it introduced a heterodoxy of issues and concerns compared to the realist focus on security.

It is at this juncture where Schoeman showed a finely-honed sensitivity about the essential grammar of international relations with specific reference to the rules of the game, how these are decided, and what the articulations of power are in terms of how these rules are constituted. This juncture was also important for how she introduced constructivist ideas, which she also helped to popularise in South Africa, especially relating to matters of identity and cooperation among states.⁴

These ideas are enduring in the ongoing epistemological and ontological contestations in the study of international relations, but also have resonance in foreign policy analysis, which is another area where Schoeman has provided critical
academic input and intellectual leadership. This relates to how she has helped to structure the agency-structure problem in the study of foreign policy and how this problem could be studied in relation to the foreign policy of South Africa and emerging powers such as Brazil, Russia, India and China as well.5

The actions of actors, their ability to act and the constraints of society are critical in shaping our social landscape. As explained by Wendt: ‘[H]uman beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live; and society is made up of social relationships which structure the interactions of these purposeful actors.’6

The actions of actors, their ability to act and the constraints of society, are critical in shaping our social landscape

It is perhaps against this broad – and necessarily sketchy – background that we can locate Schoeman’s contribution to security thinking in South Africa with reference to the writings of Ken Booth and his role and influence in shaping the Welsh School of Critical Security Studies (CSS).7 However, Schoeman also drew on Barry Buzan, whose book People, states, and fear (1983) was important in CSS, especially in broadening security to include political, economic, societal, and ecological dimensions, and offering the postulate that individual human beings were the irreducible base elements of security.8

However, in staking out the territorial contours of the Welsh School, Booth proclaimed:

The search for security is primordial, and never before in history has human society faced the multidirectional challenges that will predictably develop in the coming decades … Intense and multilevel insecurity will be in season for the foreseeable future, and so the search for security will be at the top of the agenda in public policy making as well as dominating countless private lives.9

Hence, Schoeman’s critique of realism10 is very Boothean in nature since he views realism as an ‘unrealistic … ideology masquerading as a theory of knowledge’ whose ethics are hostile to human interests since it reproduces ‘the cold monster of the state as the centre of politics.’11

It is interesting to examine the parameters of Booth’s security thinking as an entry point for appreciating the way in which Schoeman popularised its conceptualisation in South Africa, especially insofar as she took his invitation seriously to reduce the hold of realism in the study of international relations. This is very evident from the perspectival canon of her writing on security issues on Southern Africa.
Booth argued that an insecure life amounts to a ‘determined life’ that is devoid of freedom and depends on mere survival in a Hobbesian-type world where life is nasty, brutish, and short. Security means the antonym: to be free from threats that directly affect life, with the ability to make relevant choices that are consequential for its protection.\textsuperscript{12}

A very important underpinning of this freedom is that emancipatory space for ‘freeing … the people from physical and human constraints.’\textsuperscript{13} It is at the intersection of the ontology of security and the logic of emancipation that we find the practical implications of Kantian-type ethical obligations: of not treating others as means but only as ends in themselves: indeed ‘emancipation, not power and order, produces true security.’\textsuperscript{14}

In other words, the liberty that the individual enjoys through emancipation must be ‘compatible with the freedoms of others.’\textsuperscript{15} Quite critically and in terms of the agency-structure dilemma, universal security is attainable if we breach ‘the barriers we perpetuate between foreign and domestic policy’ where our common humanity is the subject and purpose in the politics of emancipation.\textsuperscript{16}

The liberty that the individual enjoys through emancipation must be ‘compatible with freedoms of others’

Booth grounds his ontology of security and logic of emancipation in empirical terms derived from Gramsci, which were also formative in Maxi Schoeman’s approach. Gramsci referred to his interregnum informed by an ecosystem of morbid symptoms where the old is dying and the new cannot be born.\textsuperscript{17} Booth saw the post-Cold War landscape through similar lenses: an interregnum that was characterised by the morbid symptoms of consumerism, patriarchy, global inequality, religious extremism, and nationalism; thus making the 21st century a ‘long, hot one.’\textsuperscript{18}

Schoeman was also a critical figure in highlighting the theoretical diversification in CSS. If Booth represented the Welsh School with a focus on investigating opportunities for social transformation where activist emancipation was the primary purpose of CSS, she was also pivotal in bringing the work of the Copenhagen School – represented in the main by the work of Barry Buzan and Ole Waever – to the attention of South African student audiences and the general academic community.\textsuperscript{19}

The Copenhagen School emerged with an emphasis on post-positivist perspectives, and its intention was to demonstrate that ‘the social production of security is sufficiently stable to be treated objectively.’\textsuperscript{20} In theory and practice, the Copenhagen School was therefore much closer to traditional security studies in an attempt ‘to grasp security constellations and thereby steer them
into benign interactions [as opposed to] a more wholesale refutation of current power wielders.\textsuperscript{21}

Ole Waever went further to establish the notion of ‘securitisation’ of political issues, which was another key preoccupation of Schoeman. Her writing on finding a more suitable explanatory grammar and vocabulary that reflected the ‘security’ vs ‘securitised’ realities of Southern Africa provides a useful register of this preoccupation.\textsuperscript{22}

A securitised approach invokes ideas about national security by which states legitimise the use of force and other extraordinary measures taken in the name of national security. This then permits the mobilisation of resources and recourse to special or emergency measures to counter an existential threat.

Underlying ‘securitisation’ is the problem and challenge of state survival and the imperative of urgent action and steps that must be taken ‘because if the problem is not handled now it will be too late, and we will not exist to remedy our failure.’\textsuperscript{23} In this formulation and compared to Booth’s emancipatory scheme, security is a negative phenomenon since it is seen ‘as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics.’\textsuperscript{24}

For Booth and the Welsh School, the ontology of security and the logic of emancipation should be privileged over power and order; for Buzan, Waever and the Copenhagen School the opposite would be the case: in line with neo-realist thinking, it is anarchies in world politics that have a particularist logic and state survival in this anarchic universe is key to power and order.

The problem, as Schoeman was quick to point out, is that the rhetorical act of ‘securitisation’ creates rights, commitments, and obligations, which calls for broadening the dimensions or elements of security. As such, securitisation becomes infinitely elastic since the scope of securitisation is both open and contingent and hence anything can be ‘securitised’.\textsuperscript{25}

The lines of conceptual and normative division between the neo-realism of the Copenhagen School and the constructivism of the Welsh School are clearly delineated with regard to the structures and dynamics of international relations, which ‘are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and … that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature.’\textsuperscript{26}

In light of this dividing line, Schoeman was a vocal exponent in pointing out how international systems have been socially constructed. It was the real-world dynamics in South Africa and Africa that provided her with the social and political space to develop and promote the elements of human security, especially with reference to the security of entire political communities rather than the security of regimes.\textsuperscript{27} This was grounded in self-reflexive Boothean terms of freeing individuals
from ‘war and the threat of war … poverty, poor education, political oppression and so on.’

**Thinking about human security: the Africa dimension**

Maxi Schoeman’s theoretical and conceptual concerns with security were translated into debates at home and on the African continent about the implications of security for political, strategic, economic, social, and environmental purposes. Traditional conceptions of security were not able to adequately capture the proliferation of actors and agendas on the global stage that posed a variety of threats to citizens and regimes.

Schoeman drew much of her inspiration in promoting elements of human security as these evolved through the paradigmatic interventions of the UN Development Programme and its ‘Human development reports’.

The 1994 report was especially important in laying down the critique of security, which ‘has for too long been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of nuclear holocaust.’ The focus and concentration on the security of nation-states rather than people resulted in a denial of the legitimate concerns of ordinary people, for whom ‘security symbolized protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression, and environmental hazards.’

Schoeman emphasised this thinking about human security in her research, teaching, and writing by applying it to the development challenges that confronted African countries. She was sensitive about the extent to which human security demanded the attenuation of a broad spectrum of threats to ordinary people, reminiscent of Boothean and the Kantian emancipation project and with due regard to promoting a people-centred formula based on freedom from fear and freedom from want; or what has been called ‘caring’ security.

A great virtue of the human security perspective is that it institutionalised its principles and served as a powerful incentive to the policy community in several countries; indeed it was an important underpinning of initiatives such as the Ottawa Process on the banning of landmines and the Kimberley Process for regulating ‘conflict diamonds’ in war zones.

This institutionalisation went a step further with the formation of the Human Security Network in 1999 and its expansion to 12 countries by 2004, including South Africa as an observer. The Network saw itself as an informal but flexible mechanism for collective action on matters of human security and specifically aimed at conflict prevention and management as well as promoting peace and development.

It has been involved in a range of international issues, such as the elimination of small arms and landmines, the establishment of the International Criminal Court, the
promotion of human rights education and human rights law, the struggle against transnational crime, and the battle against HIV/AIDS.

One of the countries that showed an early commitment to human security was South Africa, based on its will to redefine the role of the security establishment in the aftermath of its transition to democracy in 1994.

Schoeman’s voice was prominent in the wide-ranging consultative process that the new government of Nelson Mandela initiated, and that resulted in a series of policy documents. The most important was the 1996 White Paper on Defence, which contained one of the clearest and most inclusive articulations of human security:

In the new South Africa national security is no longer viewed as a predominantly military and police problem. It has broadened to incorporate political, economic, social, and environmental matters. At the heart of this new approach is a paramount concern with the security of the people. Security is an all-encompassing condition in which individual citizens live in freedom, peace, and safety; participate fully in the process of governance; enjoy the protection of fundamental rights; have access to resources and the basic necessities of life; and inhabit an environment which is not detrimental to their health and well-being. [own emphasis]

This expressive formulation in a policy document could be couched in terms of provoking Schoeman’s interest in interrogating the applicability of the human security concept in Africa and especially, the extent to which it could serve as a salutary transnational catalyst for addressing many of the continent’s depressing conditions of human existence.

Schoeman is interested in interrogating the applicability of the human security concept in Africa

She showed great empathy for the millions of people who had to make a living in the African inter-state system where most African states are comparatively weak, fragmented, and fragile; examples would include countries such as the Central African Republic, Chad, Niger, and Somalia. Moreover, their penetrative, extractive, and regulatory capacities have been hollowed out by Washington Consensus and neo-liberal market reforms, compounded by the scourge of corruption.

Schoeman’s human security focus on Africa took on added urgency in view of the widespread vulnerabilities of ordinary people, especially women and youth. This was stimulated by first-order questions, such as who or what should be the referent object of security; who or what threatens security; who has the prerogative to provide security; and what methods make sense in providing security.
Across Africa, with a current population of 1.2 billion, there are more than 450 million who live in conditions of abject poverty in a vast, seething cauldron of human under-development characterised by great opportunity deficits in which anti-social behaviour, youth delinquency, and criminality easily incubate and multiply. Notably, in Africa’s highly atomised and patriarchal societies the plight of women and the gender dimension concerned her greatly.34

In Schoeman’s research, she wrestled with how human security could be embedded in structures and processes of regional integration and through transnational norms and standards of cooperation.35 For her, transnational processes had larger meanings in the broad template of promoting peace and security in Africa’s atavistic political environment.

She showed that effective regionalism could in many ways way help to transcend the statist character of development strategy by bringing in peoples’ concerns and interests; it could be a check on the abuse of public resources and help to improve the functional competences of public institutions by engendering accountable and responsive governance, and ultimately improve public welfare in the interests of building a regional community.36

In short, human security could be a catalyst for a caring form of ‘community security’ in which ordinary people are embedded and find emotional and physical solace based on networks of relationships and common values.37

In conclusion, the rich ferment in security studies and thinking – in their theoretical, normative, and empirical manifestations – owes much to the innovative and creative contributions that Schoeman brought to the unfolding discourses in South Africa. She occupies a unique position in this community of thinkers since she was able to marry her rigorous and logically consistent theoretical interests and concerns with an enduring and meaningful humanist perspective that never lost sight of the fact that security has a profoundly people-centred dimension.

Notes


12 Ibid., 101.


14 Ibid.


24 Ibid., 29.


Chapter 6

Sandy Africa

Introduction

The role of the armed forces as an instrument of foreign policy in a democratic South Africa has also been one of Maxi Schoeman’s concerns. Her interest is highlighted in her analysis of the South African state’s contribution to peacekeeping efforts on the continent, and how South Africa’s sense of identity has influenced the role it has asked its armed forces to play. Schoeman argues that the military is a key component of South Africa’s foreign policy, but highlights a number of challenges that the country faces in pursuing its agenda.

Tracing Schoeman’s works, it becomes clear that she has addressed a number of critical questions relating to the armed forces in her unfolding work:

• What is the South African state attempting to achieve in its international relations?
• What strategies does it employ to attain these objectives?
• What specific role does it assign to the military (or the use of force) in the pursuit of its ambitions?
• Is the military aligned in terms of doctrine, posture, design, ethos and the resources needed to play the role expected of it?

This article begins with a focus on how Schoeman analysed the end of apartheid and with it the fate of the repressive apparatus that held the state intact during the apartheid years. It then assesses Schoeman’s analysis of the role of the armed forces in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives and the theoretical and conceptual ideas that have shaped her analysis.
Thereafter, the article considers Schoeman’s critique of South Africa’s peacebuilding role, and women’s participation therein. Some of Schoeman’s earlier research had focused on the position of women in the transition to democracy. This earlier work forms a useful background against which to regard her contributions to the question of gender in peacebuilding. The article concludes with some thoughts on key ideas that Schoeman’s work suggests as a basis for further exploration on the role of the military in South Africa.

**End of apartheid and beginning of the SANDF**

The future of South Africa’s armed forces and the security apparatus of the state as a whole was a pivotal point of contestation in South Africa’s negotiated transition. Under apartheid, they had been used to prop up the white minority regime. Repressive security laws ensured that political dissent was crushed, and the justification was that South Africa faced a ‘total onslaught’ from hostile forces working to overthrow the system and therefore required a ‘total strategy’.

This meant that the South African Defence Force (SADF) was engaged in a low-intensity war that violated the territorial integrity of neighbouring countries to eliminate ‘the enemy’ – defined in its lexicon as members of the armed wings of the liberation movements – destabilising neighbouring countries as punishment for harbouring ‘the enemy’, and internally, mounting covert operations to counter and eliminate opponents inside the country.

Under external and internal pressure, and in what many regarded as a stalemate, the negotiated transition unfolded, with the fate of the security forces at the centre of the debate. What would become of the ‘war-making’ machine that had been so pivotal to maintaining apartheid?

Schoeman’s research in this period reflected a deep analysis of the social and economic challenges South Africa was undergoing at the time. In an article titled ‘Women’s issues in South Africa: 1990–1994’, Yolanda Sadie and Schoeman (writing as van Aardt) noted that while the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), as well as the release of Nelson Mandela, had paved the way for negotiations on a democratic future, 2 February 1990 had also been a watershed moment for women in South Africa. Until that time:

> [It would seem that for South African women, the hegemony of patriarchy defined the political domain and issues related to the unsatisfactory conditions endured by the majority of women were pushed from the centre of the political agenda, as not being ‘really political’ or as issues that would have to stand back for the larger goal of national liberation.]

Sadie and Schoeman were acutely aware that to speak of South African ‘women’ in broad generic terms was to mask the real differences that existed among them: differences of race, colour, class, region, religion and party affiliation, as they put
it. They identified two significant developments that affected women in this period: the first was changes in the legal status of women, as there were numerous laws that discriminated against women in 1990, and the other was the formation of a broad-based women’s coalition that drew together women from across the party-political spectrum to act as a pressure group for policy changes that worked in women’s favour.

The negotiation processes that unfolded in the early 1990s saw a concerted push for the greater involvement of women. The first Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA 1) had been a largely male-dominated affair, and the Management Committee of CODESA pushed for greater women’s representation at the negotiating table. When the Transitional Executive Council was formed in 1993, it included a sub-council on the status of women.²

In 1993, as South Africa came out of its international isolation and as the political transition was unfolding, the National Party government signed several United Nations (UN) conventions. These included the Convention on Political Rights for Women, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Shortly after this the government published draft bills on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities, the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Abolition of Discrimination against Women.³

Sadie and Schoeman identified violence as one of the most important challenges facing women in the early 1990s. They saw this as a reflection of unequal power relations in society, but also as serving to reinforce these unequal relations. For them the lack of institutional responses, or even recognition that violence against women was a serious societal problem, was worrying. As they put it:

Neither the equality clause of the constitution, nor the various changes to the country’s laws, nor the high percentage of women elected to Parliament seems to have changed the high incidence of violence against women. This is the one area where a large-scale change of perception through education and socialization is of crucial importance. It would seem that this is not very high on the government’s list of priorities.⁴

The strand of feminist thought reflected in the analysis of the 1990s, and the concern about the impact of violence on women, has been a central part of Schoeman’s scholarship and later framed her contributions on peacebuilding and gender.
Schoeman has also summarised the internal and external drivers of the end of apartheid and the beginnings of democratisation many times in her work. For her the internal drivers were a combination of the failure of structural reform of apartheid; the economic costs of apartheid; the waning legitimacy of the apartheid government, even among its white constituency; and the internal resistance to the apartheid government by the trade unions and United Democratic Front, along with the banned ANC, which played an increasingly influential role in politics.

Among the external drivers she mentions are the international sanctions campaign; the comprehensive international isolation of South Africa; and the financial strain put on South Africa through its military involvement in Angola and Namibia. Other external drivers were the end of the Cold War; the collapse of the Soviet Union; and the general support for a political settlement by the international community.

In the post-1994 period South Africa continued on this trajectory of democratisation, as evidenced by the governance architecture that was set up, including the parliamentary portfolio committees. An example Schoeman gives is that of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, which provides:

... an opportunity for civil society to participate to some extent, in at least influencing formal decision-making, if only in the sense of being heard on certain issues. These committees often invite members of or groups from civil society, mostly the NGO [non-governmental organisation] sector, to address them on issues related to the mandates of the committee.\(^5\)

Schoeman writes optimistically of how the democratic turn, at least initially, affected the military, stating:

There is little if any indication of any move towards increased militarization in South Africa or of an ‘excessive’ role for the military. In fact, relative to the size of its population and economy, South Africa now has the fourth-smallest defence force on the continent. Problems seem to be located more in the realm of politics, particularly party politics.\(^6\)

In her earlier writings, Schoeman analysed the state in Southern Africa (and Africa as whole), arguing that the process (‘not act’) by which the Westphalian state has emerged – an iterative, evolutionary process, at times contested, but in essence responsive to the emerging economic, political and social realities of its period of emergence – can be sharply contrasted with the emergence of African states, whose beginning lay in territorial conquest, a period of colonialism and then the post-colonial period. These experiences created state borders that, while subject to contestation, have nevertheless remained firmly etched in the political imagination, and gained a certain legitimacy.

Central to the notion of the Westphalian state is the idea of territoriality, the notion that a defined and bordered or bounded territory constitutes the physical space over which political and administrative authority is exercised. What follows from this
is sovereignty; the idea that this political authority over the territory is to be exercised without outside interference. And finally, the ‘episteme’ of a sense of belonging to the state is essential to lending its existence credence in the eyes of its subjects and others who must relate to its existence, such as other states.

Schoeman’s problematisation of the state in Africa is instructive in assisting us to locate where her analysis of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and its prospects would later lie.

In 1997, in an article titled ‘Celebrating the 350th birthday of the Westphalian state’, she builds on Vale’s three-tiered notion of the state. First, there is the state of states (in the states in Southern Africa, notwithstanding their emergence in the crucible of imperialism and colonialism, elites insist on their identity as sovereign and territorially bounded spaces over which political authority is exercised).

Schoeman’s problematisation of the state in Africa shapes her analysis of the SANDF and where its future prospects would lie

Next, there is the state of the people: territorial state boundaries for the peoples of the region are less rigid and have less meaning, especially if they are impediments to survival and a livelihood. Thus, the people of the region traverse the borders and boundaries in order to meet their needs, regardless of the demarcated boundaries that formally circumscribe their identities.

Third, there is the state of globalisation. Globalisation has created a new meaning of statehood and sovereignty: the interconnectedness of states means that sovereignty is mediated in the international arena. In other work, Schoeman carefully points out what makes Westphalian states different to the state in Africa:

The Westphalian states of Europe developed over centuries to reflect compromises between the rulers and the ruled, and between rulers themselves. These states came to form units of production and units of meaning, thereby making social, cultural and economic sense. In contrast, African states were ‘created’ and statehood was imposed at independence regardless of logic or historical, social, economic and political conditions.

Given the diverse history and experiences of African states, statehood means different things from one country to the next. And yet in spite of these differences, there is sufficient common ground in the way that African states define themselves, in relation to each other and to the rest of the world. It may mask some of the contradictions, but African unity and pan-African identity have maintained their resilience.
After the end of apartheid, South Africa became one of these states in search of an identity, and has straddled the divide between the state of the state, the state of the people, and the state of globalisation. Not only has it had to live with the reality of having inherited the apartheid state apparatus as a sovereign, now democratic state, it has also had to make meaning of its existence in the regional and international arena, asserting its sovereignty and contending with the forces of globalisation. Here South Africa has had to choose which instruments best suit its varying aspirations. It is in this context that the role of the military must be seen.

**Role of the military in the pursuit of foreign policy**

Schoeman has analysed the role of the military as an instrument of foreign policy against the backdrop of literature that demarcates traditional and non-traditional approaches to security. While the military’s traditional role is protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state, this narrow definition has been challenged and replaced by scholars who argue for a broadened agenda.

Most scholars would agree with Schoeman in identifying Buzan’s 1991 book *People, states and fear: an agenda for international security studies in a post-Cold War era* as a text that is central to the new discourse. She places it alongside official and influential ideas emerging from the international community, which too was forced to reflect on the changing dynamics of international security when the Cold War ended.


The implication of widening the agenda, and placing developmental and human security concerns at the centre of what states should attend to, was for the military to lose its paramount status as an instrument of foreign policy. As Schoeman states:

> Many observers and politicians believed that the end of East–West rivalry, and a new ethos of commitment to human security, demanded a new role for the military, and an important issue became that of the role of the military and the extent to which it still retained primary responsibility for security in an era in which national security seemed to be losing its primacy as a foreign policy goal.

The peace dividend, however, was short-lived, and with the emergence of new intra-state conflicts that contributed to deepened insecurity, new demands on militaries emerged. Two such demands stood out for Schoeman: the need to develop unconventional capabilities that could deal with ‘militarised non-state actors’, and the need for capabilities to participate in peace missions. This shift in articulating the role of the military is reflected in the South African context, in the Mandela administration’s prioritisation of diplomatic engagements in its international relations.
As far as the military was concerned, South Africa certainly had much damage to undo: both in creating a defence force that was legitimate in the eyes of its people and in winning the trust of its neighbours in the Southern African region, as those who had offered support to the ANC during the apartheid years had borne the brunt of Pretoria’s destabilisation campaign.

Under then president Nelson Mandela, the foreign policy objective was to re-establish South Africa’s legitimacy in the eyes of the international community. Some of the successes involved renegotiating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995 and the 1996 Pelindaba Treaty that declared Africa a nuclear weapons-free zone; as well as playing an active role in the campaign to ban anti-personnel landmines in 1996/1997 and in trying to reform the global trade regime to the benefit of countries of the global South.

The Mandela years were also a period when South Africa was prepared to go out on a limb on issues of principle. For example, Mandela called for the expulsion of and sanctions against Nigeria after the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, and was involved in attempts to broker peace between the then Zaire’s president Mobutu Sese Seko and his rival Laurent Kabila.

Debates in the early 1990s in South Africa about the role of the armed forces converged with debates in the international arena, and this helped to shape security policy. In 1996 Parliament approved the White Paper on National Defence in the Republic of South Africa.

The Mandela years were a period when South Africa was prepared to go out on a limb on issues of principle

The White Paper articulated the role of the SANDF in rather traditional terms. Schoeman cites Hough and du Plessis, who observed that in the early period “[t]he objective of security policy includes the defence of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the South African state and the promotion of regional security in Southern Africa.”

Notwithstanding this, the approach to security adopted by the governing party, the ANC, reflected the international trends in the debate to see security in broadened terms. Schoeman refers to the ANC document, Ready to govern: ANC policy guidelines for a democratic South Africa, adopted at its 1992 national conference, as influencing its views on security. Factors such as underdevelopment, poverty and an absence of democratic values were seen as promoting conflict within and between states.

At the time of the transition memories of the role of the apartheid security apparatus were still fresh. Schoeman argues that South Africa was initially reluctant to assign a more central role to the military in its foreign policy agenda. This, she says, is:
... largely explained in terms of the need to first transform the South African security services, but conceivably also due to a firm belief on the part of the Mandela government that diplomacy was the best way of pursuing peace on the continent, particularly given South Africa’s history of destabilization of neighbouring countries.¹⁷

South Africa, therefore, placed great store in projecting the SANDF as a partner and force for good in the region.

Schoeman notes that, among other operations, the SANDF has provided humanitarian and disaster relief to neighbouring countries and countries further afield, including shipments and airlifts of food and medicines to Rwandan refugees; assistance to flood victims in Mozambique and Tanzania; assistance during the ferry disaster on Lake Victoria in 1999; assistance to Lesotho during a cold spell in 1999; and landmine removal operations in Angola and Mozambique.²⁸

This type of humanitarian and disaster-relief work was undoubtedly important in reshaping South Africa’s image in the eyes of its neighbours. However, from about 1998 onwards South Africa saw the need to back up its diplomatic engagement with some commitment of its troops.

While the 1996 White Paper and the 1998 Defence Review recognised that peace operations would be an important component of what a future SANDF would do, they underestimated the extent to which South Africa was to become engaged on the continent.

Schoeman notes that the SANDF has provided humanitarian and disaster relief to neighbouring countries and further afield

Under Thabo Mbeki’s presidency (1999–2008) there was a maturing both of South Africa’s domestic priorities and of its foreign policy ambitions. Mandela’s administration (1994–1999), in contrast, had been immersed in developing new policy and legislative frameworks, to match the transition from apartheid to democracy. Mbeki was more concerned about policy implementation and reconfigured the implementation, reporting and coordination structures of government to reflect this.

Emboldened by the international stature that South Africa had gained in the Mandela years, he attempted to carve out a bolder, more assertive role on the African continent. Mbeki was one of the leaders who championed the notion of the ‘African Renaissance’. Among his principal ideas, shared with prominent African leaders, was the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and the establishment of the African Union (AU) in 2002 as the successor to the Organization of African Unity (OAU).
Mbeki’s diplomatic engagement with the West revolved around establishing equal terms of engagement. However, over time his frustration with the leaders of the G7 became palpable, as he believed that they acted in their own interests rather than any ideal of an equitable partnership. This is the background against which the forum for dialogue between India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) was formed in 2003.

The idea behind the initiative was that greater South–South cooperation would allow these three democratic countries (and the continents of which they are part) to build consensus on matters in international significance, including trade. Being taken seriously at the table involved being able to project themselves in strategic terms and this involved developing influence in global affairs.

For South Africa, which had already steered the formation of NEPAD and the reincarnation of the OAU through the establishment of the AU, another strategic ambition was a non-permanent seat in the United Nations (UN) Security Council. Schoeman observes that South Africa obtained a seat in 2006/2007 to drive the agenda of closer cooperation and coordination between the UN and the AU, particularly in relation to matters concerning peace and security.

During the Mbeki presidency, under the banner of the ‘African Renaissance’, the SANDF was required to play a visible role in enabling South Africa to attain the desired pre-eminence. The commitment of troops in AU and UN missions in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan was part of this calculation.

While this gave the SANDF a prominent stature, in real and material terms, there was frustration in the Department of Defence with what was expected of the SANDF, especially since the resources allocated to it did not match the needs. This is reflected, Schoeman observes, in a number of Department of Defence policy documents that indicate concern that the changing strategic environment and the requirements it suggested were not being matched by the resources available to the SANDF. As Schoeman puts it:

By 2005, it became obvious that the 1998 White Paper guidelines on involvement in peace missions were no longer sufficient … The country’s foreign policy aspirations required much more than had originally been envisaged. Firstly, there was a decision to shift defence policy to increase involvement in peace missions. Secondly, by 2005, deployments exceeded the numbers originally envisaged. Thirdly, South Africa’s increasing involvement on the continent and the evolving African security architecture meant a much larger role for defence in structures and mechanisms such as the SADC [Southern African Development Community] rapid reaction brigade, which was launched in Lusaka in 2007 as part of the African Standby Force (ASF) of the AU.
To adjust to the changing requirements, the Department of Defence, the civilian policymaking secretariat for the defence establishment, updated the 1998 White Paper, referring to a developmental approach to peacekeeping and recognising that a ‘purely military approach to peacekeeping was no longer viable.’ The report also notes the need for a peace enforcement capacity.

The updated White Paper, in fact, interpreted the constitutional mandate of the military to go beyond the usual traditional concerns of protection of the state’s territorial integrity to include military diplomacy and participation in peace missions. This adjustment was important because it aligned the policy position with South Africa’s foreign policy ambitions. However, this was not matched by a commensurate allocation of resources or the restructuring of the actual force design to meet the peacekeeping needs.

From around 2007 the divisions in the ANC were beginning to show strain, leading up to the removal of Mbeki as president of the country, following his defeat in a party conference that saw Jacob Zuma rise to power – a move that allowed him to become president of the country after the 2009 general election.

It is to its credit that the military remained, at least on the face of it, relatively aloof from the political machinations. The integration of armed forces, while not without its problems, saw the accommodation of soldiers and combatants from former statutory and non-statutory armed forces into units of the new SANDF, and the appointment of senior staff through processes that had the buy-in of the different political parties.

The provisions relating to the role, accountability and oversight of the SANDF set out in the Constitution (1996), as well as the provisions set out in the White Paper on Defence (1996) and the Defence Review (1998), had signalled to the military that there was still a significant role for it in the post-apartheid era. What frustrations there were related to the inadequate resourcing of the defence force, even while it had to carry a significant burden in projecting South Africa’s capabilities through participation in peace missions and other military engagements.

When Zuma was appointed president of South Africa in 2009, the strain on the direction of the country’s foreign policy was beginning to tell in a number of respects. South Africa’s second term in the UNSC coincided with the popular uprisings in North Africa, and it was party to the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1973 that led to the aerial bombardment of Libya and the removal of Muammar Gaddafi.

South Africa, which had in 2005 been an ardent champion of the ‘responsibility to protect’ soft doctrine (under which the intervention in Libya had been mooted), became frustrated with the Western powers and sought to consolidate its relations with global South allies even further. As Schoeman states:

[A]fter the Libyan debacle, the country’s attitude hardened vis-à-vis the extent of P3 ‘double-speak’, their selective dealings with international
problems and the use of their power to force through decisions or to frame issues in very particular ways on the agenda of the Security Council.\textsuperscript{21}

The consequence of this was South Africa’s decisions to give the West the proverbial cold shoulder. An example Schoeman gives was South Africa’s refusal to arrest Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir during his participation in the AU Summit in South Africa, and its decision to withdraw from the International Criminal Court.

South Africa continued to give prominence to its relationship with Africa and the assertion of the ‘African Agenda’ under Zuma. It lobbied African countries for the appointment of former minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma as chairperson of the AU Commission. During her tenure she was able to spearhead and launch the AU’s Agenda 2063, a vision of where the AU would like to be in 50 years’ time from its adoption.

South Africa, which in 2005 was a champion of the ‘responsibility to protect’ soft doctrine, became frustrated with Western powers

South Africa also became a member of the BRICS alliance during the Zuma presidency, and increasingly adopted postures that were, if not sometimes anti-global North, decidedly pro-South, in international fora. Most certainly it seems to have been somewhat influenced by the Chinese approach to development, which calls for strongly centralised decision-making in the economy. This is at variance with the neo-liberal model that underlay the domestic policy and economic reform thrust under Mbeki and could partly account for why a coherent and successful economic development strategy was not forthcoming in the Zuma years.

The second tension that came to the fore during the Zuma presidency was the perceived inadequate resourcing of the SANDF. Since the recovery from the global financial crisis, economic growth had been slow. Some have argued that a number of factors, including policy uncertainty and structural weaknesses in the economy, have led to economic, political and social tensions.

In her first budget vote address in 2009, Defence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu bewailed the fact that the resources allocated to the SANDF were inadequate for it to play its expected role in peace missions.\textsuperscript{22} More worryingly, there was a misalignment between official policy and what was expected of the SANDF. In essence, the defence force is ‘primarily an instrument for the conduct of peace missions and in support of governmental obligations to the SADC and the AU, such as its contribution to the African Standby Force.’\textsuperscript{23}

Schoeman supports Olivier’s advice to mainstream ‘developmental peace missions’ (DPMs) into the South African approach to peace support operations.
Olivier points out that since 2004, the concept of DPMs has guided the South African approach:

… as a conceptual tool to work towards integrated efforts at both the strategic and operational levels to fill the institutional gap between military peacekeeping and development activities and primarily to increase the success rate of peace missions on the continent. The concept was formally introduced and presented to the South African Parliament, based on several initiatives and research facilitated by the then Deputy Minister of Defence, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, in conjunction with members of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).24

The approach mirrors the United Complex Peace Missions model, which calls for missions that combine security, political, humanitarian, developmental and human rights dimensions. This resonates with the South African approach to post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD), which has been embedded in defence and foreign policy frameworks. This approach sees military and civilian actors playing complementary roles.

This was acknowledged as early as 1999, when the South African government’s approach to peace missions was outlined in the White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions.25 While the concept of DPMs was acknowledged as ‘an underpinning philosophical framework and a holistic approach to peace missions by the SANDF and its Joint Operations Division’, it had still not been fully operationalised, primarily because of budget constraints.

The Defence Review of 2013 did acknowledge and incorporate the approach, suggesting that this multi-dimensional approach was due to be strengthened.

Schoeman notes that allies in BRICS and IBSA, such as Brazil and India, are projecting themselves far beyond their own continents, raising the question of whether South Africa should not do something similar – rather than confine itself to African peace missions – if it wants to promote its agenda and approach to peace missions.26 In fact, she says:

It could be argued that a solid epistemology on PCRD has already been built up by the South African military, and this could be used to promote not only the success of PCRD, but also to enhance the country’s leadership role in the international arena through the military as an instrument of foreign policy.27
She points out that this optimistic view would have to be coupled with overcoming several challenges. The first is that the SANDF would have to be adequately resourced. This emerged very strongly in the 2012 Defence Review: there is a mismatch between what South Africa expects its military to do and the resources it allocates to it. In the context of a depressed economy, the prospects appear bleak. However, there are some steps that could be taken to improve South Africa’s effectiveness in peace missions, such as greater interdepartmental coordination. Moreover, policymakers and politicians need to be better informed about the complexities of PCRD so that they can engage more vigorously in international debates, as well as use its experiences in the missions it has already been part of as a source of creative ideas.  

Women and peacekeeping in the SA military

The integration of statutory and non-statutory forces into the post-apartheid defence force offered a window of opportunity to put gender in the military on the agenda. Under apartheid the military was overwhelmingly white and male. Blacks were recruited as volunteers and for operational roles while white women were only recruited in support roles.

The armed struggle that was waged by the ANC had always included women combatants. There was thus no question that returning women combatants would be among those integrated into the new force. Not surprisingly, the number of men integrated from all components, including the SADF and homeland forces, far outnumbered the number of women. In the allocation of senior positions, women were few and far between.

As in most state institutions, transformation and, as an element thereof, employment equity were identified as necessary to diversify the SANDF and make it more representative. In 1996 a former uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) woman combatant, Jackie Sedibe, became the first woman to be appointed to the rank of major general in the SANDF. In 1997 she was appointed as chief director responsible for affirmative action and equal opportunities in the SANDF. In her portfolio she also headed the SANDF’s Gender Focal Point.

Heinecken points out that the expanded recruitment of women into the SANDF has not been without challenges. In the first place, there are societal norms that inhibit women from joining the defence force, and for those who do there are barriers to full participation, given prevailing attitudes to how they should be utilised.

Participating in peacekeeping missions and contributing to conflict resolution on the African continent was an integral part of South Africa’s efforts to gain international influence, starting in the Mandela era but particularly in Mbeki’s presidency.

The adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 coincided with Mbeki’s appointment and placed the position of women in peacekeeping on the agenda. A commitment to employment equity and affirmative action was already woven into the strategic
priorities of the SANDF. South Africa therefore committed itself to gender mainstreaming in line with the resolution. However, there have been challenges in meeting the commitments.

Schoeman’s starting point in addressing the challenges is reflected in an article, ‘South African female peacekeepers on mission in Africa’, and it is to interrogate the rationale of the UN approach:

UN Resolution 1325 points to the increasing importance of the role and position of women in conflict, and in approaches to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The resolution has a twin focus, first on women as actors (subjects), recognizing their contribution to conflict resolution and sustainable peace and calling for the inclusion of more women in peacekeeping operations. Second, it emphasises the situation of women as victims (objects), recognising the negative impact of war and violence on vulnerable groups – mainly women and children. The resolution calls for the mainstreaming of gender in peace operations and the full participation of women in decision-making and all peace support activities.21

Schoeman acknowledges that the SANDF has made gains in employment equity. By 2007–2008, 21% of the uniformed staff were women.32 However, there was a shortage of women at the senior level. Moreover, the involvement of women in peacekeeping operations was ‘substantially lower than 21 percent, though well above the international average, according to staff interviewed.’33

Schoeman acknowledges that the SANDF has made gains in employment equity

The Military Skills Development System (MSDS), the vehicle for recruiting young people into the SANDF, specifically has peace support operations as an eventual deployment goal in mind, but has faced resource constraints.34 Moreover, there have been a number of factors inhibiting women from volunteering for peacekeeping: stereotypes about women; being discouraged from volunteering for peacekeeping duties by male colleagues; the lack of women in decision-making roles; the lack of facilities to cater for women’s needs during deployment; and the impact of long deployments away from home on family life.35 In interviews conducted by Schoeman there was even a lack of awareness about Resolution 1325 and the reasons for including women in peace missions.

In summarising how the literature documents the benefits of having women as peacekeepers – they can be useful in building bridges with women in certain cultural contexts; can have a moderating effect on male soldiers’ conduct in the field; and can serve as role models for the local population – she points out that female deployment should not imply shifting the burden of responsibility
(for example for male misconduct) to women. Yet there are definitely benefits to women’s participation:

Peacekeeping presents a different, and in many ways, a much more complicated paradigm than the conventional military or ‘war-making’ approach. The peacekeeping paradigm, exactly because of this difference, provides an opportunity for thinking about and incorporating women peacekeepers in a way that enhances and facilitates the advantages and strengths they bring to peacekeeping.36

Schoeman concludes with a number of recommendations on how to leverage and enhance women’s participation in peacekeeping operations. These include conducting more research, including comparative studies with other countries on the experiences, recruitment and work environments of female peacekeepers; encouraging debriefing to ensure that lessons learned are captured; paying careful attention to the practical needs and concerns of female peacekeepers during deployment; and redesigning and improving the gender-training content of courses at all levels.37

**Future trajectories for the military in South Africa**

In her work, Schoeman has raised important questions about the role of the military in South Africa’s democratic project, particularly that component that relates to its role and impact in the international arena. Her analyses often point to the lack of state capacity in attaining ambitious targets set. The answer may well lie in the limits of statehood that she herself identified when reflecting on the 350th birthday of Westphalia.

She has shown how the post-apartheid state was founded on a state that had all but collapsed on its own inherent contradictions. Internal and external drivers for change led to a negotiated political settlement. In the period that the agreements were negotiated, many liberties for the previously oppressed, including South African women, were secured.

As the newly created democratic state emerged, it sought to re-establish legitimacy internationally, domestically and in the African region and Southern African sub-region. Under presidents Mandela, Mbeki and Zuma, notwithstanding different emphases on who the intended audiences were, there were consistent efforts to re-make South Africa’s image.

Schoeman’s work has shown how the military has been drawn into the re-making of South Africa’s image, along with other statecraft tools such as diplomacy. She has shown that there has been reflection and thinking on the part of policymakers, but also that the academic community has had a role to play.

Her view of South Africa’s role on the African continent in addressing conflict is that it must look beyond the ‘war-fighting’ paradigm to the complex combination of measures that will bring about sustained peace. She argues that peacebuilding,
and in particular the gendered angle that UNSCR 1325 offers on peacebuilding, offers a richer way of engaging the military, and thus South Africa, in the international arena.

Not only must South Africa address the resourcing issues faced by the military if it wants it to play this role, it also has much work to do in integrating state capacity to give effect to the concept of DPMs and enhancing the gender component of its peacebuilding work. While it does not dive deeply into the issues of force structure and design, Schoeman’s work explores questions that have a bearing on these issues, along with questions of doctrine and force posture.

But more importantly, Schoeman raises questions of what statehood means in the 21st century, what institutions are required within a modern state, and whether the state in Africa has the capacity to address the human security and development needs of the region. From her work, it is clear that ‘war-fighting’ is not an aspiration of the South African state: by and large its deployments abroad have been in either the realm of peace operations or humanitarian or disaster relief efforts.

Closer to home, the SANDF has also been called upon to perform civic roles, such as staffing hospitals during strikes or fixing infrastructure that has fallen into disrepair. More recently, the SANDF has been deployed in a major crime combatting operation in the crime-ridden Western Cape Province, in support of the South African Police Service (SAPS). Some frown on using the military in such non-military roles, arguing that this could impinge on the idea of the military’s primary function being to defend the territorial integrity of the state.

As South Africa grapples with its own challenges of poverty, inequality and high levels of violence (including gender-based violence) and social dysfunction, there is a need to confront the question of where the priorities of the state should lie. Some argue that there is no point in playing on the world stage when there are so many unattended needs in South Africa. South Africa’s DPM model is as much needed at home as in the countries on the continent that it seeks to assist.

Notes
2 Ibid., 81.
3 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 163.
10 Ibid., 211.
11 Ibid.
13 Ibid., 62.
14 Ibid.
16 Ibid., 167.
20 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
25 Ibid., 123.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid., 222.
32 Ibid., 2.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid., 3.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid., 4.
Chapter 7
Maxi Schoeman’s worldview of African regional security in a global context

‘Funmi Olonisakin and Sonja Theron

Introduction
Maxi Schoeman’s scholarship has straddled several intersections and evolutions in the African regional security landscape.

Significant events in the last quarter of a century have shaped the issues at the core of African security and to a large extent have defined the challenges with which academics and policy decision makers alike will grapple. In this period we have seen the United Nations’ (UN) efforts to reform its frameworks for responding to new security challenges, with particular focus on the African regional context; the creation of the African Union (AU) and its Peace and Security Architecture for the continent; and the emergence of majority rule in South Africa.

The global security architecture has been particularly targeted toward addressing the security challenges of the African continent, more than any other region of the world, in the period since the end of the Cold War. The challenge that confronts African scholars of international security in this period is two-fold: making sense of the global security agenda and its attendant politics; and locating Africa’s empirical realities and emerging innovations within a global agenda that is not particularly sensitive to the context.

Maxi Schoeman was part of a small, distinctive group of African scholars who sought to make sense of this interaction between African and global security dynamics. She is one of a very small group of South African scholars of her time who successfully crossed the intellectual borders between South Africa and the rest of Africa and into the global space. In this article we attempt to situate Schoeman’s contributions to African regional security discourse in a global context and reflect on how she navigated the duality of an International Relations (IR) scholar operating
within an African security reality and how, in the process, she challenged some of the assumptions of classical IR.

In the first part of the article we discuss Schoeman’s views about African security in a global context. Part two focuses on Schoeman’s engagement with key concepts and themes at the core of security discourse. Part three looks at her works on South Africa’s engagement on the African continent. In the conclusion, we reflect on the outcomes of the duality of Schoeman’s scholarship, and her navigation of the duality of African security and global agendas.

**Regional and global interaction: Africa in a global context**

In the past two decades the nature of Africa’s engagement with the world and the world’s engagement with Africa on the question of security has been underpinned by conflicting interpretations. The strange symbiosis that has underlined this relationship in the past three decades has no doubt been shaped by historical antecedents of colonialism and Cold War politics that severely impacted Africa.

With Africa often seeing the global powers as complicit in its security dilemma, and while the outside world perceives Africa as a burden and (more recently) a potential threat to global stability, several paradoxes have persisted.

The sense of abandonment from the international community when some African conflicts degenerated into chaos at the end of the Cold War in places such as Liberia and Sierra Leone produced a discourse about Africa finding solutions to its own problems. Believing that, in a new dispensation in which Africa was no longer relevant in the strategic considerations of global superpowers, the region would wait in vain for external assistance and intervention in its deadly conflicts and resulting humanitarian tragedies, calls for African solutions became rife.

Indeed, it took a regional economic body, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to intervene to establish order in Liberia and Sierra Leone, where civil conflicts had degenerated into the collapse of central authorities. This was unprecedented anywhere in the world.¹ The UN only emerged as an actor in those settings after the initial establishment of order.²

But this argument for self-reliance, which was later dubbed ‘African solutions to African problems’, persisted largely because of the fear of the world abandoning Africa in times of great need. Even in places and situations where the global community intervened through the deployment of UN peace operations, the UN quickly lost credibility, in part because it adopted approaches – including that of traditional peacekeeping with a principle of minimal use of force only as a last resort – that were no longer relevant for the time and in places like Somalia and Rwanda.

What ‘African solutions to African problems’ would mean in reality had been debated and contested from the start. It was not just about deploying Africa’s own peace operations. It was also about global institutions and actors soliciting
African responses to situations on the continent even when external actors were responding.

Africans argued strongly that UN operations in Africa must be African-led. Conceptually and practically, African solutions challenged established norms such as non-intervention in the internal affairs of states and freed the continent from the perceived shackles of a global order that was no longer relevant to its realities. It was the precursor for a re-thinking of the Treaty of ECOWAS and later, the continental organisation, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) – with both embedding the right of intervention in member states in exceptional circumstances. In essence, Africa set the scene and an initial path towards establishing norms that were later packaged as ‘responsibility to protect’ (R2P).

The instrumentalisation or repackaging of African innovations in norm setting and practice in regional peace operations later became evident in the evolutions of the ‘African solutions’ discourse. Before long, global actors, weary of the endless burden of contributing to the ‘bottomless pit’ of African conflicts, began to argue that Africa should be left alone to solve its own problems.

The concerns underpinning such arguments were not simply financial. The fatalities recorded in peace operations in Africa were a real concern to potential troop-contributing countries, which would find it difficult to explain the loss of any number of their personnel to their electorates. Indeed, the argument to develop African capacity for peacekeeping has been seen to reinforce this view.

There are now strong voices in Africa against this new interpretation of African solutions. Fearing that this is a ploy to abandon African countries, they argue that conflict in Africa is not an African problem but a global problem. It should not be up to Africans alone to contribute people and money to peace efforts in Africa. The need for burden sharing in terms of both financial resources and personnel has been underscored.

As such, a strange symbiosis has persisted between Africa and the world that is not mutually beneficial but commensalistic at best – with the global powers benefitting more while Africa is neither helped nor harmed. As Adebajo argued, Africa contributes the blood for peace operations, while the world contributes financial resources.³

Schoeman’s contribution to this debate was clear from the start. The need to pay attention to the international state system, the way power is distributed within that system and in particular the role of national interest, which she describes as
‘marvellously ambiguous’, is well articulated in her work. After all, notwithstanding all the contestation against the state in regions such as Africa, the state has persisted and remains the most prominent and legitimate unit of engagement in the international arena.

Schoeman well understood the context of the 1990s that informed the argument for African solutions to African problems. But she worried that any attempt to detach Africa from the collective security framework of the UN would further marginalise the continent. She argued convincingly, from the start, that Africa deserves UN attention; it was not only the former Yugoslavia that should have a privileged status.

Rather than developing the capacity of African military personnel for intra-Africa peacekeeping, she argued, African regional focus should be to develop this capacity for contribution to peacekeeping globally. And the internal capacity of regional institutions should primarily focus on early warning and preventive diplomacy. This was, however, not sufficient. The restructuring of the UN Security Council in terms of expanding its membership and within that, African representation in its permanent membership, is identified by Schoeman as a necessity in all of this.

Schoeman understood the context of the 1990s that informed the argument for African solutions to African problems

The argument made, then, is that the UN should retain primacy in global security as a senior partner, including on the African continent. This is founded on Schoeman’s understanding of and support for human security and the ‘ideals and principles of collective security which … comprise all members of the international community – be these states or regions or people and be it as protectors or protected.’

In this view, ‘security is indivisible’ and ‘the UN is not something separate from Africa and its various regional organisations, the UN belongs to all, and all are … responsible for the maintenance of peace and security everywhere.’

Importantly, Africa’s responsibility is not seen as limited to the African continent here. For example, the building of peacekeeping capabilities should be done not only for deployment on the continent but globally as well. In addition to this, the UN is seen as an important institution in the socialisation of values and practices that promote human security, and Africa should not be seen as exempt from this due to misconceptions of exceptionalism.

On a more pragmatic level, the material, logistical and financial capacity of regional organisations to take primary responsibility for regional security is questioned. Calls for increased subsidiarity, regional responsibility and ‘African solutions to African problems’ ‘should be realistic.’ With regard to the Southern African
Development Community (SADC), and especially the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) case, Schoeman argues the following:

In brief, what limits regionalization in the security domain is perhaps a too ambitious security agenda (though the problems warrant an ambitious management approach), and in order to implement the agenda, too much political power may be granted to one or more members, to the exclusion and subordination of others. Inevitably, this leads to friction and mistrust between members and resentment of bigger powers or, more specifically, South Africa as ‘regional hegemon’.13

Schoeman also challenges the notion that regional interventions are more legitimate simply by virtue of being regional, and argues that illegitimate regional interventions may lead to a rejection of external interventions as a whole.14 An argument is made against the ‘romanticisation’ of regional interventions.15 While Schoeman acknowledges the mistakes made by the international community in the 1990s in dealing with the African continent and the lack of legitimacy driving these calls for ‘African solutions’, she and Muller point out that regional organisations are ‘not necessarily more democratic, representative or just than the [UN] Security Council’.16

All this does not mean that Schoeman is opposed to building regional capacity and involvement in peace and security efforts. She noted, at the time, a new trend of ‘speaking with one voice’ on the global stage and its advantages for advocating Africa’s international position and ‘fostering a collective identity’.17

According to Schoeman, Africa, despite its heterogeneity, retains more commonalities internally than with the rest of the South, and houses some sense of an African identity.18 As such, she argued, Africa needs to identify and place key opportunities on the international agenda and then ‘negotiate from a position of strength, based on strategic coalitions and alliances founded on a thorough knowledge of the subject matter and a clear understanding of what is to be achieved to promote an African Renaissance.’19

Thus, Schoeman staked her position about the place of African security in relation to the world very early on in the debate advocating for Africa’s finding its voice in a universal system. However, she underscored the need to restructure the system to ensure that Africa had its rightful place at the table of global security decision-making while also contributing its fair share to addressing security challenges wherever they may occur.

In so doing, she straddled an African regional security landscape evolving within a global context. This is a pragmatic approach. There are, of course, implications for how that worldview ensures the relevance and consistency of a response framework in Africa. Schoeman has responded to this challenge with a narrative that connects her contribution to this discourse conceptually and operationally.
African regionalism within global security discourses

Broadly, Schoeman was writing within a discipline that found itself grappling with the continued relevance of its dominant theory of realism amid challengers such as liberalism, critical theory and critical security studies, which could be viewed as more representative of a changing world. At the same time, Africa’s place in the discipline was relegated to one of ‘nuisance potential’, in which the thinking and realities emerging from the continent were not seen as important contributions or challenges to IR theory but rather as ‘crises’ that ‘[could] lead to serious consequences in terms of policy for Western nations.’

African thinking, however, engaged with global discourses to influence and develop international norms, concepts and ideas and its realities posed important questions to assumed and accepted knowledge on issues of statehood, regions and security. The 1990s saw a further shift in security and IR thinking. The end of the Cold War provided the opportunity for new and previously marginalised thinking to emerge. Scholars and practitioners globally began to seriously question traditional notions of statehood, security and development. Many of these schools of thought reached their height in the 2000s, particularly the concept of human security and the field of regionalism. Both of these challenged the accepted conceptualisation of the state and sovereignty.

The human security paradigm initially emerged from the policy world, particularly the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and Canadian policy initiatives. This growing paradigm pushed by global and international decision makers would come into conflict with a strong focus on regime security that persisted on the African continent. The 1990s and 2000s also saw a wave of regionalism, what some refer to as a ‘new regionalism’. One of the most dominant concepts that emerged from this was Adler and Barnett’s ‘security communities’. Schoeman’s work reflects many of these debates and illustrates how these conceptual influences filtered into African regional dynamics, but also how African realities challenged some of these narratives. The empirical evidence emerging from Africa demonstrated the weaknesses or insufficiencies of some of these concepts, particularly in implementing policies inspired by them.

Schoeman does not use any one concept, theory or approach in a sweeping manner, but rather demonstrates how one can engage such conceptual influences without allowing them to dominate the conceptual space or overwhelm or restrict our understanding of the reality of events on the continent.
A good starting point is to evaluate Schoeman’s reading of the state on the African continent. She does not adhere solely to the realist paradigm of IR in which the state is the primary unit of analysis and sole referent object. At the same time, she notes the ‘enduring’ nature of the state-based international system, and her work is conscious of the important role that the state continues to play in African politics.\textsuperscript{26}

She highlights the contradictions and opportunities for bridging state and sovereignty-based paradigms with concepts of collective and human security. She states that collective security requires a ‘softening’ of the once indisputable principles of sovereignty and non-intervention.\textsuperscript{27}

African states, naturally, did not surrender their sovereignty fully or immediately. The effort to maintain sovereignty within regional organisations hindered regional institutionalisation, making it easier for stronger states to take a hegemonic stance and use these organisations for their own purposes.\textsuperscript{28} Yet, the tendency towards preserving hard sovereignty principles, despite official rhetoric contradicting this, is noted while also commending the significant (albeit small) steps made towards enabling criticism between African states.\textsuperscript{29}

Of particular significance was the AU’s inclusion of a right to intervene in its Constitutive Act.\textsuperscript{30} In combination with Kofi Annan’s calls for the international community to take greater responsibility for protecting civilians against genocide, this provided the foundation for a movement towards the R2P norm.\textsuperscript{31}

This ‘right to intervene’ was a practical response to the disastrous consequences of the Rwandan genocide and the failure of the international community to intervene, and was first implemented in Burundi and Darfur in 2003.\textsuperscript{32} Similarly, the OAU and later the AU sought to strengthen its legal obligations to sanction against unconstitutional changes of government, although this was unevenly implemented.\textsuperscript{33}

In this way, Africa did not act as a simple consumer of the narratives re-framing statehood or the human security concept, which moved the referent object from state to people, but pioneered some of the norms and practical responses to the global challenges of civil war and human rights violations.

In addition to this re-evaluation of state sovereignty in an increasingly globalised world, studies on African security were flooded with the widely recognised (in policy circles) concept of human security, stemming from the rapidly growing human development approach.\textsuperscript{34} This provided a framework and rationale for the questioning and revisiting of absolute sovereignty discussed above.\textsuperscript{35}

When analysing regional security, Muller and Schoeman appear to be driven by this underlying paradigm.\textsuperscript{36} They primarily question ‘whose security’ is being protected and argue that, ‘[f]or many ordinary southern Africans …, the idea of SADC as a provider of regional security remains a myth [but] their leaders … would probably perceive the organisation’s ability to provide security as an increasing reality.’\textsuperscript{37}
Linked to the question of sovereignty, they interrogate whether an organisation like SADC, which has a ‘predisposition to focus on military and political security’ and is founded on principles of sovereignty and non-intervention, has the capacity to protect human security in the region.\(^{38}\) There was and remains a tension in Africa between the realities that challenge traditional notions of security and statehood and the stubborn persistence of the state and ‘traditional imperatives of state interests, power, military force and geopolitical instability.’\(^{39}\)

Such questions have deepened how regional projects have progressed, and at times stalled, on the continent. Whose regional security is protected? The understanding of the region varies when viewed from the perspective of the traditional state, as most official efforts at regionalisation do, as opposed to the perspective of the people. Cross-border communities, economies and conflict complexes define the reality of many Africans’ daily lives.

Regional security paradigms need to acknowledge this reality that exists apart from the state and its ability to fuel insecurity or provide opportunities for peace. In addition, the ability to distinguish between elite concerns and people-focused needs in regional initiatives, as Schoeman and Muller do, is ever more important, not only on the continent but also globally.\(^{40}\) One need only look at the case of Brexit to see the gap between political aspirations instigating the process and the everyday concerns that have fuelled it.\(^{41}\)

Schoeman also confronts the global knowledge structures behind the regionalisation wave. The global trend towards regionalisation at the time of writing was observed with some caution by Schoeman.\(^{42}\) She was sceptical of transplanting concepts ‘from one location to another, in terms of both space and time,’ including the push for a regionalisation process driven by neoliberal economic thought, international monetary institutions and the European experience.\(^{43}\)

Some of this caution is well founded. Over the last few years, Africa has experimented with various forms of regional security initiatives, some more successful than others. While some regionalisation processes have been donor-driven with a liberal agenda and/or are reliant on the European model, there have been some important initiatives stemming from African realities.\(^{44}\)

For example, the Panel of the Wise and the African Peer Review Mechanism, as much as they have faced implementation challenges, represent independent responses to African challenges and demonstrate the continent’s ability for policy innovation rather than a mere consumer of global policies and concepts. The fact that many of these have been co-opted through donor politics and global
hierarchies notwithstanding, this remains important. Of course, ideas must be implementable. This challenge is discussed further below.

Another challenge is that of identifying regions, as Schoeman identified. African regions are not fixed or as easily discernible as implied by policies that carved up the continent into the five regions of Southern, Eastern, Western, Central and Northern Africa.

Southern Africa, for example, and SADC’s degree of ‘regionness’, shifts according to changing situations, and the organisation can be characterised as having ‘regions within regions’. While global and continental policies rely on such distinctions, regions are in fact much more fluid and not easily demarcated according to states. The Great Lakes region, for example, straddles Eastern and Central Africa (and includes a SADC country), but its political, economic and social reality constitutes a region in itself.

A dominant concept underpinning global regionalisation was that of security communities. Schoeman highlights the challenges of the security community as conceptualised by Adler and Barnett. In particular, she points out its state-centric nature and the difficulty of adapting such a concept to a continent facing intra-state conflicts and seeking to include civil society in its community-building endeavours; its focus on negative peace; and its association with liberal peace and liberal economics.

Regionalisation as a whole is based on certain assumptions regarding globalisation and liberal economic policy as the better development path that Schoeman seeks to challenge.

When the AU was first established, Schoeman wrote an article titled ‘Imagining a community: the African Union as an emerging security community’. In this article she identifies several ‘precipitating conditions’ for Africa’s emergence as a potential security community, including an increased awareness of mutual problems, stemming from a re-interpretation of social reality, that require cooperation.

She goes on to evaluate Africa’s ongoing and potential development into a security community, while also questioning the concept’s relevance to the African context. Her argument concludes that Africa remains in the early stages of a nascent security community, with ‘some of the characteristics of an ascendant security community.

One of the key components of a security community is a shared identity. But a shared identity, which Schoeman views as present in Africa, does not necessarily translate into mutual trust and ‘good intentions do not necessarily translate into good governance’. This is perhaps one of the most prevalent themes in Schoeman’s work on regional security – the gap between policy and reality, what she refers to as the ‘implementation gap’ or the difference between official accounts and operational realities.
Despite her general view that the AU represented a step forward for the security of African peoples, she did warn of a potential gap between the AU’s stated vision and the behaviour of member states.\textsuperscript{59} In particular, she pointed to contradictions in AU policies and statutory documents between the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention, on the one hand, and economic integration and the right to intervene, on the other.\textsuperscript{60} So, while the establishment of the AU was viewed as a genuine effort on the part of elites to bridge the ‘implementation gap’, Schoeman maintained that the true test of the AU would be its ability to socialise its members.\textsuperscript{61} Unfortunately, this proved challenging, as the AU’s vision not only appears to have dimmed in the face of implementation challenges but also suffers from “the creeping loss of African influence over its own operational affairs.”\textsuperscript{62}

Similarly, Muller and Schoeman’s analysis of SADC and its interventions in the DRC and Lesotho discusses the differences between official accounts of and justifications for intervention versus operational experiences that suggest a significant degree of national interest playing a role.\textsuperscript{63} They also point to the gap between the image of unity that is presented and the reality of a highly divided regional organisation and, as with the AU, the difficulties in implementing the policies of these regional organisations.\textsuperscript{64}

Schoeman also notes several opportunities and advantages to regional intervention and regional security organisations. For example, the shift away from a hard stance on solidarity and sovereignty is identified as an indication of “the possibility of a new political culture.”\textsuperscript{65}

In its early days the AU and its security architecture showed promising signs of a shift in security thinking and potentially practice.\textsuperscript{66} Similarly with SADC, writing in 2001, she notes how, despite shortcomings and significant challenges, the simple fact of an attempt to form an organisation and ‘find common ground’ is a milestone ‘compared with the state of play a mere decade ago.’\textsuperscript{67}

However, she is highly aware of how contextual factors influence the development and efficacy of regional interventions.\textsuperscript{68} SADC’s intervention in Lesotho is characterised as a success, for example, but due to very specific conditions (e.g. the relative weakness of Lesotho as a state, its support of regional intervention and the relatively ‘contained’ conflict in comparison to others like the DRC).\textsuperscript{69} In fact, the case of Lesotho is seen as an example of where national interest and human security can coincide.\textsuperscript{70}

**Regional security: South Africa and Southern Africa**

In understanding the complexities of regional dynamics on the continent, it is useful to study Southern Africa, specifically SADC, and South Africa, for two reasons. First, SADC was one of the earliest regional organisations to pursue significant regional security initiatives.\textsuperscript{71} As such, its experiments, some successful and some
less so, in regional security are worthy of interrogation. Second, South Africa’s efforts to place itself as a regional and continental leader demonstrate many of the opportunities and tensions between human security and national security.

Southern Africa already had a long history of regional economic cooperation and integration through the Southern African Customs Union and the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). With the end of apartheid, the raison d’être for much of this cooperation shifted, and SADC began to look towards providing regional security in addition to economic integration and development. This intent is best reflected in the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security, launched as early as 1996. However, regional dynamics were characterised by divisions and opposing forces and visions for the organisation and the region as whole, which have complicated SADC’s ability to provide regional security, particularly for the people of Southern Africa.

SADC began to look towards providing regional security in addition to economic integration and development.

SADC appears to be ‘carved … into spheres of influence.’ The deep historical and political divisions in the Southern African region, previously hidden by the united efforts against apartheid, are reflected in different approaches to conflict resolution (peaceful versus military intervention) and common values (democratic versus authoritarian tendencies).

With regard to differing and challenging internal politics, Schoeman argues that ‘a lack of a democratic culture “at home” does not bode well for cooperation at a supranational level.’ It is, however, crucially noted that these divisions are ‘fluid and context driven.’ But political configurations ‘determined by personal power and historical relations,’ along with efforts to compromise, in the end resulted in a weakened and less effective organisation.

For example, Muller and Schoeman’s analysis of SADC’s interventions in Lesotho and the DRC results in a conclusion that SADC is a “sovereignty-boosting” form of regional governance’ with a degree of ‘regional shadow governance’ in the case of the DRC. Schoeman had previously argued that in SADC’s early years the organisation was not an attempt at supranational government but rather an effort to ‘use regionalisation in order to promote the survival of individual states’ in the face of globalisation and internal challenges.

Schoeman and Muller also show that ‘sovereignty boosting’ can be a form of regime protection. The organisation is seen as an instrument used by member states to pursue their own national, regime or elite interests. As Schoeman states in an earlier article:
National interest, a marvellously ambiguous term covering many sins, therefore becomes the yardstick in terms of which governments make decisions, formulate policy and justify their actions.83

At the same time, South Africa was balancing its national, regional, continental and global obligations and interests. Early on, Schoeman questioned South Africa’s regional legitimacy with regard to the country’s efforts to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council.84

South Africa’s claims to ‘great power status’ is seen as dependent on its standing as a regional leader that acts as a ‘regional manager and protector’ and a voice for Africa in global forums.85 The acceptance of South Africa as a regional leader is by no means uncontested (discussed further below) and the state often finds itself caught between global, regional and national considerations.86

South Africa’s lack of legitimacy to act on behalf of the continent on the international stage without consultation with other actors (e.g. the AU) reduces its international standing, and on the flip-side, South Africa’s actions at the UN, driven by considerations of international politics, reduce its legitimacy in the region.87

The South African state often finds itself caught between global, regional and national considerations

South Africa has historically sought to position itself as a leading African state.88 Despite some successes in this endeavour, the country’s legitimacy and acceptance as a leader is contested and suffers a perception and trust crisis on the continent and at the AU.89 Thabo Mbeki’s role in promoting and institutionalising South Africa’s leadership and African regionalism through his philosophy of the African Renaissance is noted, which was followed by a shift towards national interests in later years and after a change in administration.90

While the African Renaissance does not dominate debate as a movement in itself anymore, many of its aims have lived on in other iterations beyond the discourse itself. Two key components of the African Renaissance are its questioning of the state system and its promotion of regionalisation and cross-boundary cooperation, which is by no means resolved.91

The African Renaissance also provided further impetus for South–South relationships, as reflected in South African foreign policy.92 This advances cross-regional relationships that have been growing as emerging powers continue to insert themselves into the global space and challenge pre-existing global hierarchies.

Despite South Africa’s positioning as a bridge or gateway to the African continent, it has found itself struggling to balance its stated principles, national interest and regional obligations.93 Also, the foundations of South Africa’s claim to leadership are
questioned and challenged. The first, that its history of a peaceful transition gives it special status, is contradicted in its uneven commitment to human rights principles internationally. Second, South Africa’s expectation that its economic power gives it weight is weakened when one examines its inability to apply pressure on Zimbabwe.

Schoeman engages South Africa’s challenges with its hegemonic or leadership role in many ways, but is partially summarised by the following statement:

[South Africa] will have to learn how to exercise leadership qualities and capacity through consultation, rather than unilateral efforts at ‘assisting’ its African partners – a sentiment easily interpreted as being paternalistic, pedantic, and patronizing and not becoming to a relative ‘newcomer’ to the African community in political terms.

**Conclusion**

Schoeman’s work on regional security serves as an example of thoughtful and nuanced scholarship in a field rife with tensions. These tensions include the ongoing battle between realism, state-centrism and non-interventionism, on the one hand, and collective security, human security and interventionism, on the other. It occurs within a context of constant tension between the global and regional, the universal and the African.

Schoeman navigates the conceptual pitfalls in the literature, the theoretical and political tensions between the global and the African, and the complexities of the lived realities of those on the continent with a grace and clarity of position that is often lacking in peace and security literature. She examines the continent from a position that prioritises its empirical reality without isolating the region from its global role and influences. Her engagement with the conceptual, in terms of statehood, human security, and regional security demonstrates her perspective as an African academic who is able to use theories and concepts within their academic and historical context and challenge them based on her own context.

In this way, Schoeman confronts the discipline of IR, which has tended to neglect the African experience, with a measured, contextualised and evidence-based scholarship that indicates the continent is a context worth studying, not only for its examples of the ‘exceptional’ or ‘problematic’ but also for the space it occupies within the global context and the conceptual contributions it holds. As such, she provides emerging scholars and practitioners within the field with two key lessons.

First, her use of the empirical with the conceptual serves as an example of how to bridge the gap between the abstract and the real, and that tensions need not be ignored but should rather be a signal for further inquiry. Second, Schoeman’s scholarship, even when limited to case studies, remains cognisant of the global context, both conceptually and empirically. Scholars and practitioners should
avoid the figurative ‘blinkers’ that result in de-contextualised, navel-gazing scholarship that fails to consider the constant interchange between ideas and political experiences.

Notes


5 Ibid., 76.


7 Ibid., 168.

8 Ibid., 171–2.


38 Ibid., 176.

43 Ibid.


45 Ibid., 89.


50 Ibid., 4.


53 Ibid., 9–11.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., 20.


60 Ibid.

61 Ibid., 17.


64 Ibid.


69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.


74 Ibid., 185.


79 Ibid., 175, 183.


84 Ibid., 77.


86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.


92 Ibid.


94 Ibid.

95 Ibid.

The discipline of International Relations was Maxi Schoeman’s second field of study and led to her second professional career, academia. After her appointment as junior lecturer in Politics at the former Rand Afrikaans University in 1990, she made rapid progress through the ranks. Ten years later Maxi became professor and head of the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Pretoria (UP). As I often reminded her, she had then become one of South Africa’s highest political scientists: Maxi held sway from an office located on the 21st floor of the university’s Humanities Building!

There is a true word in the jest. Hers was a prestigious position at UP, and the department had played a pioneering role (together with Wits University) in establishing and developing International Relations as a discipline in its own right in South Africa. With Maxi at the helm, that ‘inheritance’ was in safe hands and the department remained an eminent centre of learning in International Relations and Political Sciences more generally.

But more than serving and shaping her academic discipline, Maxi has during her time at UP provided true intellectual leadership. She led the Department of Political Sciences until early 2016, after which she became Deputy Dean: Postgraduate Students. Maxi is due to retire at the end of 2019.

While this monograph pays tribute to her scholarly contributions, notably her published work, Prof. Schoeman deserves recognition from her peers for the other facets of her intellectual leadership too.

In his book *Intellectual leadership in higher education: renewing the role of the university professor*, Bruce Macfarlane distinguishes four professorial duties or roles that constitute intellectual leadership. The first, that of mentor, means ‘helping people realize their own potential,’ such as advising junior colleagues on career development and publication outlets. As a mentor, a professor is also expected to act as a ‘talent spotter’ and, of course, provide supervision to postgraduate students. Maxi’s colleagues and students at UP can provide ample evidence of her outstanding mentorship.
The second duty is being ‘a guardian of academic standards and associated values.’ Macfarlane calls it a professor’s ‘good citizen role’, part of which is to ensure that ‘the next generation of academics are inculcated with an appropriate set of values and academic standards inherent to the discipline.’ A person of utmost integrity and unwavering commitment to sound academic standards, Maxi has been an exemplary academic guardian.

Maxi equally led by example in assuming the third role of enabler or facilitator. This is essentially about ‘collaborative networking’ that involves access to scholarly networks, engaging in academic collaboration and creating opportunities for others to conduct research. She has been an active member of, among other organisations, the South African Institute of International Affairs, Foundation for Global Dialogue, Institute for Security Studies, International Crisis Group, International Peace Research Foundation and African Peace Network.

A person of utmost integrity and unwavering commitment to academic standards, Maxi has been an exemplary academic guardian.

Extensive conference participation nationally and internationally (in Russia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Denmark, Sweden, Britain, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, China, South Korea, Senegal, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Lesotho, among other countries) has contributed to her academic network, as did teamwork and collaboration with other researchers and research institutions locally and abroad. Maxi’s membership of the editorial boards of several academic journals in South Africa and overseas bears further testimony to her scholarly connections.

The professor as ambassador, in the fourth place, represents the university’s interests nationally and internationally to raise its profile and promote its reputation. Also in this role Maxi has served UP with singular distinction, in both her previous and current capacities.

Macfarlane concludes his discussion of the four professorial duties with a consideration of the importance of legacy. Here he has in mind a professor’s intellectual work or associated achievements ‘as they are remembered and continue to have an impact on thinking or practice.’ A legacy has both tangible and intangible elements. The latter legacy ‘might be the influence that someone has had as a mentor on the intellectual thinking of another scholar.’ Maxi’s selfless mentorship of colleagues and students, mentioned earlier, is bound to be one of her intangible legacies.

A tangible legacy could refer to a professor’s body of research or concepts, theories or arguments. And this brings us back to Maxi’s publications, to her peers the most visible and tangible measurement of her scholarship in International Relations.
Among the themes she has covered in her writings are the meaning of statehood, sovereignty and non-intervention in contemporary international politics; human security; collective security; regional security; security communities; regionalism; and regional institutions. In nearly all these issues Maxi has placed the focus on Africa, often questioning the applicability of foreign (mainly Western) perspectives of the African situation.

Another main area of Maxi’s research, with obvious links to several of the themes just identified, concerns South African foreign policy. Widely acknowledged for her expertise in this domain, Maxi has considered such questions as the impact of the country’s dual identity as an African country and an emerging power on its international relations; its claims to regional and continental leadership or hegemony; the use of South Africa’s defence force as an instrument of foreign policy; the Republic’s engagement in peacekeeping operations in Africa; and its pursuit of global summity.

When dealing with these serious issues, Maxi could see the irony involved at times and neatly captured such situations in some of the titles of her writings: ‘A foreign policy to die for: South Africa’s response to the Nigerian crisis’; ‘The hegemon that wasn’t: South Africa’s policy towards Zimbabwe’; and ‘South Africa in Africa: behemoth, hegemon, partner or “just another kid on the block”?’ (I wonder whether Maxi would agree that, given state capture, corruption, violent crime and xenophobia, the normal kid on the block has become not only naughty but nasty?)

More seriously, Maxi was no passive paradigm-taker in her scholarly inquiries, but rather a paradigm-shaker and -mover. In one such domain Chris Alden (in his contribution to this volume) heard ‘Maxi’s voice ringing out loud and clear on the assumptions of the prevailing scholarship on South African foreign policy and challenging it through detailed research and reflection.’

In similar vein ‘Funmi Olonisakin observes that Maxi does not apply any single concept, theory or approach in a sweeping fashion, ‘but rather demonstrates how one can engage such conceptual influences without allowing them to dominate the conceptual space or overwhelm or restrict our understanding of the reality of events on the continent.’

Garth le Pere in turn attributes much of the ‘rich ferment in security studies’ in South Africa – regarding theoretical, normative and empirical aspects – to Maxi’s ‘innovative and creative contributions.’ What gives her a ‘unique position in this community of thinkers,’ according to Le Pere, is Maxi’s ability ‘to marry her rigorous and logically consistent theoretical interests and concerns with an enduring and meaningful humanist perspective that never lost sight of the fact that security has a profoundly people-centred dimension.’

In problematising the state in Africa in the 21st century, Maxi raises pertinent questions about the institutions required by the state and asks whether African
countries have the capacity to address human security and development needs, Sandy Africa points out.

Linked to her scholarly writings, Maxi also deserves credit for her ‘discursive interventions’. One example cited by Le Pere involves the South African Association of Political Studies (SAAPS), in which Maxi played a prominent role. The discursive intervention concerned the search ‘for uniquely South African-inspired forms of enquiry’ when it comes to the ‘challenging interface between domestic and foreign policy’ more broadly.

In Alden’s words, ‘Maxi has been a singularly active and supportive figure in all key institutions that shaped the academic study of the discipline [International Relations] in South Africa.’ These engagements speak to Maxi’s professorial roles as facilitator (à la networker) and mentor.

Maxi’s academic pursuits have gone beyond the basic scholarly task of analysis to offering advice and engaging in advocacy. In Alden’s article mention is made of Maxi’s prominent voice in the broad consultative process the Mandela government had initiated on the role of the security establishment in the new South Africa. More formally, Maxi served on the South African Council on International Relations, a state-founded consultative and advisory forum on the country’s foreign policy.

In sum, as the articles in this monograph make plain, Maxi’s published work has been conceptually, paradigmatically and empirically enriching in each of her chosen fields of inquiry. More than that, she has provided commendable intellectual leadership. This dual achievement is quite rare among academics, certainly among International Relations types in South Africa.

When Maxi reaches the formal end of her academic career, it will hopefully not be the end of her scholarly writing. Jakkie Cilliers has helpfully suggested that she owes ‘her many admirers, colleagues, current and former students’ a new study on learning the lessons from the past in shaping South Africa’s international orientation under President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Whereas Cilliers might have foreign lessons in mind, there have lately been some sobering domestic developments that South African foreign policymakers should heed. I’m sure Maxi still has a lot to say about the domestic sources of South Africa’s foreign policy and indeed about other issues in the country’s international relations. She, moreover, has the gravitas to make politicians and bureaucrats take her insights seriously.

Note
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The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) partners to build knowledge and skills that secure Africa’s future. The ISS is an African non-profit with offices in South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia and Senegal. Using its networks and influence, the ISS provides timely and credible policy research, practical training and technical assistance to governments and civil society.

About the University of Pretoria

The University of Pretoria is a leading research-intensive university in Africa that is recognised internationally for its quality, relevance and impact. The Faculty of Humanities is one of the oldest in South Africa and is an intellectual home of the liberal arts. Its academic curricula, research activities and community engagement initiatives not only address the diverse needs of local communities, but also help shape and drive international endeavours and debates.

About this monograph

Maxi Schoeman is very much a scholar, teacher and leader without much honour in her own profession. To me, she has been a teacher, friend and mentor. The undiscovered country: essays in honour of Maxi Schoeman is a generous-spirited and cheerful swansong to someone who is well deserving of such an honour. There are many of us who have crossed Maxi’s path in various ways over the years who have been influenced in one way or another by her person, warmth, intellect and political insights. This collection makes important contributions to the discipline – and, as is appropriate, builds on Schoeman’s own insights. The essays represent a rich repertoire of analysis written with clarity, plain humanity and passion in a fitting tribute to Maxi on the occasion of her 65th birthday.

Ambassador Kingsley Makhubela

Acknowledgements

This monograph is funded by the University of Pretoria’s Faculty of Humanities and the Hanns Seidel Foundation. The ISS is also grateful for support from the members of the ISS Partnership Forum: the Hanns Seidel Foundation, the European Union and the governments of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the US.