SADC as a Peace and Security Actor since its Inception in the Region

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Abstract: *The study critically assessed the Southern African Development Community (SADC), currently constituting 15 member countries, as an actor of peace and security in the region since its inception in 1992. Relevant literature was critically analysed and existing models of conflict transformation for buttressing all forms of instability were appraised. The study adopted secondary data collection method as an approach. The findings showed that SADC,faced with more internal challenges than external challenges, led to the regional integration. Leading factors in the lack of peace and security were; armed conflict, widening-socioeconomic disparities, competing over scarce resources, legacy of violence, power struggle, exploitation of ethnic groups by the elite and poor governance among others. Consequently, instability caused missing of lives, refugees and displaced persons, anti-personal landmines, economic losses, high social costs, conflict induced changes in women's gender roles and post-conflict (humanitarian, political, economic and social) reconstruction. SADC envisioned peace and security through adopted Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO). Though achievements were experienced they were tainted with unattended weaknesses and challenges.*

Keywords: Southern African Development Community (SADC), conflict, conflict transformation, peace and security

1. Introduction

In Southern African Region (SAR), intra- to inter-state conflicts affect social, cultural, economic, political development wellbeing of the majority. The instability stretches from colonialism to post-colonialism between 1960s up to 2000s. Mass violence is experienced in nearly every nation despite those who attained independence. Since political instability is the worst enemy of peace and development in every dimension of life, SADC was committed and accredited to be devoted to regional integration.

SADC emerged from Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) (1980-1992), officially instituted in 1992 in Windhoek, Namibia. The Article submits that origins has external and internal influences.However, the challenges posed by instability had cost on human, political, economic, ecological, social, cultural, psychological and spiritualwellbeing. The crisis in the region pushed the regional bloc's intervention, envisioned to "promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient productive systems, deeper co-operation and integration, good governance, and durable peace and security, so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy" [1].The Regional Body is rated as a peace and security actor through conflict mediation, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping.

In order to ensure peace and security in the region,in 2001, SADC established the Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO) I in Blantyre, Malawi. The Regional Bodythen revised SIPO (II) in 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia, with the aim of fostering:(i) solidarity, peace and security; (ii) human rights, democracy and rule of law; (iii) equity, balance and mutual benefits; and (iv) peaceful settlements of disputes. While it may be argued that SADC made little successes in its role due to some challenges, however,it cannot be heralded that it has done nothing.

It is against this background that the study critically analysed SADC as a peace and security actor since its inception in the region**.** The Article is guided by four critical questions; which are the opportunities for the origins of SADC? What were the root causes contrary to peace and security in the SAR? What were the effects of instability within the SADC? How did SADC address the challenges against peace and security in its region? Which were the challenges and weaknesses encountered by the SADC during the work of fostering peace and security? Further to that Conflict Transformation Theory is the framework of this research as the article has special focus on peace and security dimension.

2. Literature Review

The creation of "SADC Organ was as a result of major threats to the security of people and states derive from internal rather than external" [2].It has been stated that Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe formed the SADCC towards economic liberation and integrated economic development. It was preceded by the Frontline States (FLS); (Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania) formed in the 1970s to support anti-colonial and anti-apartheid forces within the region. Namibia joined in 1990, South Africa in 1994, Mauritius in 1995, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Seychelles in 1997, and Madagascar in 2005 [3].

It has been submitted that origin of SADC was due to external pressures like globalisation, instability and security [4] while other school of thoughts [5] and [6]observe as it

was internally through geography, social and cultural context, colonial experience, alliance with Front line States (FLS) and some enemy enforcing apartheid regime in South Africa. Hence it was meant for political solidarity, economic cooperation and to stand against instability in South Africa which was economic stronghold of the Southern region. Accordingly, the Windhoek Treaty of1992 transformed SADCC to SADC [7], [8] and [9].The regional bloc came up with two frameworks for the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) for sound political, economic and corporate governance and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) responsible for peace and stability [10] and [11]. Both were launched in 2004 in Tanzania and Mauritius while in Windhoek, 2010 SIPO I was revised to SIPO II [12]. Outlined mission being, "The SADC mission is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient productive systems, deeper cooperation andintegration, good governance, and durable peace and security, so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy [13].

Theorists contend that Southern Africa is not immune from challenges that threaten peace and security. These are armed conflict, political crisis as well as lack of democracy and governance deficits [14], widening socio-economic disparities [15], competition over scarce resources, legacy of violence and the exploitation of ethnic, religious and other differences [16], colonialism, neo-colonialism, political factionalism and capture of the state by elites or ethnic group [17].

Instability as a result of political conflict or any factors yields more negative results than positive as [18], [9], [20] and [21]reflected that domestic crises leads to neighbourhood effect through migration of victims which then negatively impacts on the hosting nation for the refugees. In view of social scientists, political instability adversely affects economic growth [22],while [23]argues that it affects tourism industry attraction as well. Notably conflicts have both internal and external effects as they exacerbate missing lives, refugees and displaced persons, anti-personal landmines, economic losses, high social costs, conflict induced changes in women's gender roles and post-conflict (humanitarian, political, economic and social) reconstruction [24] and [25].

In order to fight against the chameleon type of challenges, [26] opine that SADC came up with legal documents for guidance, which are; Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation and Mutual Defence Pact. Suggestions specify that the agreements are meant to protect member states of which SADC established a number of institutions for smooth running of peace and security processes. These were SADC Standby Force (SSF) in line with African Union (AU) and Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Integrated the Southern African Regional Police Chief's Cooperating Organisation (SARPCCO) into Inter-state Defence and Security Council (ISDSC). The Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre (PRTC) is located in Harare Zimbabwe, Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC), SADC electoral advisory centre (SEAC) and SADC Mediation Unit (SMU) [27]. All these

became critical tools for the casessuch as of Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Madagascar and others. Southern Africa Regional Development Community [28], [29] and [30]. These methods and strategies were meant for peaceful resolution of conflictand management to be assured of sustainable peace and security. Simply, [31] asserts that the role of institutions through military threat, peace-making, peace-keeping and peace enforcement, conflict prevention, management and resolution, crime prevention, mediation, foreign policy approach as well as veneration of human rights is ideal for conflict transformation.

In the process of combating challenges, SADC was faced with other impediments which robed its effectiveness towards the goals.Other scholarly works assert that weaknesses could be of the then current chair who dictates the solution of the matter according to self-interests or political interests [32] and [33]. In the case of Zimbabwe, [34], [35] and [36] noted with concern the Mbeki's 'quiet diplomacy' over its crises which was prolonged until he left the office with no solution. The bloc also forfeited its credibility due to ineffective procedures in elections monitoring. From another perspective, the allocated committee is limited and slowed by home challenges as a result regional attention becomes secondary issue [37].It has also been deplored over the SADC Organ's fatigue on the crises of Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Democratic of Republic of Congo, Lesotho and Swaziland seemed as if the bloc had run out of ideas and approaches [38].One scholar holds challenges as division among member states themselves on being liberation fighters versus non-liberator fighters, difficult relationship with donors and International Co-operator Partners (ICP) which suffocated the regional budget, inconsistent security policy decision making in member state's conflicts and absence of codified common regional peace and security (CRPSP) framework [39].

Given the scenario of the crisis and dealing with it in the SADC region, intervention approach was through conflict transformation processes [40] asespoused by proponents such as Kriesberg (1989), Curle (1990), Galtung (1995), Lederach (1995) among others. "Conflict transformation is a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the constitution of violent conflicts" [41]. This is a significant part in the underpinning and guiding the practical intervention in conflict. However, in this study it has been used to inform, analyse and assess on the SADC's practices inintervening in regional conflicts. Accordingly, the conceptual framework embraces principal theories of transforming conflict applied by the SADC Organ which are conflict prevention (strategy for addressing latent conflict), conflict resolution (strategy of addressing open conflict finding not in an agreement to end violence), conflict management (strategy for addressing limit and avoid futureviolence) and conflict settlement (resolutions of some of the incompatible goals underlying it) [42].

3. Methodology

The study was carried out through secondary data collection[43], relied predominantly on internet based

sources such as relevant thesis, books, newspapers, journals, articles, reports prepared by research scholars and universities publications. However due care on reliability, suitability and adequacy of data was considered.

4. Findings

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

- SADC was established in 1992, and is currently made up of 15 member states.
- The SAR experienced more internal challenges than external which threatened peace and security.
- Identified causes of instability in the regional were as such; armed conflict, competing over scarce resources, power struggle, undemocratic governance, colonialism and neo-colonialism legacy of violence, political factionalism, and exploitation of ethnic, religious and other differences.
- SADC discovered that instability within the region negatively impacted on sustainable development towards social, economic, political, psychological and cultural dimensions of human life and the societies.
- The regional bloc objectives to promote peace and security in the region were through the protocol on politics, defence and security co-operation under SIPO.
- The SADC through methods and strategies, made some achievements to enforce conflict transformation.
- Although achievements were scored the study identified internal weaknesses and challenges as blow towards its vision.

5. Discussion of Findings

The discourse here is guided by the research findings in the literature review. The emergency of SADC since 1992 is currently constituted with 15 member states as in[44], [45] and 46. The integrating factors being externally fighting against apartheid in South Africa, legacy of colonialism and Neo-colonialism within the rest of SAR. Internally, the uniting cause was to fight for economic liberation and integrated economic development which were threatened by instability of peace and security the greatest enemy of sustainable peace and development in all diversities of human and societal dimensions. From the conflict transformation perspective the SADC envisioned to promote peace and security in the region.

Different scholars displayed causative threats for peace and security,[47], [48], [49], [50] and [51] observed that the region experienced instability characterised with armed conflicts such as in DRC and other states as the legacy from colonialism and Neo-Colonialism. Armed conflicts necessitated domestic crises as well as neighbourhood resulting in unplanned regional migration. Victims were in search of political, social and economic security. The challenge of undemocratic governance of other member states was coupled with power struggle; coup-d'état (Lesotho and Madagascar) and political factionalism (Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, DRC and Zimbabwe) as well as poor electoral processes (Zimbabwe and DRC). The

competing over scarce resources was both internal and externally in the case of DRC, South Africa and Zimbabwe among others. The perennial exploitation of ethnic by elite ethnicity, religious and other differences rampantly divided the communities leading to civil wars.

The study found out that the violation and absence of peace and security negatively impact on the institutional development; costing of human, economic, political, psychological, spiritual, social ecology. As attributed in [52] effects of instability in the region consequently influences poverty, economic inequality, food insecurity, energy shortages, trans-border crimes (smuggling of drugs and weapons), money laundering, illicit mining and poaching, vulnerability of national boarders, economic recession, unconstitutional change of government and poor management of natural disasters such as climate change. Refuging affects the recipient member states.

As discovered by [53], [54] and [55] since 1994' South Africa became a hostage of refuges from Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Lesotho and Botswana and Zimbabwe having the highest figure of around 3 million in SA and 40 000 in Botswana hence stressing the resources of the hosts. It was concluded that the hosting of foreign nationals in South Africa triggered xenophobia of 2008, 2015, 2016 and 2017. Refuging exposed female to sexual violence, risk of HIV/AIDS transmission and unwanted pregnancies and change gender roles due to absence of spouse. Other nations which were recipients being Tanzania, Namibia while DRC being refugees producer of over 225 000 in 1999 and currently Zimbabwe is hosting refugees from Mozambique in Manicaland province. Displacement of people trigger collapse of key humanitarian system; clothing, food, shelter, education and health services. As projected by [56] and [57] economic growth is adversely affected due to high disruption of transport, market system, infrastructure, mining, agriculture and tourism industry among others as investors cannot take the risk. As identified in [58] and [59], during conflict civilians die and wounded in numbers, land mines are also a threat to human and animals. The affected nations with landmines are Angola, DRC, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. They are being assisted demining by the SADC's Security Sector Reform (SSSR). In [60] it has been shown that lack of International donor caused the region to struggle for post-conflict reconstruction in infrastructural, humanitarian, political, social and economic perspectives.

The study unearthed various achievements by SADC. As in [61] and [62] that for the SADC to man the situation within its sphere of influence vision for promoting peace and security it instituted policy framework of SIPO. Thus a primary strategic guide for the organ to promote peace and security. Key reports on achievements are as in [63], [64], [65], [66 and [67] various approaches towards conflict transformation were employed in the name of conflict (prevention, management, resolution and settlement). The methods were supported by the acts of preventive diplomacy, conciliation, mediation, negotiation and arbitration inclusively part of peacekeeping, peace-making and peace-building.

Role of established institutions were realised; REWC for conflict prevention and management, SMU was set up to strengthen peace-making with elderly political panellists exclusive of external support. Nations in crises and their mediators were Zimbabwean by Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma all South African, Madagascar by Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, DRC mediation and received 3000 SSF military intervention from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Malawi and Zimbabwe. In [68] indicates Lesotho being mediated by Ketumile Masire, region sent 539 peacekeepers; police were from Botswana, Tanzania, Malawi, Namibia, Zimbabwe, SA and Swaziland as well as 90 electoral observers. . As in [69] the building of consolidating of democracy by SADC enhancing human rights, democracy and the rule of law for good governance. In 2004 it adopted Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (PGGDE) to enforce free and fair elections in tandem with AU's guidelines for African Union Electoral Observation and Monitoring Mission (AUEOMM), but arguably not applied in Zimbabwe's and DRC's elections. It is clearly outlined in [70] that establishment of SADC Brigade in 2008 in support of regional peace is squarely acceptance of AU protocol. Hence the SADC's RPTC in Zimbabwe trained over 5000 personal for military, correctional services, police and civilians from member states. Results from [71] revealed that SADC also signed legal documents for peace and security mandate such as Mutual Defence Pact (MDP) to protect one member states from attack.

Noting the achievements, the study also take into cognisance challenges and the weakness of the SADC. As evidenced by the work of [72] SADC was faced with multiple of challenges and weaknesses. The was a division among member states under the historical ideology of being fought for liberation while others did not hence that affected decision-making. Difficult relationship with donors and international partners due to some of member states because of human rights abuse, unconstitutional cling to power and claiming autonomous as spelled out in the doctrine of sovereignty yet SADC couldn't deal with it. The SADC fall short of consistence in security policy decision-making for example SADC acted swiftly on the crisis of Madagascar in 2009 while it failed to act like wise in the conflict of Zimbabwe (200-2008), Angola (1975-2000), Lesotho (1994, 1998 and 2007 and DRC (1998-2001). It is evidenced that the systemic and institutional weaknesses were many; low political will displayed by member states, secretariat ineffective in implementing resolutions, poor infrastructure for implementing of regional integration, poor engagement with civil society and civilians for new perspectives, unconstitutional change of government, dictatorship in some of the states, poor governance, violation of SADC electoral code and poor capacity implementing other resolutions by member states, uncordial working relationship with AU, preventive from external support because of sovereignty ideology and no clear policy framework on the post-conflict reconstruction and security sector reform.

6. Conclusion

From the above discourse, words of appreciation and encouragement for SADC can be hailed. The regional bloc's methods and strategies in promoting peace and security precisely lessened negative magnitude of crisis in an effort to ascertain sustainable peace, security and development. However, it could have done better than if it have addressedthe enshrined weaknesses in the discussion. Opportunities are there if political will is upheld and the SAR can be the icon of Africa as it is stipulated in its vision and mission statement.

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