From Freetown to Kinshasa: Reassessing Nigeria and South Africa’s Foreign Policy Behaviour and Conflict Intervention Roles in Africa

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Division of Humanities in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Politics, at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

October 2018
Dedication

To My Father—Olusegun Adebowale Amao
Whose name the STARs spelt out, and the Angels took away on December 18, 2014

To My Mother and ROCK—Moromoke Amao
Who risked everything she had to keep me in school when no one cared

To My Children
I hope this encourages you to get to the peak of your dreams, regardless of the circumstances you find yourselves

To All Those
Who never allowed their humble beginning deter them from getting to the peak of their imaginations
Abstract

Based on the meta-theoretical approach of eclecticism, and drawing on the insights of structural realism and constructivism, this study comparatively analyses Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention roles in Africa, with a special focus on the conflict episodes in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (1997-2005). The study finds that Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention behaviour in Sierra Leone and the DRC was significantly dictated by the structural constraints and incentives imposed on them by their dominant positions in their subregion, and the regional complexes in which they operate. However, their identities as African actors, forged by their de-colonisation and anti-apartheid struggles, and the existing values and bond that they share with their contiguous states also shape their intervention roles significantly. Through the two case studies, the study illustrated the advantages of a multi-perspective, eclectic approach that is sensitive to the relative explanatory weight both approaches offer on Nigeria and South Africa interventions role in Africa. Overall, the thesis makes a contribution to the literature by looking at the two actors simultaneously and comparatively, and by illustrating the value of an eclectic approach to foreign policy analysis, rather than participating in the theoretical turf-wars that are all too prevalent in the discipline of international relations.
Acknowledgements

I note with thanks and appreciation the indispensability of the Almighty God in the successful completion of this journey. Indeed this voyage was completed not because I had the strength or capacity to get the job done; I was merely fortunate to be counted worthy of God’s amazing grace and mercy. My special appreciation goes to the: University of Otago, for the $75,000 doctoral funding without which this journey would never have begun; Division of Humanities for the $2500 international conference grant, Department of Politics for the $2000 which covered my research expenses, and the formidable team at the Graduate Research School, particularly the Doctoral office, for their support all through my studentship.

To my supervisors—Professor Philip Nel, and Professor Robert Patman, thank you for the efforts you have put into this work since March 7, 2014, when I arrived at the University of Otago. Between these senior scholars, I enjoyed exceptional tutelage any student could have envisaged, and words are clearly insufficient to describe how grateful I am for your guidance and mentoring all through the journey. In particular, I do like to place on record Professor Philip Nel’s scholarly intervention at every stage of the research, and his lead role in piloting the study to its final destination.

To Professor and Dr (Mrs) Okeke-Uzodike and family, I am grateful for the love you have shown me over the years; may God in his infinite mercies continue to bless you and your family. Grateful to Professors Oluyemisi Akinyemiju, Dhikru Adewale Yagboyaju and Chris Isike for their enduring assurances and unwavering belief in my capacity to get this done. I acknowledge with gratitude, the commendable role played by Ettang Dorcas (PhD), Azeez Olaniyi (PhD), Tella Oluwaseun (PhD), Tadashi Iwami (PhD), Hakeem Onapajo (PhD), Ayo Whetho (PhD), and Benjamin Maiangwa while this lasted.

How can I possibly forget my Kiwi friends who became family during my sojourn in Dunedin? To Tim Pascoe, Aleisha Hildred, Tom Blacker, Annie Turnbull, Guys Rider and Alex Coughlin, thank you for the good memories at 46 Duncan Street. I am equally indebted to the team at 8 Ethel McMillan Place where I spent the last few months of my academic life. In particular, to Courtney Gibson for always ‘speaking to God’ on my behalf pro bono, and Sophie Smith, for
supplying the reassuring smiles when the journey got bumpy. To the rest of the team—Jessie Collis, Nathan Laurie, and Callum McRae, thank you for making my residency in the flat one of my best in Dunedin. To my immediate family in Nigeria—Deola, Yetunde, Tayo and Eniola, thank you for providing the psychological lifeline needed for this journey. The Opoolas and Pastor Olayinka Olatundun were steadfast with their best wishes and prayers, and I am happy to report it worked!

I remain perpetually indebted to Ms Lukong Shulika Stella, who introduced me to the University of Otago. Kabiyesi and Olori Ojetimi, Mr and Mrs Coker, and their daughter—Toyin, Egbon Adekunle and Mrs Jumoke Adeyemo, Uncle Abdulwasi Adewole, Mr and Mrs Waheed Falola, Egbon Abiola and his wife, Yinka Adeagbo, Abioye Joseph, Odubote Dare, Osahon George, Adeyemo Adewale, Olaitan Fatokun-Onyebuoha, Sainur Samad, Jiffinvir Singh Khosa, Oni Olutola Oladipupo and his wife-Dunni, and Olagoke Akinyosoye Sharafdeen were the extended family I relied on when the storm raged.

Mrs Stella Owolabi Ajobo, Mrs Oluremi Akinyemiju and Mrs Felicia Opoola were the mothers who adopted me during my undergraduate days in Great Ife, and they remained true to their responsibilities till the very end. To Mother Shirley Hendry, my unit nurse manager at Ross Home, thank you for saving my life and for giving me the opportunity to earn a decent living in the final lap of this race. Grateful also to my work mates—Ms. Cyriin Stroud, Nico Madill, and Josh Baker-Carlyle. This trio treated me as family all through my stint at Ross Home, stepping in at very critical moments!

On a final note, I do like to appreciate my elegant and beautiful wife—Olaide Olumuyiwa-Amao. Thank you for always celebrating my virtues, and for holding for me, the mirror through which I see my shortcomings. I apologise retrospectively for those years you sacrificed so that this story could be told, and I congratulate you for having the courage and tenacity to whether the storm. I did this for you and our children, in the hope that it will guaranty us a ticket to a greater and better tomorrow.
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<td>Allied Armed Force of the Community</td>
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<td>ACB</td>
<td>African Central Bank</td>
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<td>ACCORD</td>
<td>African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes</td>
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<td>ACHPR</td>
<td>African Court of Human and People’s Rights</td>
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<td>ACJ</td>
<td>African Court of Justice</td>
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<td>ACP</td>
<td>African Caribbean and Pacific Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFDL</td>
<td>Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre</td>
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<td>AFISMA</td>
<td>African-led Intervention Support Mission to Mali</td>
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<td>AFRC</td>
<td>Armed Forces Ruling Council</td>
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<td>AIB</td>
<td>African Investment Bank</td>
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<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>AMF</td>
<td>Africa Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>AMIB</td>
<td>African Mission in Burundi</td>
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<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<td>ANC</td>
<td>Armée Nationale Congolaise</td>
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<td>APC</td>
<td>All People’s Congress</td>
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<td>APRM</td>
<td>African Peer Review Mechanism</td>
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<td>AR</td>
<td>Africa Renaissance</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>AZAPO</td>
<td>Azanian People’s Organisation</td>
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<td>BNC</td>
<td>Bi-National Commission</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>British Petroleum</td>
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<td>BRICS</td>
<td>Brazil–Russia–India–China–South Africa Cooperation</td>
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<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-in-C</td>
<td>Commander-in-Chief</td>
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<td>CODESA</td>
<td>Convention for a Democratic South Africa</td>
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<td>CNS</td>
<td>Conférence Nationale Souve-raine</td>
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<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration</td>
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<td>DRRRR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement</td>
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<td>DFA</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>DIRCO</td>
<td>Department of International Relations and Cooperation</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
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<td>ECCAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of Central African States</td>
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<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
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<td>EO</td>
<td>Executive Outcomes</td>
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<td>EU</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investments</td>
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<td>Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda</td>
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<td>GCC</td>
<td>Gulf Cooperation Council</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>HCR-PT</td>
<td>High Council of the Republic-Parliament of Transition</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>IBSA</td>
<td>India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
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<td>ICD</td>
<td>Inter-Congolese Dialogue</td>
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<td>ICG</td>
<td>International Crisis Group</td>
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<td>ICISS</td>
<td>International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty</td>
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<td>International Marketing Council</td>
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<td>IOR</td>
<td>Indian Ocean Rim</td>
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<td>IR</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
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<td>IRIN</td>
<td>Integrated Regional Information Network</td>
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<td>JMC</td>
<td>Joint Military Council</td>
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<td>MAD</td>
<td>Mutual Assistance on Defence</td>
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<td>MAGRIVI</td>
<td>Mutuelle Agricole des Virunga</td>
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<td>MK</td>
<td>Umkhonto we Sizwe</td>
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<td>MAP</td>
<td>Millennium Partnership for African Development</td>
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<td>MONUSCO</td>
<td>Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo</td>
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<td>MNC</td>
<td>Mouvement National Congolais</td>
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<td>MPLA</td>
<td>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</td>
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<td>MPR</td>
<td>Mouvement populaire de la révolution</td>
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<td>NAI</td>
<td>New African Initiative</td>
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<td>NAM</td>
<td>Non Aligned Movement</td>
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<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Defence Council</td>
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<td>New Partnership for African Development</td>
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<td>NNPC</td>
<td>Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation</td>
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<td>Neutral Monitoring Group</td>
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<td>NPFL</td>
<td>National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
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<td>NPRC</td>
<td>National Provisional Ruling Council</td>
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<td>NOREF</td>
<td>Norsk Ressursenter for Fredsbygging</td>
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<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
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<td>ONUB</td>
<td>United Nations Operation in Burundi</td>
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<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan Africanist Congress</td>
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<td>PCASED</td>
<td>Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development</td>
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<td>PRC</td>
<td>Provisional Ruling Council</td>
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<td>PSC</td>
<td>Peace and Security Council</td>
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<td>R2P</td>
<td>Responsibility to Protect</td>
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<td>RCD</td>
<td>Rassemblement Congolaise pour la Démocratie</td>
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<td>RCD-Goma</td>
<td>Rassemblement Congolaise pour la Démocratie Goma</td>
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<td>RENAMO</td>
<td>Resistência Nacional Moçambicana</td>
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<td>RPA</td>
<td>Rwandan Patriotic Army</td>
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<td>RPF</td>
<td>Rwandan Patriotic Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front</td>
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<td>SACU</td>
<td>Southern African Customs Union</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>SANDF</td>
<td>South African National Defence Force</td>
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<td>Sierra Leone Liberation Army</td>
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<td>SLPP</td>
<td>Sierra Leone People’s Party</td>
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<td>SMC</td>
<td>Supreme Military Council</td>
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<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<td>SLWMP</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Women’s Movement for Peace</td>
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<td>SWAPO</td>
<td>South West African Peoples’ Organisation</td>
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<td>Technical Aid Corps</td>
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<td>Troop-contributing countries</td>
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<td>TNC</td>
<td>Transitional National Council</td>
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<td>United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur</td>
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<td>United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
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<td>União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola</td>
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<td>UNMEM</td>
<td>United Nations Middle East Mission</td>
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<td>Organization des Nations Unies au Congo</td>
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<td>United Nations Organisation</td>
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<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolution</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>USAF</td>
<td>United States of Africa</td>
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<td>WACR</td>
<td>World Conference against Racism</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organisation</td>
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<td>ZANU-PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front</td>
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Chapter 1: Focus and Approach

1.1 Introduction

Several decades after the emergence of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 and the political transition of many countries from colonialism to independence in the 1960s, the African continent continues to be a theatre of violent conflicts and civil strife. From Congo in 1960 to Central African Republic (CAR) in 2013, the story has remained almost the same. Understandably, this has not been without consequences; a development most visible in terms of gross human rights violations, economic underdevelopment, a diminishing or virtually non-existent social infrastructural base, and threatened socio-political and economic structures. More specifically, between 1960 and 2000, nearly 20 African countries or 40 per cent of the states in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have experienced at least one period of civil war, with the conflict episodes in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (1997-2005), being some of its deadliest. Due to the severity and attendant consequences of these two conflicts, some scholars have described them as Africa’s First World War and the Blood Diamond war.¹

As a consequence, efforts have been by an amalgam of state and non-state actors towards finding a way out of these crises. In Africa, these efforts have most notably been championed by Nigeria and South Africa, as seen in Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone, and the DRC.² Scholars, while interpreting these leadership roles, often point to the hegemonic tendencies embedded in the foreign policy and conflict intervention behaviour of both states. In a recent study, Jason Warner in his article, “Nigeria and “Illusory Hegemony” in foreign and security policymaking: Pax-Nigeriana and the challenges of Boko Haram”, argued that while Nigeria possesses

the realist attributes of a hegemon, given its military power, economic strength, and a large population, it lacks the liberal attributes of a hegemon (the legitimacy for rightful rule). In exercising its leadership roles in Africa, Nigeria, as Warner contends, is guilty of “illusory hegemony” or foreign and security policy prevarication. This pursuit of illusory hegemony, as Warner argues, has an opposite unintended effect of undermining, rather than improving Nigeria’s perception of rightful rule in Africa. Olusola Ogunnubi and Ufo Uzodike have asked if Nigeria can be Africa’s next hegemon. Nigeria, as they argued, remains an important regional power on the continent, but continues to be hindered by several factors in playing a hegemonic role. To assert this claim, they highlighted issues such as: economic capacity, texture of its polity, international public image, among others, as conditions capable of increasingly deflating Nigeria’s capacity to play a meaningful hegemonic role in Africa.

Commenting on Nigeria’s seeming exhibition of this benign hegemon tendencies, Ogunmola and Badmus, drawing references from the hegemonic stabilization theory examined Nigeria’s self-imposed leadership role, as enunciated in its foreign policy, and uncovers the dilemma of preventive diplomacy versus an insurgent/irregular conflict scenario by a non-neutral party. Similar attempts have been made by scholars to interrogate South Africa’s leadership role in Africa. For example, Cyril Obi has highlighted how South Africa’s membership of BRAZIL, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) forum, places it in a prime position to lead the rest of Africa.

Relatedly, Alexandrof Alan has attempted to provide answers to the question of how and where South Africa fits in a complex global order. He argued that given South Africa’s membership

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4 Ibid., p.638.
7 Ibid., Pp.110-128.
8 Ibid., Pp.110-128.
of the G-20 and the BRICS, the country has the capacity to leverage on the benefits of its ‘multiple identities’ as a foreign policy strategy, to provide leadership for Africa.\textsuperscript{12} Alexandrof’s argument appears to have been motivated by Maxi Schoeman’s earlier classification of South Africa as an ‘emerging middle power’, in view of its role in the international system and its regional position in Africa.\textsuperscript{13} In his contribution to the discourse, Paul-Henri Bischoff went a notch higher than Schoeman’s “middle power classification”, by highlighting the need to recognise South Africa’s power preponderance \textsuperscript{14} Bischoff argues that given South Africa’s possession of three important political resources: 1) a recognition of its geo-political position and importance as a democratic yardstick and reformer; 2) its acceptance of a transnational, neo-liberal elite alliance and 3) recognition of its leadership role from forces wishing to challenge Africa’s political establishment, the country has a role to play in providing leadership for the rest of Africa.\textsuperscript{15}

Daniel Flemes in particular has made a case for South Africa to be recognised as a regional power in Africa given its fulfilment of the four pivotal criteria: claim to leadership, power resources, employment of foreign policy instruments, and acceptance of leadership, expected of a regional power.\textsuperscript{16} He adds however, that while South Africa appears ready to bear the cost of co-operative hegemony (such as capacity building for regional institutions and peacekeeping), the regional acceptance of South Africa's leadership is constrained by its historical legacy”.\textsuperscript{17}

There have also been studies demonstrating how regional powers can serve as facilitators of

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p.249.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., Pp.183-201.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p.1.
peace and stability,\textsuperscript{18} and how effective regional leadership could potentially lead to a well-ordered global governance structure,\textsuperscript{19} despite the challenges of regional institutionalisation.\textsuperscript{20}

Similar attempts have been made to assess the foreign policies of regional actors on an individual basis.\textsuperscript{21} While these studies and many more have highlighted Nigeria and South Africa’s capacity to lead the rest of Africa, there has been no study which comparatively assesses this capacity from a demonstrated point of view and more importantly, from an analytic eclecticism theoretical construct. Put differently, there is a dearth of foreign policy and intervention behaviour literature which comparatively assesses the international relations approach(es) within which the conflict intervention roles and foreign policy behaviour of regional actors in Africa can be located.

Accordingly, this contribution assesses Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention roles in Africa as crucially influenced by their regional hegemonic interests and their subscription to the notion of collective identity. For the sake of this study, and following Terry Nardin, “intervention” is defined as the exercise of authority by one state within the jurisdiction of another state, not necessarily with the permission of the other state.\textsuperscript{22} As the discussion of intervention in chapter one will clarify, intervention has different purposes and different modalities. Here, we are particularly interested in why and how Nigeria and South Africa became involved in what can be broadly classified as “humanitarian intervention” in Africa; that is, their exercise of authority in another African state with the purpose of mitigating civil violence and the resultant humanitarian suffering in that state.


Drawing on the theoretical insights of structural realism and social constructivism respectively, the study examines Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict roles in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) and the DRC (1997-2005). The purpose of this study is to explore the relative merits of these two approaches in explaining the motives and intervention behaviour of these two states. Our basic assumption is that more than one theoretical perspective is required to adequately grasp the complexity of intervention decisions and behaviour. In this vein, this study draws inspiration from the 1971 study of Graham Allison on state decision-making in the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, and on the current revival of interest in “eclectic theorising” in the discipline of International Relations.

Allison shows the value of using different theoretical perspectives to illuminate different dimensions of the complex process of decision-making on the part of the US and the Soviet Union government before and during the crisis. By using different analytical perspectives, Allison reveals dimensions of complex processes that would otherwise have been ignored if one relied only on a rational-actor understanding of the two main actors involved. Similarly, Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein celebrate the value of using more than one approach in analytically exploring political behaviour.

Analytical eclecticism has three defining characteristics: one, in contrast to much of the current practice in International Relations where analytics are largely employed to bolster a preferred grand theory, analytical eclecticism is pragmatically inclined, and explores a range of approaches to enrich the analytical process. Two, it chooses to address issues that have wider scope than the narrow confines of specific research approaches, which in principle, can “incorporate more of the complexity and messiness of particular real-world situations”. Three, by constructing substantial arguments to trace various dimensions of a complex event, eclecticism drops the excessive reliance on “parsimony” (which has come to be an almost unassailable precondition

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25 Ibid., p.412.

26 Ibid., p.412.
for “scientific” analysis) in appreciation of the different types of causal mechanisms involved in real-world social situations.27

In a recent study, Albert Domson-Lindsay undertook a scholarly assessment of South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour by examining the debate between Parsimony and Eclecticism.28 As he notes, the literature on South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour is marked by a clash of concepts, arguments and normative convictions—between two dominant intellectual traditions: realism and liberalism.29 Works based on each of the perspectives, as Albert Domson-Lindsay argues, “inclines towards particular preferences, values and prescriptions—a single vision or a universalising organising principle guides the framing of policy problem, interpretation of empirical observations and prescriptions”.30

Making a case for the adoption of the eclectic approach in the analysis of South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in particular, and those of a number of African states in general, he argues that “neither of the two dominant perspectives ‘comprehensively and persuasively’ explain their foreign policy behaviour and practice”.31 Albert Domson-Lindsay thus advocates for the application of analytic eclecticism to the study of the foreign policy behaviour of African states, given its ability to integrate ideas and variables associated with different theoretical perspectives.32 The analytic eclecticism approach is therefore preferable, because it ensures that a scholarly endeavour is sufficiently close to the experience of real world actors, leads to deeper insights into policy behaviour and holistically deals with the problems associated with it.33

Its application to International Relations (IR) discourses therefore is imperative given that scholars have attempted “to self-consciously forego metatheoretical and methodological battles in favour of approaches that explicitly seek to explore the interfaces between, and build bridges across problematics and analyses originally constructed within seemingly incommensurable

27 Ibid., p.412.
29 Ibid., p.370.
30 Ibid., p.370.
31 Ibid., p.370.
32 Ibid., p.370.
33 Ibid., p.370.
These research traditions, according to Katzenstein and Sil, are typically founded on metatheoretical principles that are distinct from those informing competing traditions, each intrinsically favouring some types of scholarly endeavours over others. These include—the selection and framing of research puzzles, the representation and interpretation of relevant empirical observations, the specification of evidentiary standards, and the attention to certain causal mechanisms at the expense of others.

This seeming lack of consensus on such fundamental issues has necessitated the employment of the eclectic approach in this study, particularly given its capacity to define and explore substantive problems in ways that provide deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The eclectic approach is thus useful for this study because it represents a major shift from a paradigm-driven research which has become all too familiar within the IR discourse and, because unlike other ways of theorising, it does not emphasise the utility of one approach over the other; rather, it offers a multidimensional platform to examine a research question from different perspectives. By its adoption, the eclectic approach affords us an opportunity to pay detailed attention to the central question posed in the study, and engage the question fruitfully, thereby making the study’s contribution problem-driven.

Conscious of the fact that the study’s hypothesis is generated on the basis of the explanatory weight that structural realism and social constructivism brings to bear on Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention roles and foreign policy behaviour, the eclectic approach provides us a broader platform to understand the extent to which these IR approaches explain both countries’ foreign policy behaviour, and what other possible ways of analyses and interpretation exist. The relevance of this approach to the study shall be further explored in chapter 8. This study aligns itself squarely with this understanding of analytical eclecticism, in an attempt to

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35 Ibid., p.2
36 Ibid., p.2.
37 Ibid., p.2.
38 Ibid., p.2.
arrive at a nuanced understanding of Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention behaviour in Africa in general alongside Sierra Leone (Nigeria) and the DRC (South Africa) in particular.

Given their relative power preponderance in sub-Saharan Africa, and their extensive intervention profiles, the choice of Nigeria and South Africa as our analytical focus demands little justification. The choice of these two country-case studies is informed by a number of considerations. First, as state actors within the West African and Southern African sub-regions, Nigeria and South Africa have been significantly involved in a number of efforts aimed at resolving conflicts on the African continent. Also, Nigeria and South Africa are actively involved in conflict intervention initiatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in their respective sub-regions. Lastly, there appears to be a dearth of literature which comparatively assesses the international relations theory within which Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention roles and foreign policy behaviour in Africa can be situated.

The choice of the Sierra Leone and the DRC conflict case studies was equally informed by a number of reasons. First, both episodes remain one of the unfortunate examples of conflicts where grave human rights violations have occurred, and one in which the international community displayed considerable apathy towards their resolution. Second, and as a consequence of this apathy, a considerable degree of pressure was imposed on (sub) regional institutions in Africa to resolve the conflicts, with the weight of this responsibility falling on Nigeria and South Africa, given the strategic and lead position they occupy in ECOWAS and SADC. Lastly, the selection of both conflict episodes affords us the privilege to comparatively assess Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles from a sub-regional perspective.

What is less obvious than the selection of our case studies, though, is the choice of the two analytical approaches that this thesis explores and uses to highlight variety of dimensions of the behaviour of these states. The field of International Relations (IR) is well-populated by a variety of theories, ranging from the well-established rationalist realism and liberalism that still dominate the field, across various sociological theories that include varieties of constructivism, to explicit critical theories such as world-systems theory and post-colonial theory. Liberalism as an IR approach, was excluded from the study because, compared to the other two theories used,
it tells us very little about Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour apart from stating the obvious point that the two contribute to some degree to the provision of regional public goods. An approach that largely ignores the significant power differentials in the contexts where the two operate, and has little to say about the role of their identities as African actors, is prima facie of less relevance.

Ideally, a full treatment of the foreign policies of these two actors would have to consider a range of theoretical perspectives – which is exactly the point of an eclectic approach, however, we will focus here on two approaches which, in the literature on Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policies, have proven to be particularly productive, namely structural realism and social constructivism. Without necessarily assuming that these two approaches contribute equally to an understanding of the behaviour of these two states under review, the rest of the study hopes to show how each in its own right is useful in unravelling the complexities of the foreign policy behaviour of the two states.

It is possible that one of the two approaches might be better/more suited at explaining a particular set of behaviour, but it is not the main purpose of this study to pass judgement on the overall merits of the one versus the other. Instead, the study explores the contributions that both can make in an even-handed way as possible, without ignoring that one might be more useful than the other for the purposes of understanding a specific aspect of behaviour. Based on this realisation that the thesis argues that Nigeria and South Africa’s relative power positions within

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their immediate neighbourhoods, plus their identities as African actors, forged by de-colonisation and anti-apartheid struggles, and the existing values and bonds that they share with their neighbours, all play a crucial role in their intervention behaviour. Thus, structural realism, with its focus on material structure and the pursuit of relative gains, and a constructivist focus on identity and how interests are shaped by this are both required to develop a substantive understanding of the behaviour of these two regional powers.

1.2 Research design and methodology

The overall research design of the study is structured to generate empirical insights deduced from an exploration of the explanatory potential of structural realism and social constructivism. The insights relate to the intervention behaviour of two powerful states, namely Nigeria and South Africa. As explained above, the approach taken is analytical eclecticism. Conscious of the complex and elusive nature of the phenomenon under investigation, the thesis employs a qualitative research methodology based on two broad assumptions. The first is an ontological assumption that the two states respectively are unified actors with discernible single foreign policies. The second is an analytical approach which uses a broad interpretive strategy to expatiate on specific behaviour in terms of both the meaning attributed to the behaviour by the actors, and the significance that these actions have for us as observers. This is achieved through a theory-guided content analysis of published materials on Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention and foreign policy behaviour in Sierra Leone and the DRC, and a number of other conflict episodes.

Viewed as such, the research design falls squarely within the qualitative approach in the social sciences. There is no attempt here to generate hypotheses that are then subjected to empirical tests. Rather, the purpose is to generate interpretive insights based on the application of the theoretical perspectives to the raw material of published accounts and documentary evidence of foreign policy behaviour. Relying substantially on interpretive readings of such sources, there is an element of theoretical pre-selection at play. However, one of the benefits of an analytical eclectic approach is that by being willing to consider a range of interpretations, it reduces the effect of pre-selection.
Scholars have argued that the utility of the content analysis approach is inherent in the relative ease it provides when accessing past literature and the avenue the qualitative approach provides in building on what has been previously done. The content analysis approach, as Shank observes, “allows for a relatively easy access to data and also provides the researcher with the prerogative of deciding what to use, how to use it and where to use it”.\textsuperscript{40} The qualitative method of research is appropriate when the phenomena being examined are complex, and social in nature, and not easily quantifiable.\textsuperscript{41} This much is evident in a study such as this, where the objective is to examine the conflict intervention behaviour of Nigeria and South Africa from a foreign policy perspective. Furthermore, the qualitative research methodology celebrates the richness, depths, nuances, contexts, multi-dimensionality and complexity of the phenomena under investigation. Instead of editing these elements out of the research, the qualitative research methodology factors them directly into its analysis and explanations.\textsuperscript{42}

Employing the qualitative method in a research facilitates an in-depth understanding of the world, particularly through the eyes of the people being studied.\textsuperscript{43} Useful to note that the adoption of a qualitative research method in the study enabled this researcher to explore the phenomena (Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour, their interventions in Sierra Leone and the DRC, and how this can be explained within the theoretical constructs of structural realism and social constructivism). The approach also provided the researcher the analytical platform to describe the variation in the foreign policies of Nigeria and South Africa, the similarities and how their historical experiences have redefined their conflict intervention roles and behaviour as deduced from existing literature.

This is essentially a literature-based study and the secondary data were gathered through an extensive review of academic materials, including books, journal articles, policy documents, and commissioned reports. Content analysis and process-tracing were employed in analysing the data, considering the nature of the information required and the available literature. Both of these


tools assisted in the narrative reconstruction of the behaviour of the two states in general but also in the specific cases of intervention. The content-analysis approach enabled the researcher to analyse and review the existing literature used at different stages of the thesis, including the employment of, and textual analysis with, tabular illustrations.

More than anything else, the textual analysis helped in the discussion of the gathered data in human communications such as speeches or public addresses, correspondences, and policy statements available to the researcher. This approach has been described by Barbie as “any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of the messages”. The approach equally encompasses “the study of recorded human communications such as books, websites, paintings and laws”. Process tracing, on the other hand, “is a research method which traces causal mechanisms using detailed, within-case empirical analysis of how a causal process plays out in an actual case”.

As a method of data analysis, is often used for case studies seeking to gain a greater understanding of the causal dynamics which produced the outcome of a particular historical case and to shed light on generalizable causal mechanisms linking causes and outcomes within a population of causally similar cases. The analytical added value of process tracing is that, it enables strong causal inferences to be made about how causal processes work in real-world cases based on studying within-case mechanistic evidence. In a study which seeks to assess the utility of applying an eclectic approach to the understanding and interpretation of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles as this, process tracing contributed significantly in achieving the study’s central research objective in a number of ways.

First, it afforded us the opportunity to thoroughly engage what structural realism and social constructivism tells us about Nigeria and South Africa’s role in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) and the DRC (1997-2005). This was achieved by soaking and probing the fundamentals of both IR approaches, particularly how they singularly, and/or collectively explain both countries’

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48 Ibid., p.1.
intervention mechanisms in the conflicts. Second, it allowed us to comprehensively review the relevant literature related to the study, thus gaining clues about the strength and limitations of both IR approaches, and the ‘danger’ in adopting one at the expense of the other. Lastly, having exposed us to the explanatory weight of both approaches in our country and conflict case studies, process tracing provided us the platform to mitigate the effects of their limitations, by combining the strength of both approaches to analyse and interpret Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in the conflicts in particular, and Africa in general. This combination is what led to the analytic eclecticism perspective introduced in the study.

1.3 Prospectus

The thesis is divided into nine chapters, with this chapter serving as the introduction. The main analytical work is done in Chapter eight, where the relative contributions of structural realism and constructivism in our understanding of Nigeria and South Africa’s roles are adumbrated and contextualised. To get there, though, a range of preparatory work has to be done. Chapter one provides a summary of the focus and approach of the study. Chapter two discusses the concept of intervention, and in particular the practice of humanitarian intervention. This focus is required as it is the intervention behaviour of the two states that are investigated in the rest of the study. Chapter three provides a broad description of the two competing international relations theories that will provide the analytical lenses employed in the chapters that follow.

The focus then turns to the two states and their behaviour. In Chapter four, Nigeria’s foreign policy passes the revue with a specific focus on its conflict intervention behaviour in Africa. Chapter five analyses the role played by Nigeria in Sierra Leone between 1991 and 1998. In chapter six, South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour, and its conflict intervention in Africa is examined. Chapter seven analyses and evaluates South Africa’s role in the DRC. Finally, Chapter eight unifies the theoretical, analytical and case-study materials generated up to that point. The behaviour of the two states is assessed and, based on the two theoretical perspectives employed, points to the value (and limitations) of an eclectic approach. Chapter nine concludes by offering a restatement of the research question; key findings in relation to this question, and a summary of the central argument.
Chapter 2: The Concept of Intervention in International Politics

2.1 Introduction

As stated in the previous discussion, the purpose of this chapter is to examine the different debates surrounding the notion of intervention, in order to prepare the ground for how Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa can be situated conceptually. To achieve this, the chapter discusses the definitional issues related to the concept of intervention and its variants, the differences and similarities between these variants, particularly the distinguishing features between unilateral and multilateral humanitarian intervention, and the legal debates surrounding both types of intervention. Overall, the central objective is not to provide an exhaustive discussion of the concept of intervention, but to provide a broad interpretive map within which Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention roles in Africa can be located and appreciated. The chapter concludes by showing the relevance for Africa of the conceptual and behavioural dimensions reviewed.

2.2 Delineating the concept of intervention international politics

Scholars are divided on a generally-acceptable definition of the concept of intervention, despite its being immanent in world politics.\textsuperscript{49} Terry Nardin defines intervention “as the exercise of authority by one state within the jurisdiction of another state but without its permission, but it becomes an armed intervention, when the exercise involves use of force”.\textsuperscript{50} For an armed intervention to qualify as humanitarian, Nardin contends that “its aim is to protect innocent people who are not nationals of the intervening state from the violence perpetrated or permitted by the government of the target state”.\textsuperscript{51} For Vincent, intervention refers to the “deliberate incursion into a state without its consent by some outside agency in order to change the

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p.1.
functioning, policies, and goals of government, and achieve effects that favour the intervening agency”.52

Some other scholars have avoided the definitional issues associated with the concept of intervention, preferring to contribute to the discourse from a behavioural perspective. For example, Rosenau sees it as “a form of behaviour which constitutes a sharp break from existing forms, particularly, when directed at changing or preserving the structure of a political authority in a target society”.53 It is worth noting that Rosenau’s behavioural approach to the understanding of intervention has been criticised for having a built-in bias towards the examination of military intervention, given its emphasis on “existing patterns of behaviour which are directed towards the authority structure of targeted states”.54

Pointing out the inherent deficiency in Rosenau’s “biased” interpretation, Patman argues that “it is not always clear when a conventional mode of behaviour has been broken or whether constituted authorities are the target of what Rosenau denotes as unconventional behaviour”.55 Activities like foreign aid, as he mentions, can be excluded from consideration, although they can fall within the boundaries of his definition.56 The arms deal between Czechoslovakia (a Soviet ally) and Egypt (a United States ally) in 1955, represents a sharp break with the existing norms of behaviour, but whether it was targeted at changing the political authority in Cairo (as it eventually did), can only be verified by assessing the motives of Soviets decision-makers—an aspect which Rosenau’s definition excludes.57

Inferable from the foregoing is that, though the concept of intervention lacks an overwhelmingly-acceptable definition, there is a general consensus on the fact that its enforcement does not require the consent of the parties to a conflict, and it often involves the use of force. By way of classification, the normative (non-armed) and the physical perspective (armed intervention) have been identified as the most useful ways of understanding the concept, and their meanings are

55 Ibid., p.5.
56 Ibid., p.5.
57 Ibid., p.5.
often interchangeably used.\textsuperscript{58} When discussed from the normative or prescriptive perspective, emphasis is placed on the non-forcibility of the action on the warring parties, as was the case of former President Mandela’s intervention in the Burundian crisis of 2003.

In other words, under the normative setting, the role of the intervener in a conflict is largely persuasive and mediatory, and the currency of negotiation or bargaining power is the amount of soft power the intervener wields. On the other hand, a physical or armed intervention, occurs when “party “C” (Nigeria in the case of its intervention in Sierra Leone) engages in a conflict between opposing parties “A” (Revolutionary United Front led by Foday Sankoh) and “B” (the government of Sierra Leone)”.\textsuperscript{59} Furthermore, and as Lieblich contends, “whenever a state engages parties to an internal armed conflict, using forcible or non-forcible measures, legally or illegally, such a state is believed to have intervened physically in the conflict”.\textsuperscript{60}

Oftentimes, approval for this class of intervention requires approval of a supra-national authority (UN). However, there are instances when the concept can assume a different connotation, particularly when it is perceived by the international community as an “unlawful and coercive interference or encroachment on the territorial integrity or internal political affairs of another state”.\textsuperscript{61} A case in point was Tanzania’s invasion of Uganda to oust Idi Amin in April 1979. The other issue linked to intervention, as Damrosch argues, is that it is difficult to establish if the intervention (when it does take place) is relatively less acute when executed under the instrumentality of forcible intervention, as compared to when carried out under the daunting challenge associated with non-forcible intervention.\textsuperscript{62}

This, according to Lieblich, is because “a physical intervention is mainly identified by the fact that it breaks significantly from the status quo; and military interventions are the most dramatic and clear-cut departures from existing patterns.”\textsuperscript{63} This suggests that interventions can indeed

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., p.344.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., p.344.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., p.344.
occur without the prerequisite backing or consent of the affected state or that of the international community, as in the case of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in Kosovo in 1999. It is imperative to note that for an intervention (armed or non-armed) to occur, there must be the existence of an intra-state civil strife, or a violent dispute where the ensuing violence occurs primarily within the boundaries of a single state”.

These types of conflict, according to Falk, often erupt in the form of “sustained, large scale violence between two or more factions, seeking to challenge in whole or in part, the maintenance of governmental authority in a particular state”. Notably, however, there is a caveat attached to the definition of armed conflicts, particularly the issue of what does not constitute an internal armed conflict. According to Article 1(2) of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions, (Additional Protocol II), which views the concept as a non-internal armed conflict, issues such as internal disturbances, riots, isolated and sporadic acts of violence and other acts of similar nature, do not necessarily constitute an internal armed conflict because these types of crises are easily resolvable once the underlying problems have been addressed and, are as such, temporary.

A third perspective offers us some criteria that be must be fulfilled before an action can be termed as an intervention. The first argues that an intervention situation exists when an actor responds to an intervention stimulus. The second contends that when conflict develops between the units in a bifurcated actor, and creates a potential transformation, intervention has occurred. The third claims that when a party maintains a relationship with one side of a bifurcated actor, intervention has occurred, just as maintaining a relationship with both sides of a bifurcated actor,

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64 Ibid., p.339.
67 See the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Relating to the protection of victims of Non Internal Armed Conflict (Protocol II), as amended on June 8, 1977.
is seen as a non-intervention response. It is noteworthy also that Little’s definition has been criticised for being “too narrow and too broad”.

As Patman comments, the linkage of the act of intervention to conflicts within a bifurcated target state as argued by Richard Little, makes the definition too narrow, because activities such as the Israeli-French-British operation against Egypt in 1956, would not be considered as an intervention, as Egypt was not a bifurcated actor at that time. Little’s criteria has equally been considered “too broad” because it fails to distinguish between interventionary behaviours from other forms of international action, and couches intervention in terms of response, thus leading us to ask: what type of “response” can be considered interventionary? These definitional debates notwithstanding, scholars are unanimous that there are features peculiar to the discourse on intervention, regardless of one’s point of view. These include:

1. If a state (for example, Nigeria or South Africa) exercises authority in the affairs of another, it wants to achieve some political, moral or legal objective(s);
2. The power relationship between the intervening state and the target society is perceived to be unequal. The intervener believes its power to be superior to that of the object of the intervention, or displays a paternalistic attitude towards the other;
3. Intervention represents a clear departure from the existing pattern of relations both for the intervener, and the target society;
4. From the perspective of the intervener, intervention is intended to be limited in scope and time;
5. An external intervention can occur with or without a conflict within the target state;
6. The objective of the intervener is often not connected with changing or preserving the structure of the political authority in the target society, and its aspiration may or may not involve the use of force, and lastly;

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71 Ibid., p.6.
72 Ibid., p.6.
7. The dividing line between intervention and non-intervention is not marked by an objective criterion; the difference thus rests on intention.\textsuperscript{73}

The forgoing, when related to Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention role in Sierra Leone and the DRC, leads us to the following conclusions. First, Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention in these conflict episodes was meant to achieve a combination of political and legal objectives which we shall explore further in chapter five and seven respectively. Second, Nigeria and South Africa’s military and economic might were far superior to that of the RUF in Sierra Leone, and that of the M23 and other rebel groups in eastern DRC. Third, both interventions marked a clear departure from the foreign policy behaviour of Nigeria and South Africa towards Sierra Leone and the DRC. Lastly, both interventions involved the use of force, were limited in scope and, from both interveners’ point of view, had a clear exit strategy.

Against the background of these features, it is instructive to note that interventions do not just happen; there must be a motive and an opportunity to do so.\textsuperscript{74} These motives are shaped by a broad range of interests premised along the lines of domestic and external levels.\textsuperscript{75} At the domestic level are issues such as defence, ideological and economic interests.\textsuperscript{76} The defence focuses on the need to protect the state from any conceivable physical aggression from the outside. The ideological bothers on the preservation of set of values which the people of a state share, while the economic interest stems from the desire of a state to acquire or preserve access to resources.\textsuperscript{77} At the external level, an intervention may be motivated by a strategic or world-order interest, particularly the need to maintain a state’s security in the context of the global distribution of power, and by regional interests such as concern for contiguous areas perceived as having a bearing on a state’s well-being.\textsuperscript{78}

Structural realists attribute this motivation for intervention to the concept of the 3s—Statism, Self-help, and Survival.\textsuperscript{79} However, some legal requirements are expected to be fulfilled before

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p.8.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., p.8.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., p.8.
an intervention can occur.\textsuperscript{80} These are: (1) the possession of a recognisable power—the ability to affect the will and mind of others irrespective of their wishes,\textsuperscript{81} as evident for example in Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone (1991) and South Africa’s in the DRC (1997). (2) The dependency factor shows the reliance of the target state on the intervening state, and its possession gives some form of psychological impetus for the intervening state,\textsuperscript{82} as witnessed during South Africa’s invasion of Lesotho in 1998. (3) The existence of a political crisis categorised along overt and latent lines in the target state.\textsuperscript{83}

By overt crisis, we mean a situation where “rival political forces have arisen and are able to use violence,”\textsuperscript{84} without being strong enough, individually, to give the government decisive support or to overthrow it.\textsuperscript{85} Under such scenarios, legitimate authority is absent, and force becomes the norm for implementing decisions.\textsuperscript{86} The Sierra Leone government under Momoh in 1991 is a classic example in this regard. Latent crisis, on the other hand, refers to a situation where a political or social minority rules in a way detestable to the mass populace, but are too weak to effect a change of government, as evident in South Vietnam in 1959.\textsuperscript{87}

Our last point of consideration is the legitimacy of the intervener. Policymakers, according to Patman, “may be inclined towards intervention if they believe it would be popularly received in the target society”.\textsuperscript{88} However, it has been noted that there are a few factors which may equally affect the reputation on the part of the intervener. These are: (1) [if there is] a history of existing cultural, religious, ethnic or ideological links between the intervener and the intervened, such relationship or intervention may be deemed “special” by the intervener. (2) A belief on the part of the intervener that the ruling government in the target society is unpopular may serve as further motivation for intervention, and (3) where there is a perception of an identity of interests

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., p.9.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., p.10.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., p.10.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p.10.
between the intervener and then target state, the intervener may view its role as that of a messiah or “liberator”.  

2.3 Conceptualising humanitarian intervention in international politics

The debate on humanitarian intervention, as Arbour contends, began to crystallise in the 1970s when humanitarian reasons were either offered or assumed as part of the rationale for the intervention of India in East Pakistan (1971), Vietnam in Kampuchea (1978) and Tanzania in Uganda to overthrow Idi Amin (1979), as well as for the French government’s support for the coup against Jean-Be’del Bokassa in Central Africa Republic (1979). The concept of humanitarian intervention is dependent on the existence of the obligations erga omnes partes, i.e., the obligations of a state towards the international community as a whole. For example, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) held that “such obligations derive from the outlawing of acts of aggression, as also from the principles and rules concerning the basic rights of the human person, including protection from slavery and racial discrimination”.

It is in the event of material breaches of such obligations that every other state may lawfully consider itself legally injured and entitled to resort to counter-measures against the perpetrator. By definition, humanitarian intervention refers to “the threat or use of force across state borders by a state (or group of states) aimed at preventing or ending widespread and grave violations of the fundamental human rights of individuals other than its own citizens, without the permission of the state within whose territory force is applied”. Others define it as “a short-term initiative,

89 Ibid., p.11.
aimed only at stopping massive and on-going human rights violations. Once the violations cease, it is no longer justified”. 94

Though this definition does not embrace regime change (as this should not be the central objective of humanitarian intervention), some observers have noted that “it would make no sense to invade a state which is committing serious crimes against its people, only to pull out and leave the oppressive government to finish the job”. 95 At the same time, as they argue, “humanitarian intervention must be clearly distinguished from intervention in the name of democracy, sometimes called pro-democratic intervention”. 96 Obvious from both definitions is that the humanitarian-intervention debate in IR raises the tension between ethics and politics, thus subjecting the narrative to a two-sided discussion among scholars. 97

While proponents of humanitarian intervention view it as a very potent force capable of restoring human dignity, the opposing school of thought sees it as a concept which violates the principle of the legal sovereignty of independent states. 98 Leading the arguments for proponents of humanitarian intervention is Holzgrefe, who defines the concept as “the threat or use of force across state borders by a state (or group of states) aimed at preventing or ending widespread and grave violations of the fundamental human rights of individuals other than its own citizens, without the permission of the state in whose territory force is been applied”. 99

Teson, lending support to Holzgrefes’ argument for the necessity of humanitarian intervention in times of crisis, portrays it as the “proportionate international use or threat of military force, undertaken in principle by a liberal government or alliance, aimed at ending tyranny or anarchy,

96 Ibid., p.1227.
98 Ibid., p.766.
welcomed by the victims, and consistent with the doctrine of double effect”.100 In the opinion of Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, the concept of intervention should encompass both “forcible” and “non-forcible” humanitarian interventions.101 And it must be constrained to the protection of the fundamental rights of the civilian population, and where inevitable, without the blessings of United Nations (UN) or the consent of the targeted government.102

The argument surrounding the legal basis for humanitarian intervention is defined along the camps of the “Restrictionists” and “Counter-restrictionists”.103 The Restrictionists, in justifying their stance against the notion, anchor their arguments on the Westphalian principle of sovereignty and the norm of non-intervention.104 Making allusions to Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, they argue that military humanitarian intervention is bound to be illegal since the Charter forbids interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state.105 Article 2(4) of the UN Charter states that “all members shall refrain in the international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations”.106


101 Ramsbotham and Woodhouse defined post-cold war humanitarian intervention as “… cross-border action by the international community in response to human suffering, made up of (i) “forcible humanitarian intervention”, (an expanded version of the classic concept to include collective action as well as self-help and no longer confined to human rights abuse by governments), and (ii) “non-forcible humanitarian intervention”. In Ramsbotham, O. and Woodhouse, T. (Eds.) (1996). Humanitarian Intervention in Contemporary Conflict: A Reconceptualization, Polity Press, Cambridge, p.113.


103 The Restrictionists are international lawyers who argue that humanitarian intervention violates Article 2(4) of the UN Charter and is illegal under both the UN Charter law and customary international law, and counter-restrictionists are “international lawyers who argue that there is a legal right of humanitarian intervention in both UN Charter law and customary international law”. See for example, Wheeler, N.J. and Alex J. Bellamy, A.J. (2005). “Humanitarian Intervention in World Politics”. In Baylis, J. and Smith, S. (Eds.) The Globalization of World Politics. Oxford University Press, p.561.


The Restrictionists premise their argument on the provisions of Article 2(7) which states that “nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state”. Therefore, they argue, the conferment and recognition of legal sovereignty – that is, the right to act as final law-giver in a territory and for a specific population - must be respected. Restrictionists stress the importance of the preservation of the international legal order established by the Charter which avers that:

Whatever may be the idealistic rhetoric by which military actions are justified, the system of norms ensuring the peaceful coexistence among nations—what has been known essentially as the “international rule of law”—will not only be gradually undermined but will finally collapse if an equivalent to the old jus ad bellum is introduced into international relations. This fact cannot be denied, whether the principle is introduced under the pretext of “crisis response operations”, or of outright “humanitarian intervention”. They contend that “legalizing humanitarian intervention, without Security Council authorization, would only result in the weakening of the restraints on the recourse to force and fragmentation and regionalization of the international security system”. Therefore, any interference in the internal affairs of the sovereign state in the name of “humanitarianism,” according to the Restrictionists, is an affront on the UN Charter. Humanitarian intervention, on the basis of all available definitions, as the Restrictionists argue, “would be an instrument wide open to abuse, a rule allowing humanitarian intervention is a general license to vigilantes and opportunists to resort to hegemonic intervention”.108

Admittedly, the issue of abuse and the often selective nature of humanitarian intervention are capable of damaging the fragile issue of legality and legitimacy; however, this should not deter the international community from enforcing humanitarian intervention when a government commits grave atrocities against its own citizens. As Wheeler and Bellamy ask—what would

107 Ibid.


happen if governments use “sovereignty as a license to kill?” It is the answer to this question that has motivated the “Counter-restrictionists” support for humanitarian intervention.

They argue that the UN Charter does not ban the use of force in cases where a state abuses human rights on a massive scale. And that where a tyrant “should inflict upon his subjects such a treatment as no one is warranted in inflicting,” other states may exercise a right of humanitarian intervention”. Teson argues that the belief that international law in general bars the use of force should not deter the international community from intervening in situations where it is proven that serious violations of international law, such as genocide and crimes against humanity, have occurred. Teson further notes that, regardless of whatever action we take or tolerate in the face of the violation of some fundamental rule of international law, we are indeed left with only two choices: “we either intervene or put an end to the massacres, or we abstain from intervening, in which case we will be tolerating the violation by other states of the general prohibition of gross human rights abuses”. It is the need to prevent the occurrence of this situation that often motivates the support of Counter-restrictionists for the inevitability of military intervention in the face of glaring human rights violations. Therefore, and as Stone contends, “Article 2(4) does not exclusively forbid the threat or use of force simpliciter; except when directed against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. Stone adds that so long as a “genuine humanitarian intervention does not result in territorial conquest or political subjection; it may amount to a distortion of facts to argue that humanitarian intervention is prohibited by article 2(4)”

114 Ibid., p.1.
This explains Murphy’s definition of humanitarian intervention as “the threat or use of force across state borders by a state or group of states to end widespread and grave violations of the fundamental rights of civilians”. ¹¹⁷ When a legal basis is used as a criterion for distinction, there are two basic types of humanitarian intervention, multilateral and unilateral.¹¹⁸ Multilateral humanitarian intervention is broader in scope and operations, and it is authorised by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter to deal with conflicts that could potentially result in humanitarian catastrophes or genocide.¹¹⁹ To provide a mandate for such interventions, the Security Council classifies humanitarian catastrophes as a “threat to the peace,” pursuant to Article 39 of the Charter.¹²⁰ Such multilateral interventions include those of the UN in Somalia (1992), Haiti (1994), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995), and in DRC (1999).

On the other hand, unilateral humanitarian intervention also covers situations in which more than one state is involved in the use of force, except that such interventionary acts often lack the backing of United Nations Security Council (UNSC).¹²¹ Examples of this type of intervention are the ECOWAS intervention in Liberia (1990-91) and Sierra Leone (1991-1998), the United States’ operations in Iraq (1991), and the intervention in Kosovo in 1999 by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). It is worth mentioning that there are a number of similar and distinguishing features between multilateral and unilateral interventions.

A common denominator for both is the use of military force, and the fact that the intervening force(s) is/are usually more than one state, while the key to distinguishing between them lies in the approving or sanctioning authority. For an intervention to be considered multilateral, its mandate, scope and operation must be backed by the UN through a UNSC resolution, but a unilateral intervention does not necessarily need the approval of the UNSC, as the intervening force(s) do so in their capacity as members of a sub-regional bloc, or in some cases, as interested state-actors.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p.11.
¹¹⁹ Ibid., p.1227.
¹²⁰ Ibid., p.1227.
¹²¹ Ibid., p.1227.
It is noteworthy that, for the rest of the study, our assessment of Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention role in conflicts shall be viewed from the lenses of unilateral humanitarian intervention, given that both interventions lacked the backing of UNSC, albeit, under the concept of peacekeeping. It is pertinent to mention however that there are controversies surrounding the concept of humanitarian intervention, most notably, issues surrounding the legality and illegality of such interventions. Here, five opinions exist. The first, according to Rogers, is that unilateral humanitarian intervention finds no support in current international law.122

According to this view, the prohibition on the use of force in Article 2(4) of the Charter must be interpreted restrictively as allowing no exceptions except the right of self-defence according to Article 51 of the Charter, together with Security Council actions under Chapter VII.123 The opponents of this intervention equate its legalisation to the “opening of a Pandora Box”.124 They make reference to the ICJ’s half-century-old dicta from the “Corfu Channel case”,125 and contend that intervention would be reserved for the most powerful states.126 They further warn against the danger of abuse of the right of unilateral humanitarian intervention, and are sceptical about any use of force invoking humanitarian reasons.127 And that no authority for unilateral humanitarian intervention is found in customary international law either, because Article 2(4) of

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125 On 22 October 1946 in the Corfu Strait, two British destroyers struck mines in Albanian waters and suffered damage, including serious loss of life. On 22 May 1947, the Government of the United Kingdom filed an application instituting proceedings against the Government of the People's Republic of Albania seeking a decision to the effect that the Albanian Government was internationally responsible for the consequences of the incident and must make reparation or pay compensation. Albania, on its part had submitted a counter-claim against the United Kingdom for having violated Albanian territorial waters. On 9 April 1949, the Court found that Albania was responsible for the explosions and for the resulting damage and loss of human life suffered by the United Kingdom.
the Charter replaced all existing customary international rules regulating the use of force and has not been modified by any new customary international rule.\textsuperscript{128}

The second opinion, according to Orford, holds that unilateral humanitarian intervention is “illegal but legitimate,” given the unique circumstances of a particular humanitarian catastrophe.\textsuperscript{129} And it is the inevitability of situations where the international community must act outside positive law in ways that are legitimate because of the demands of morality and justice.\textsuperscript{130} This school of thought premises their arguments on justice, morality, or necessity.\textsuperscript{131} They ask: If we start to create exceptions, would we really be able to talk about something like the international rule of law?\textsuperscript{132} Nevertheless, as Valek notes, the approach remains one of the possible ways of resolving the legal dilemma between human rights protection and the Charters’ rules on the use of force.\textsuperscript{133}

The third opinion hinges the legality of unilateral humanitarian intervention on the assumption that customary international rules allowing self-help survived the Charter and exists in parallel with it, and that treaty-law and customary international law “retain a separate existence”.\textsuperscript{134} Scholars have however described this theory as “not very convincing”.\textsuperscript{135} They note that “all customary international law regulating the use of force in contradiction with Article 2(4) and other Charter provisions ceased to exist after the Charter had been adopted”,\textsuperscript{136} and that

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p.1228.
  \item \textsuperscript{129} Orford, A. (2003). Reading Humanitarian Intervention, Human Rights and the use of force in International Law. Cambridge University Press, p.44.
  \item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid., p.44.
  \item \textsuperscript{131} Ibid., p.44.
  \item \textsuperscript{132} Ibid., p.44.
\end{itemize}
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unilateral humanitarian intervention was clearly part of the pre-Charter customary international law.\textsuperscript{137}

The fourth opinion deploys customary international law to defend the legality of unilateral humanitarian intervention, albeit, on a new emerging rule.\textsuperscript{138} It argues that “in theory, the Charter could be changed by a new rule of customary international law which conforms to the general maxim of \textit{lex posterior derodat priori}”.\textsuperscript{139} As developed by Wallace, such a rule derives its legal basis from the possession of two elements: (i) a material (state practice) and (ii) psychological (\textit{opinio juris}).\textsuperscript{140} The notion that unilateral humanitarian intervention is legal when viewed from the material sense holds that such acts can take place as long as the underlying motive is purely humanitarian.

However, in the history of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, it is very hard to find any undisputed case of unilateral intervention with purely humanitarian objectives.\textsuperscript{141} The 1999 Kosovo intervention, the Indian intervention in East Pakistan in 1971, the Vietnamese intervention in Cambodia in 1978, the Tanzanian intervention in Uganda in 1979, Nigeria’s intervention in Chad in 1980, and South Africa’s intervention in Lesotho in 1998, among others, remind us of instances where objectives, other than humanitarian grounds, served as key motivations. Like material element, scholars have noted that “\textit{opinio juris} is even harder to prove”,\textsuperscript{142} because no state would accept the argument that its affairs could be subjected to the intervention of another state legally or illegally.

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\item \textsuperscript{139} \textit{lex posterior derodat priori} is a latin maxim which implies “a legal rule arising after a conflicting legal rule”. For more, see: Malanczuk, P. (1997). \textit{Akehurst's Modern Introduction to international law}. Taylor and Francis: London, p.56.
\item \textsuperscript{140} \textit{Opinio juris} or opinion of law is the belief that an action is carried out as a legal obligation. This is in contrast to an action resulting from cognitive reaction or behaviours habitual to an individual. See for example: Wallace, R.M. (2002). \textit{International Law}, (4th edition). Sweet & Maxwell Publishers, p.9
\item \textsuperscript{142} Ibid., p.1231.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
The last legal opinion on unilateral humanitarian intervention claims that this type of intervention is compatible with Article 2(4) of the Charter, because such intervention does not violate the territorial integrity or the political independence of any state, since its objective is to stop the atrocities and not to annex part of the state’s territory or create a dependent colonial government.\textsuperscript{143} They admit that it is true that the right of unilateral humanitarian intervention could be abused. Nevertheless, any right can be abused. A very good example, as they note, is the right of self-defence, which was subject to abuses by states in the last century. They ask: is the possibility of abuse a reason for abolishing this right?\textsuperscript{144}

Deducible from the foregoing is that the legality of the concept of unilateral humanitarian intervention is complicated and controversial, and it raises a number of questions. First is the question of whether a unilateral humanitarian intervention can occur without a regime change since the fundamental essence of intervening is to terminate widespread atrocities and possible genocide. Second, in the eventuality of a regime change, would the action not lead to a violation of the territorial integrity or the political independence of the target state?

In this context, I would argue that the possibility or otherwise of a regime change in the event of a unilateral humanitarian intervention is dependent on the party committing the perceived atrocities. If the human right crimes are being perpetrated by a government (Party A) against its people, as it was the case in Uganda in 1978, regime change would at some point feature in the game plan of the intervening force(s). Therefore, since every regime change creates a power vacuum, a temporary authority has to be installed to take over the control of government, and for this authority to succeed; it needs the support of the intervening force(s). In effect, it is the provision of this support that ultimately leads to the loss of territorial integrity and/or the political independence of the target state, as found in Iraq in 2003.

To mitigate widespread criticism that accompanies regime change, and demonstrate to the international community that unilateral humanitarian intervention is not a violation of the international law of non-interference, or at least, a clear-cut case of non-humanitarian use of

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., p.1231.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., p.1250.
force, unilateral interveners point to the “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P) doctrine.\textsuperscript{145} The R2P doctrine advocates possible remedies, including military intervention, to avoid or to put an end to massive violations of human rights committed by a state towards its own citizens or in situations where state authorities critically lack effectiveness.\textsuperscript{146}

The doctrine argues that any wait for states’ consent to a limitation to their sovereignty while massacres occur, without being able to intervene, has clearly appeared morally unsatisfactory.\textsuperscript{147} And it is believed to be in response to the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s question: “if humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica—to gross and systematic violations of human rights that affect every precept of our common humanity?”\textsuperscript{148}

Termed the 2001 Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), the report addresses the question of possible remedies to avoid massacres in civil wars, insurrections, acts of state repression and failed states by first changing the nominal label of the problem, namely by posing the question in terms of responsibility to protect rather than in terms of humanitarian intervention.\textsuperscript{149} The report further argues (in para. 2.4) that the language of past debates arguing for or against a “right to intervene” by one state on the territory of another state is out dated and unhelpful\textsuperscript{150}.

The intention of the ICISS (as contained in para. 6.17) was to promote – and hence to do so as effectively as possible – a new international law regime capable of solving a no-longer evadable problem.\textsuperscript{151} The reports’ central idea is that “in today’s globalized world, sovereignty as control (typical of the so-called Westphalian system), must give way to sovereignty as responsibility,

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., Pp.191-213.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., p.193.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., p.194.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., p.194.
both external towards other states, and internal towards citizens, as a result of the dramatically growing impact of international norms on human rights, and the concept of human security. As it is the case with other arguments against unilateral humanitarian intervention, critics have argued that the “R2P doctrine” suffers from a number of deficiencies. As they note, “the opposition between control and responsibility is neither clear, nor does it appear coherent within the report, and it underscores in various points that sovereignty (as control) is still necessary inter alia to respect and ensure respect for human rights. Second, they oppose the reports’ claim (in para. 1.34) that “a cohesive and peaceful international system is far more likely to be achieved through the cooperation of effective states, confident of their place in the world, than in an environment of fragile, collapsed, fragmenting or generally chaotic state entities, and its emphasis on the need for sovereignty to be limited”. They contend that “state sovereignty has always been limited in one way or another, the problem being to determine what different and new limits it has today rather than theoretically contrasting an old concept to another which is supposed to reach more consensus”. Third, they fault the reports’ submission (in para. 2.27) that there is a large and accumulating body of law and practice which supports the notion that whatever form the exercise of that responsibility may take, members of the broad community of states do have a responsibility to protect both their own citizens and those of other states as well.

Opponents of the R2P doctrine argue that “clearly, if no problems arise in respect of existing treaty norms on human rights and international humanitarian law, the appeal to natural law can hardly go unnoticed and raise doubts, because States are not inclined to accept natural law as a source of international law”. Lastly, they contest the claim made by the R2P doctrine that “the new concept of sovereignty, understood more as responsibility than control, gives rise to three

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152 Ibid., p.194.
153 Ibid., p.194.
154 Ibid., p.194.
155 Ibid., p.194.
158 Ibid., p.196.
types of responsibility, or tasks or duties—of both individual states and the international community as a whole: the responsibility to prevent, to react and to rebuild”.  

As a response, they argue that “the duty to protect is in the first place vested with the state in whose territory the violation of human rights is occurring, and that it is only when this state proves unable or unwilling to discharge the duty to prevent that the international community’s duty to react as a whole would set off”. They submit that “this duty should preferably be discharged by peaceful measures, ranging from early warning mechanisms through development assistance to economic sanctions, but can ultimately also take the form of military intervention”. In sum, whichever side the argument for unilateral intervention is examined from, it appears there will be no consensus on the justifiability or otherwise for humanitarian intervention in general, and unilateral intervention in particular. Rather, it is the desirability, relevance, degree of acceptability, and the extent of its enforceability in the target state that determines the legitimacy or otherwise of humanitarian intervention.

In Africa, the legal basis justifying the necessity for intervention in conflicts is embedded in Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000). This Act authorises the AU to “intervene in a member state, pursuant to the decision of its Assembly of Heads of State and Heads of Government in situations where ‘grave atrocities’, such as, war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity are being committed against the citizens”. By way of classification, diplomatic and military interventions have been noted as the two most common types of intervention.

While the former refers to the use of other persuasive tools in negotiating for peace among warring parties as seen in former President Mandela’s peace efforts in Burundi in 2003, and that

159 Ibid., p.196.
160 Ibid., p.196.
161 Ibid., p.196.
of former President Obasanjo in Sao Tome and Principe in 2003,\textsuperscript{164} the latter involves the actual deployment of military troops as peacekeepers, as Nigeria and South Africa did in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) and the DRC (1997 and 2005) respectively. Peacekeeping refers to the deployment of military and sometimes civilian personnel under international command and control, usually after a ceasefire has been achieved and with the consent of the parties. Others view the concept as a form of conflict control that restores and maintains peace.\textsuperscript{165}

Another school of thought refers to the concept as a host of third-party interventions and actions, which ranges from preventative diplomacy to humanitarian assistance and military enforcement of agreements or UN mandates.\textsuperscript{166} By unilateral humanitarian intervention, this study refers to Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention acts under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the case of Nigeria in Sierra Leone, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in the case of South Africa in the DRC.

It is imperative to note that the African continent has a long history of being anti-intervention, given its experience with colonialism and the hard-fought independence process most of its states went through. Scholars have in fact noted that “Africa, after an initial period of political quarrelling over the concept of unity, African governments emerged as the most enthusiastic supporters of the ‘pluralist’ conception of international society—that is, a society of sovereign states”.\textsuperscript{167} Independence, as Mayall observes, was as seen as an end in itself; it was, therefore, self-evident that African rights would be better protected under indigenous than under alien and/or racist rule, and, one of the main reasons for establishing the OAU in 1963, was to reduce the vulnerability of African states to external intervention.\textsuperscript{168}

Africa’s principled commitment to territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic affairs was buttressed by the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU’s) adoption in 1964 of the principle


of *uti possidetis, ita possideatis*: “as you possess so you may possess”.\(^{169}\) Despite the maxim’s Latin American origin, and dating back to the 19\(^{th}\) century, African states revived this principle in the 20\(^{th}\) century, before it was accepted by the international community as a whole in the efforts to confine self-determination to European decolonisation and deny the legitimacy of secession. Nonetheless, scholars have argued that there are at least four reasons Africa has been, and seems likely to continue to be the testing ground for the theory and practice of humanitarian intervention.\(^{170}\)

The first, Africa has accounted for at least 30 civil wars since 1970, with the vast majority of them intra-state in origin.\(^{171}\) In 1996 alone, a year in which the discussion on humanitarian intervention was particularly pertinent, 14 of the 53 (now 54) countries of Africa were afflicted by armed conflicts, accounting for more than half of all war-related deaths worldwide and resulting in more than 8 million refugees, returnees and displaced persons.\(^{172}\) Second, and as Mayall states, “in many parts of the continent, the state itself is in crisis. Most African states are extremely fragile, partly because control of state institutions is regarded as a prize in a ferocious competition, where the stakes are high and the players employ ruthless methods”.\(^{173}\)

The experiences of Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and at present, South Sudan, bear witness to this question of state fragility in Africa, and why proponents of humanitarian intervention are winning the argument in Africa. Third, the disturbing absence of fit between Western interests and African needs after the cold war ended meant that the majority of sub-Saharan African countries featured less in the geostrategic priorities of the West; despite the support its leaders gave to international stability.\(^{174}\) This apathy towards Africa compelled local powers to be more interested in containing the spillover of local conflicts, resulting in the enactment of Article 4(h) by the African Union to contain most of these spillovers.\(^{175}\)

\(^{169}\) Ibid., p.5.
\(^{170}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{171}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{172}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{173}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{174}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{175}\) Ibid., p.9.
The enactment of Article 4(h) meant that the African Union can (and has been called upon) to intervene “in respect of grave crises namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity”, while Article 4(j) gives the member-states the “right to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and stability”.\(^\text{176}\) This is evident in the AU’s intervention role in the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) in 1995 and African-led Intervention Support in Mali (AFISMA) in 2013. Finally, the absence of strong external interest meant that Africa remains a testing ground for the evolving theory and practice of humanitarian intervention, and these efforts will continue to be dominated by the UN, and sub-regional institutions, such as ECOWAS and the SADC.\(^\text{177}\) In the chapters that follow, particularly from chapters’ four to seven, we will explore the extent to which Nigeria and South Africa discharged these self-imposed interventionary responsibilities, by focusing on both countries’ foreign policy behaviour and how they speak to their conflict intervention roles from the humanitarian intervention perspective.

### 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the essential issues embedded in the concept of intervention. In particular, the key focus has been on the distinguishing characteristics between the two main types of intervention in international politics: unilateral and humanitarian. To achieve this, the chapter reviewed the definitional issues, its various classifications, and the legal and moral debates surrounding the intervention debate. As the literature review on the concept has shown, the chapter finds that Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) and the DRC (1997-2005), can be contextualised within the framework of unilateral intervention. In the succeeding chapter, a broad description of structural realism and social constructivism, two competing IR approaches which serves as the analytical lenses for our assessment of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa is in focus.

\(^{176}\) Ibid., p.9.
\(^{177}\) Ibid., p.9.
Chapter 3: The Battle of Ideas: Structural Realism versus Social Constructivism

3.1 Introduction

As highlighted in the introductory chapter, the nature and significance of Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention roles in Africa are relatively underexplored. To the extent that the literature pays attention to these roles, a limited theoretical palette is employed. To rectify this, this thesis deliberately employs more than one theoretical perspective to highlight a wider variety of perspectives on a complex phenomenon and tries to determine the relative merits of the different theoretical approaches employed. As the term implies, different “perspectives” allow the analyst, on the one hand, to highlight and profile a variety of dimensions that may remain obscure if only one “view” is explored. On the other hand, the term “perspective” also implies a view from a specific point of observation.

In the case of foreign policy analysis, theoretical constructs provide relevant points of observation. It is the purpose of this chapter to present the main features of the two theoretical perspectives presented in the introduction, to be particularly relevant to the study of Nigeria and South Africa’s respective policies towards the rest of Africa—structural realism and social constructivism. Structural realism and social constructivism both have a long and distinguished pedigree, and it is impossible exhaustively to treat both in a short chapter like this. Rather than focusing on the genealogy of these theories, this chapter focuses on their main analytical contributions, highlighting their potential contribution to understanding the variety of constituents of foreign policy behaviour in general, and conflict intervention in particular.

The central theme that emerges in the pages that follow is how the two perspectives deal with crucial concepts: national interests, relative gains, and national identity. To pre-empt the discussion that follows, structural realism emphasises that the relative position a state occupies in structural relationships that are primarily determined by the distribution of material power resources, determines the state’s national interests and role conceptions. It could be inferred that material structure constitutes agency. On the other hand, social constructivism relegates
“national interests” to a secondary, derivative position. Pride of place in the explanatory stakes goes to “identity”; that is, a set of shared meanings that are socially-constructed within a society as well as in interactions that transcend national borders.

In their own right, these shared meanings form structural constraints on, and provide incentives for action, particularly the identification and articulation of national interests. Ontologically speaking, meaning (identity) precedes interests. Thus, while social constructivism shares a focus with structural realism on the structural determinants of behaviour, the two perspectives differ diametrically about the nature and constituents of the relative structures. This chapter’s major focus is to present the major concepts and arguments related to structural realism and social constructivism, with a view to setting the stage for the examination (in chapter 8) of the extent to which their applications, as IR approaches, explain Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention roles and foreign policy behaviour in Africa.

### 3.2 Structural Realism

Historically, realism is not a theory that can be defined by an explicit set of assumptions and propositions.\(^\text{178}\) While some view it as a general orientation and philosophical disposition\(^\text{179}\), to others, it is a set of normative emphases which shapes theory.\(^\text{180}\) Another school of thought views it as an attitude of the mind with a distinctive and recognisable flavour.\(^\text{181}\) As such, it remains one of the most relevant theories in explaining the nature of the international system and the behaviour of significant actors in it.\(^\text{182}\) Its defenders claim that realism views the world from an empirical point of view, rather than from a normative context. It claims to see the world the way it is and not how it should be.\(^\text{183}\) According to Jackson and Sorensen, realism is cynical in nature

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owing to the fact that it emphasises the recurrent patterns of power politics, as manifested by recurring conflicts, rivalries and wars.\footnote{184}{Jackson, R. and Sorensen, G. (2007) \textit{Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches}. New York: Oxford University Press, p.9.}

Taliaferro et al. have identified three first principles and core assumptions of realism as a general approach in politics.\footnote{185}{Taliaferro, J.W., Lobell, S.E., and Ripsman, N.M. (Eds.) (2009). \textit{Neoclassical Realism, The State, and Foreign Policy}. Cambridge University Press, p.14.} First is the notion that human beings cannot survive as individuals, but rather as members of larger groups that command their loyalty and provide some measure of security from external enemies.\footnote{186}{Ibid., p.14.} Tribalism, as they argue, remains an immutable fact of political and social life, thus all variants of realism are inherently group-centric.\footnote{187}{Ibid., p.14.} The second assumption is that politics is a perpetual struggle among self-interested groups under conditions of general scarcity and uncertainty. These scarce commodities, as they note, could be over material capabilities, or social resources, such as prestige and status.\footnote{188}{Ibid., p.14.} This implies that groups face pervasive uncertainty about one another’s present and future intentions.\footnote{189}{Schweller, R.L. (1999). “Realism and the Present Greta Power System: Growth and Positional Conflict over Scarce Resources”. In Kapstein, E.B. and Mastanduno, M. (Eds.) \textit{Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies after the Cold War}. New York: Columbia University Press.}

The third assumption is that power is a necessary requirement for any group to secure its goals, regardless of whether those goals are universal domination or simply self-preservation.\footnote{190}{Gilpin, R. (1996). “No one loves a political realist”. \textit{Security Studies}, 5(3), Pp.3-26.} Structural Realism in IR applies these three general ideas to the world of international politics, which by definition it sees as anarchic, that is, without effective centralised power. For structural realists, the state represents the most important political reference point. Secondly, and given the nature of the international system, states are relatively secure or insecure depending on the actual positions that they occupy in the structures formed by the distribution of power resources. This implies, thirdly, that decision makers acting on behalf of states are compellingly motivated by a desire to maximise the relative power positions of their states.
This compulsion to achieve relative power preponderance as a precondition for security does not necessarily mean, as classical Realists assumed, that people are motivated by what Morgenthau referred to as *animus dominandi*, the desire for power per se. What motivates decision makers, a structural realist such as Kenneth Waltz would argue, are the incentives and constraints that flow from their state’s relative position within international (and regional) complexes of power.

In his contribution to realism, Morgenthau presents the state as a collective reflection of political man’s lust for power and the unit which carries out its impulses at the international stage. The state, according to Morgenthau, is the object and agent pursuing power in international politics and, anarchy, “is not the deep cause of power competition but a vital permissive force”. Morgenthau notes that, in a hierarchical order, the pursuit of power would be abolished as and will be constrained by a *global leviathan*. To be sure, Morgenthau’s approach has been criticised by other schools of thought, particularly the Waltzian school, which calls him “a first image theorist”, and criticises his arguments on three accounts.

First, Waltz argues that Morgenthau’s account of human nature is entirely hypothetical as it is impossible to empirically verify what the true human nature is, thus making the validity of his thesis impossible to assess. Second, Waltz critiques Morgenthau’s essentialist conception that human nature is problematic, for a constant cannot explain variation. Put differently, and as Waltz argues, accepting Morgenthau’s claim would mean accepting that “if human nature was the cause of war in 1914, it was by the same token, the cause of peace in 1910”. Lastly, Waltz contests Morgenthau’s reductionist attempt to explain the whole by the sum of its parts, and

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191 A Latin expression which argues that the relation between power and interest is a crucial one, because without interest, there is no power. The doctrine connotes that the desire for power can be translated as a will to give precedence to one's own interest without taking any circumstances into consideration, because power is an end in itself.
193 Ibid., p.477.
194 Ibid., p.477.
196 Ibid., p.166.
197 Ibid.,p.166.
198 Ibid., p.28.
argues that reductionism is inadequate in explaining why the patterns of international politics constantly reoccur, even though the actors and their character are in a constant change.\textsuperscript{199}

Waltz, in his theoretical response to Morgenthau’s work, posits that the anarchical international system inevitably leads to the logic of self-help and power politics, and when states struggle for power, they are simply following the dictates of the international system in order to survive in an international order where there is no global leviathan to offer them protection.\textsuperscript{200} Evolving from Waltz’ thesis is an attempt to restrict himself to the systemic level and avoid reductionism, but this attempt in itself is not without shortcomings given his theory’s dependence on the unit-level in order to function. As some scholars note, “Waltzian structuralism presupposes state preferences, given that international anarchy cannot possibly impel states to struggle for power if they do not share any ambitions.”\textsuperscript{201}

It seems Waltz is well aware of this point, hence his interference at the second level of analysis by assuming that states pursue strategies for survival, in order to operationalise his theory.\textsuperscript{202} Waltz’ argues further that to structural realists, “ideology, form of government, peacefulness, or bellicosity” matters less in the scheme of things”, what does, is the ‘distribution of power and capabilities” as a state can choose to intervene in a conflict in furtherance of its pursuit for relative power. Like other variants of realism, structural realism holds a number of assumptions. First, that politics is a perpetual struggle for power among different states for material power and security in a world of scarce resources, and pervasive uncertainties.\textsuperscript{203}

Second, anarchy is seen as the absence of a universal sovereign or worldwide government, and it is the permissive cause of international conflict. Lastly, systemic forces create incentives for all states to strive for greater efficiency in providing security for themselves.\textsuperscript{204} Structural realism emphasises the role of state actors in foreign policy-making, particularly, how domestic

\textsuperscript{200} Ibid., p.87.
\textsuperscript{204} Ibid., p.4.
Considerations shape a state’s behaviour, and leads to outcomes at the system level. Structural realists believe that the systemic account of world politics as contained in structural realism is incomplete and supplementing the approach with other unit level variables such as how power is perceived and how leadership is exercised is crucial to understanding the workings of the international system.  

Classical (human-nature) and neo-classical (structural) realism are the two main types of realism prevalent in modern international relations discourses. Embedded in classical realism is the assumption that politics is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature and that international politics can be best understood when, viewed from the perspective of interests, defined in terms of power. On the other hand, neoclassical realism argues that the scope and ambition of a country’s foreign policy is driven by its relative material power, and that systemic pressures must be translated through intervening unit-level variables such as decision-makers’ perceptions and state actions. By way of distinction, scholars contend that there are at least four distinguishing features between classical and neoclassical realism.

First, while classical realism locate the roots of international conflict and war in an imperfect human nature, neoclassical realism maintain that its deep causes are found in the anarchic international system. Second, the state is ontologically superior to the system in classical realism, in contrast to neoclassical realism, allowing more space for agency in the former approach. Third, classical realism differentiates between status-quo powers and revisionist powers, while neoclassical realism regards states as unitary actors. Lastly, while neoclassical realism attempts to construct a more rigorous and scientific approach to the study of international

209 Ibid., p.17.  
210 Ibid., p.17.  
politics, heavily influenced by the behaviourist revolution of the 1960s, classical realism limits its analyses to subjective valuations of international relations.\textsuperscript{212}

According to Powell, the division between two of the most influential approaches to the study of international relations theory (neoliberal institutionalism and structural realism) is traceable to the importance attached to absolute and relative gains by both schools of thought.\textsuperscript{213} Neoliberal institutionalists focus primarily on their individual absolute gains and are indifferent to the gains of others. In other words, neo-liberals claim that “whether cooperation results in a relative gain or loss is not very important to a state so long as it brings an absolute gain”.\textsuperscript{214} By interpretation, the “absolute gain” theory measures the total effect, comprising power, security, economic, and cultural effects of an action, and is thus indifferent to relative gains, referring to it instead, as a non-zero-sum game. In contrast, the structural realist is single-minded in emphasising that what matters, ultimately, are “relative gains” and how these affect the balance of power.

Since international interaction is a zero-sum game, with no recourse to a higher authority, states have to compete with each other to increase their own benefits, no matter whether all sides involved will be better off collectively. The policy advice that realists thus give is that states should be cautious of their collaborators and keep track of relative gains.\textsuperscript{215} Present allies strengthened by greater relative gains, according to realists, might turn out to be enemies in the future and the worries of aiding potential foes through cooperation constitute another fundamental barrier to cooperation.\textsuperscript{216} In reality, states always keep an eye on each other, even during the honeymoon period of bilateral relations. Thus, in line with this logic, regardless of the absolute gains, a relative loss or smaller relative gain (relative to those of the competitors) can be regarded as a loss for states.\textsuperscript{217}

\textsuperscript{214} Ibid., p.1303.
\textsuperscript{215} Ibid., p.1303.
Structural realism also contends that universal moral principles cannot be applied to the action of states, because a state can choose to intervene in a conflict based on interests, as seen for example, in Russia’s annexation of Crimea, Ukraine in 2014, and the invasion of Iraq by the United States in 2003. However, a state can also intervene against its own interests, when issues such as support for norms and humanitarian intervention, as evident in the US intervention in Somalia in 1993. Noteworthy is the fact that structural realism as a framework for understanding world politics is characterised by a stiff competition for power mainly among a small number of powerful states.

These competitions could either be for the purpose of creating a hegemonic status for itself, for the regulation of the balance of power in the international system, or out of fear or suspicion that a state could be attacked by a more powerful state, as we saw under Hitler’s Nazi Germany, Mussolini’s Fascist Italy, and Stalin’s Soviets Union. In structural realism, changes in the structure of the system, according to Waltz, are distinct from changes at the unit level, and changes in polarity also affect how states provide for their security. Significant changes as Waltz contends, take place when the number of great powers reduces to two or one and, when more than two states rely for their security both on their internal efforts and alliances they may make with others. Competition in multipolar systems is more complicated than competition in bipolar ones because uncertainties about the comparative capabilities of states multiply as numbers grow, and estimates of the cohesiveness and strength of coalitions are hard to make.

Structural realism equally focuses on the objective nature of the international system, and its view of a state behaviour from the vantage point of individual states (including national attributes, national interests and domestic politics). The approach holds that the international system is anarchic, although this does not mean the permanent existence of chaos and perpetual conflict, but the absence of permanent or universal authority in the international system.

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220 Ibid., p.5.

regulating states’ behaviour. At the heart of structural realism is the notion that state actions and behaviours are stirred by national interests, and can override certain international values and norms such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

According to structural realists, the interests of nation-states changes from time to time as they modify their policies and transform their means of engagement to adjust to the unchangeable anarchical structure of the international system. Structural realism is thus fundamentally premised on the pillars of “statism, self-help and survival”, all of which will be applied in chapter 8 to explain the motivating factors underpinning Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and their intervention roles in Africa. The point has to be made however that the advent of globalisation has considerably redefined the way state actors intervene in conflicts. Increasingly, globalisation has become what Igor Ivanov calls an “ever more influential architect of the new international security agenda”, but its impact on the evolution of the relations among states in this key area is contradictory.

On the one hand, globalisation contributes to accelerated development of productive forces, scientific and technological progress and ever more-intensive communication among states and peoples. Through globalisation, the resource base and the intellectual potential for ensuring international security at a qualitatively new level has been strengthened. Similarly, there has been a growing interdependence of both state and non-state actors in the generation of new political approaches aimed at creating democratic multilateral mechanisms of managing the international system and hence reliable solution to the security problems.

While both Nigeria and South Africa, each in their own way, confront the challenges presented by globalisation, the most important contexts for their foreign policies are the respective regions in which they operate. In terms familiar to structural realists, these two states find themselves in a regionally defined struggle for relative gains against potential rivals, and it is this regional context, rather than any other consideration, that must be employed to understand their foreign

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224 Ibid., p.243.
policy behaviour. As argued by Fawcett, regions, given their potential socio-economic and political benefits, have grown to become an important concept in the discourse on how the global order is constituted as they provide a significant complementary layer of governance.\textsuperscript{226}

For Mansfield and Milner, a region represents an arrangement between independent states, made more feasible by the existence of close geographical proximity and very strong cultural, economic, linguistic, or political ties.\textsuperscript{227} Although Fawn has argued that a region does not necessarily need to have institutional forms to be one, how a region moves from using its shared identifiers to more formalised interactions and even institutionalisation deserves some mention.\textsuperscript{228} By accident of history and geography, Nigeria and South Africa are both overbearing presences in the regional distribution of power in West and Southern Africa.

A case in point in this regard is the dominance of Nigeria in West Africa where it accounts for more than 51 per cent of the sub-region’s gross domestic product (GDP), estimated at about $375,771b.\textsuperscript{229} Similarly, South Africa, with a GDP of $349,419b, accounts for more than 60 per cent of the combined estimate of the 15-member SADC.\textsuperscript{230} Similarly, between Nigeria and South Africa is a combined value of at least 25 per cent of Africa’s GDP, and at least 25.7 per cent of Africa’s population.\textsuperscript{231} What these statistics suggest is that Nigeria and South Africa wield enormous influence in their respective sub-regions, and can effectively use this soft power to influence the leadership direction of their subregional organisations and the African Union if desired.

This possibility again reinforces the core elements of the power assumption which maintains that states seek power and calculate interest in terms of power either as an end in itself, or a means to

\textsuperscript{231} Ibid.
an end as embedded in structural realism. Another potential advantage embedded in the concept of regionalism, as Fawn notes, is its tendency to further the interest of realists in a subregion when utilised as a conflict management mechanism.\textsuperscript{232} This can be deployed in a number of ways to resolve crises on the grounds of the shared history, geographical contiguity, and economic bond which states belonging to a particular region or subregion often share.

This was evident in the “quiet diplomacy” approach of President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa during the 2008 disputed elections in Zimbabwe and that of former President Obasanjo of Nigeria in Togo in the wake of the crises that greeted its presidential elections of 2005. Equally important is the fact that Nigeria and South Africa, when located within the discourse on the structural factors shaping regionalism and regional gigantism, can at times exhibit a foreign policy behaviour suggestive of how structural realists think in their sub-regions. As argued by Muntschick, the central argument of the structural approach to the thesis of regionalism is that it distinguishes between several ideal types of problematic situations, which suggest various degrees of conduciveness to cooperation and the formation of common regulative institutions.

In addition, the situation structural model assumes that intervening context variables can have an effect on the likelihood that institutionalised regional cooperation will occur.\textsuperscript{233} Consequently, where there is a prevailing backdrop of a strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence between regional and third actors, it is likely to impact the genuine structure inherent in a regional problematic situation towards a more cooperation-aversive situation.\textsuperscript{234} However, where there is an existence of a strong asymmetric intra-regional interdependence between states at the regional level, a state in a relative power position (such as Nigeria and South Africa) may be able to influence the institutional design and success of the regional cooperation project, and provide for more attractive alternative exit options for regional actors during negotiations on second-order problems.\textsuperscript{235}

\textsuperscript{234} Ibid., Pp.1-29.
\textsuperscript{235} Ibid., Pp.1-29.
Alternatively, such a state can also undermine the capacity of regional institutions to achieve effectiveness, if the deliberations or negotiations are not in its favour. This further reinforces the nexus between the realist leanings embedded in Regionalism, given its capacity to further the position of the leading (sub or) regional power as evident in the case of Nigeria through ECOWAS and that of South Africa through SADC. The influence of an external actor, when deliberately skewed in its favour, can alter an institutionalised (sub) regional cooperation, as seen in the case of Nigeria, which has consistently manipulated the economic framework of ECOWAS to reflect its national/long term economic policies/ambitions.

A further testament to this is the ongoing debate regarding the acceptability of the country’s national currency (the naira) as a unit of exchange in a number of countries in the West African subregion, and the ongoing debate over the naira’s adoption as a mono-currency for the subregion. Similarly, South Africa, given its substantial contribution towards the SADC budget, is in an advantaged position to alter the subregional institutional arrangement in its favour when it deems fit. Consequently, when situated within the discourse on structural realism, and its nexus with regionalism, Nigeria and South Africa, to a large extent, can (and often) employ/enforce their gigantic socio-economic and political standing to suit their hegemonic dominance and ambitions in their respective sub-regions.

The next section examines the arguments embedded in social constructivism, with a view to laying the background for its application as a framework for explaining Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Chapter 8.
3.3 Social Constructivism

The end of the Cold War in 1989 opened up a new space for alternative explanatory perspectives in international relations, leading critically-inclined scholars to move away from the hitherto narrowly-defined theoretical explanations critique. By the beginning of the 1990s, a new generation of young scholars emerged and initiated a new line of enquiry or speculation about world politics, called constructivism. Led by Friedrich Kratochwil, Nicolas Onuf and Alexander Wendt, this school of thought proposed constructivist ideas as a genuinely-radical alternative to conventional international relations (IR) theories. Their line of enquiry focused on rejecting the assumptions that both neorealists and neoliberals shared, in particular the assumption that behaviour can be “rationally” reconstructed without reference to processes of “meaning construction.”.

By that, constructivists do not deny that realists and liberals sometimes focus on the role of ideas in explaining behaviour. What they do react against is the notion that these ideational factors are mere reflections of material-structural or institutional practices. For constructivists, the very process of the (social) construction of beliefs and how these in turn shape interests and interest-driven behaviour should be the focus of explanation. In addition, social constructivists react against the assumptions of methodological individualism they perceive to underlie the narrow rationalism that realism and liberalism inherited from the micro-economics revolution in post-World War II social science. Instead, constructivists emphasise the processes of collective meaning-creation and meaning-attribution that the alternative interpretative tradition, following Max Weber and phenomenological-hermeneutics, highlights.

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Three basic forms of constructivism (systemic, unit level, and holistic) arose from these debates in the early 1990s. The first is systemic constructivism which follows neorealists in adopting a “third stage” perspective, by focusing solely on interactions between unitary state actors. In systemic constructivism, it is argued that everything that exists or occurs within the domestic political realm is ignored, and on account of world politics, is derived simply by theorising how states relate to another in the external international domain. Unit level constructivism explains external behaviour by concentrating on the domestic processes of meaning creation and how domestically-generated social norms and identities shape the interests and interest-driven behaviour of states.

It has been argued that this variant of constructivism does not adequately explain the similarities between states, and patterns of convergence in state identity and interests. Hence, holistic constructivism attempts to overcome the traditional dichotomy between the international and the domestic, by accommodating the entire range of meaning-creation processes that condition the identities and interests of states. To achieve this, holistic constructivists bring the corporate and the social together into a unified analytical perspective that treats the domestic and the international, as two faces of a single social and political order. They concern themselves primarily with the dynamics of global change, particularly, the rise and possible demise of the sovereign state, and focus on the mutually-constitutive relationship between this order and the state.

Consequently, the failure to explain systemic transformations that occurred in the 1990s encouraged this new generation of scholars to re-examine old questions and issues long viewed through neorealist and neoliberal lenses. Like all other social theories, the crux of rational choice is its tendency to ask some questions and not others, and treating the identities and

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242 Ibid., p.200.
243 Ibid., p.200.
244 Ibid., p.201.
245 Ibid., p.201.
246 Ibid., p.201.
247 Ibid., p.201.
interests of agents as exogenously-given and focusing on how the behaviour of agents generates outcomes. Constructivism challenges the rationalist thinking in three important respects. First, where rationalists assume that actors are atomistic egoists, constructivists treat them as deeply social, by showing that identities are constituted by the institutionalised norms, values, and ideas of the social environment in which they act. Second, constructivists, rather than treating actors’ interests as exogenously-determined prior to social interactions, consider interests as endogenous to interaction, and identity, learned through the process of communication, reflection on experience and role enactment.

Third, rationalists view society as a strategic realm, a place where actors rationally pursue their interests, while constructivists see it as a constitutive realm which transforms actors into knowledgeable social and political agents, and makes them who they are. Constructivists also challenge the rationalist assumptions on the unchanging reality of international politics, particularly the argument that anarchy is an inevitable feature of international reality, arguing instead that it is, “what states make of it”. Wendt offered a range of international anarchies based on variation in the ideas that states have about themselves and others. Wendt believes that “with enmity at one end and friendship at the other, and with indifference in the middle, the formal condition of anarchy is by itself not very informative about the behaviour of the units”.

Unlike the rationalist or “mainstream” theories of international relations which view state identities and interests as “given”, constructivism problematises them by taking a more sociological than economic approach to state theorising. Wendt, in Anarchy is what States Make of It, challenges the neorealist and neo-liberals assumptions on the devotion to

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250 Ibid., p.195.
251 Ibid., p.199.
252 Ibid., p.199.
253 Ibid., p.199.
a crude method of materialism. Wendt defines constructivism as a structural theory of international politics which sees: (1) states as primary actors in international politics; (2) key structures in the state system are inter-subjective rather than material; (3) that state identities as well as interests are relatively constructed by those structures, rather than exogenously by human nature or domestic politics.

Wendt argues that core concepts in the realists’ foundation such as “power politics” are social constructions by nature, therefore not static, and are capable of changing as a result of human practice, given the dynamic nature of social reality. Wendt premises his theorising of the international system on the assumption that social construction(s) shapes the environment within which international actors interact, and that the international system is a social construction, contrary to the positivist and materialist conceptualisation of IR theories by realists and liberalists. Rationalism, as Wendt notes, only offers a fundamentally-behavioural conception of both process and institutions, by changing behaviour, and not identities.

Similarly, constructivists contest the assumptions by neo-realists and neoliberals on their view of security in “self-interested” terms. Constructivists also contest neo-realists’ claim that anarchies are necessarily “self-help” systems, where both central authority and collective security are absent. According to constructivists, the contention by neorealists that self-help serves as a means of regulating state behaviour and surviving the anarchy in the system is because self-help is not seen as an institution that could be regulated by interaction based on a state’s identity. Constructivists therefore question neo-realists’ silence on identity and state-

\[258\] Ibid., Pp.391-425.
\[263\] Ibid., p.392.
\[264\] Ibid., p.392.
\[265\] Ibid., p.391.
formation, and the system’s self-regulating tendency, including its ability to reduce process to dynamics of behavioural interaction among exogenously-constituted actors.266

Process, as Wendt notes, is capable of generating cooperative behaviour, even in an exogenously-given self-help system, which neorealists argue as a consequence of the absence of a central authority.267 Self-help and power politics, to constructivists, “do not follow either logically or casually from anarchy, and if we the world finds itself in a self-help situation, it is due to process, not structure”.268 For constructivists, therefore, self-help and power politics are institutions, not essential features of anarchy.269 Anarchy, according to Wendt, is what States Make of It.270 Constructivists argue that states observe norms not only because it is in their self-interest, but by internalising them in their identities, thus broadening the narrow liberalist framework for the study of norms.271 In this instance, foreign policy exists not only as the principal vehicle by which actors can instantiate and reproduce, but also as a means of changing identities and interests.272

However, it is useful to note that identities are not individualistic or divorced from a social setting, as states exist within an international community (or society) of states.273 Rather, the principle (from social theory) of “reflected appraisals” posits that actors see themselves as a reflection of how they are appraised by others.274 Hence, the social world is constituted by shared meanings and significations, without which any community cannot exist.275 According to this view, change in international politics mostly occurs not because of structure, but because of agency when actors redefine their interests and identities.276 Constructivists equally contend that

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266 Ibid., p.392.
267 Ibid., p.392.
268 Ibid., p.394.
269 Ibid., p.395.
270 Ibid., p.395.
272 Ibid., p.341.
identities and collective cognitions do not exist apart from each other, but are mutually exclusive.\textsuperscript{277}

They view institutionalisation as a process of internalising new identities and interests, not something occurring outside them and affecting only behaviour; socialisation is a cognitive process, not just a behavioural one.\textsuperscript{278} As an IR approach, constructivism is interested in how knowledge practices constitute subjects, and how it shares a cognitive, intersubjective conception of process, in which identities and interest are endogenous to interaction, rather than a rationalist-behavioural one, where they are exogenous.\textsuperscript{279} A fundamental principle of the constructivist social theory, according to Berger, is that “people act towards objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the world gives it.”\textsuperscript{280} Expatiating on Berger’s observation, Wendt notes that “each person has many identities linked to institutional roles, such as brother, son, teacher, and citizen”, and that same logic applies to a state with multiple identities, such as, “sovereign”, “leader of the free world,” and “imperial power”.\textsuperscript{281}

The lesson to draw from the foregoing is that, for constructivists, the process of interaction within the international system is premised on the type of identity the state shares or has, formed largely from its history, or shaped by the environment or realm it operates. For example, South Africa’s identity is believed to be constructed along the lines of its history with apartheid, and the extent of solidarity it got from the rest of the world during its anti-apartheid struggles.\textsuperscript{282} Nigeria’s on the other hand is premised on its decolonisation struggles and its military-styled dictatorship which shaped its statehood shortly after independence in 1960.

While constructivists are unanimous in their view that “the commitment to and the salience of particular identities vary, each identity remains an inherently social definition of the actor

\textsuperscript{277} Ibid., p.399.
\textsuperscript{279} Ibid., p.394.
grounded in the theories which actors collectively hold about themselves and one another, thus constituting the structure of the social world”.\textsuperscript{283} In \textit{Anarchy is what States Make of It}, Wendt draws from what he calls structurationist and symbolic interactionist sociology to argue that international institutions can transform state identities and interests, in contrast to the economic theorising form of systemic theory which classifies identity and interests as dependent variables.\textsuperscript{284}

Constructivists believe that the interests of states are shaped by their identities, while state identities (and interests) are subject to change in the process of interaction.\textsuperscript{285} Constructivists argue that identities and interests are treated as endogenous to interaction, which is produced and reproduced in the process of interaction.\textsuperscript{286} Constructivism further challenges the materialistic bases of social theory by hypothesising that structures of human associations are largely cultural rather than material phenomena, the result of which is identity and interest creation, and behaviour regulating.\textsuperscript{287} This implies that, to constructivists, material strengths (hard power) still matter and the people (government) are still intentional actors (state actors),\textsuperscript{288} but it is the ideational framework of identity and interests creation that informs the output of the actor to the international system.\textsuperscript{289}

As Reus-Smit observes, where neo-realists emphasise the material structure of the balance of power, and Marxists stress the material structure of the capitalist world economy, constructivists argue that systems of shared ideas, beliefs and values also have structural characteristics, and they exert a powerful influence on social and political actions.\textsuperscript{290} Constructivists claim that “material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared

\textsuperscript{284} Ibid., p.193.
\textsuperscript{287} Ibid., p.193.
\textsuperscript{288} Ibid., p.193.
\textsuperscript{289} Ibid., p.193.
knowledge in which they are embedded”. For example, Western Sahara and Algeria share borders with the Kingdom of Morocco. However, the realists’ argument regarding the balance of power is insufficient in explaining why Western Sahara is perceived by Rabat as an enemy while Algeria is seen as an ally.

“Ideas about identity, the logics of ideology, and established structures of friendship and enmity,” as Reus-smit notes, is useful in explaining the radically-different meaning of the material balance of power between Western Sahara and Morocco on the one hand, and Algeria and Morocco on the other. Consequently, understanding how non-material structures condition actors’ identities, according to constructivists, is useful in explaining the nexus between identity, interests, and actions. Where rationalists contend that actors (individual or states) interact with a defined set of preferences, and neo-liberals or neo-realists focus on how actors pursue their goals strategically to protect their national interests, regardless of preferences, constructivists argue rather that understanding how actors develop their interests is vital to explaining a wide range of international phenomenon, which rationalists ignore or misconstrue.

In explaining interest formation, therefore, constructivists focus on the social identities of individuals or states, and argue that identities are the basis of interests. They argue that institutionalised norms and ideas “define the meaning and identity of the actor and the patterns of appropriate economic, political, and cultural activity engaged in by those individuals”.

To constructivists, change in international politics occur not necessarily because of the existence of a structure (viewed by realists as anarchy and the distribution of power), but because of agency (interaction and learning), which helps actors redefine their interests and identities.

293 Ibid., p.196.
294 Ibid., p.196.
297 Ibid., p.336.
Agents and structures, to constructivists, are mutually-constituted, although they add that those structures only exist because of the knowledgeable practices of the actors. Hurd refers to “structures” as institutions and shared meanings that make up the context of international action, and “agents” as any entity that operates as an actor in that context. Ted Hopf calls it “a set of relatively unchangeable constraints on behaviour”. These constraints, as Hopf adds, “can take the form of systems of material dis/incentives, such as a balance of power or a market, as important from a constructivist perspective is how an action does or does not reproduce both the actor and the structure”.

To illustrate this point, Hopf cites the example of how the United States’ appeasement in Vietnam would be considered unimaginable, because of the formers’ identity as a great power; indeed, military intervention, as he adds, constitutes the United States as a great power. Appeasement was an unimaginable act. Thus, by engaging in the “enabled” action of intervention, the United States, according to Hopf, reproduced its own identity of great power, as well as the structure that gave meaning to its action. The United States’ intervention in Vietnam therefore maintained the international intersubjective understanding of great powers as states that use military power against each other.

This same logic can be applied to South Africa’s military intervention in Lesotho in 1998. According to the constructivists’ perspective on how an action does or does not reproduce both the actor and the structure, any appeasement from South Africa (an actor), over its action in Lesotho would be deemed inconceivable, considering South Africa’s ranking as a great power compared to Lesotho. Consequently, by intervening in Lesotho, South Africa is restating its great-power identity, made possible by the strength of its hard power resources (structure), thus

301 Ibid., p.172.
302 Ibid., p.172.
303 Ibid., p.172.
304 Ibid., p.172.
305 Ibid., p.172.
emphasising the symbiotic relationship between agents and structures which constructivists often make.

A constructivist approach to co-constitution is its argument that the actions of states contribute to making the institutions and norms of international life, and that these institutions and norms contribute to defining, socialising, and influencing states.306 Both the institutions and the actors can be redefined in the process.307 According to constructivists, there are three basic mechanisms by which normative and ideational structures shape actors’ identities and interests—imagination, communication and restraint.308 Through imagination, constructivists contend that non-material structures affect what actors see as the realm of possibility: how they think they should act, what the perceived limitations of their actions are, and what strategies they can imagine to achieve their objectives.309

Similarly, normative and ideational structures also work their influence through communication. For example, when a state seeks to justify its behaviour, it appeals to established norms of legitimate conduct by referring to the norms of sovereignty, or in the case of intervention in the affairs of another state, according to international human rights norms.310 Even if normative and ideational structures do not affect an actor’s behaviour by framing their imagination or by providing a linguistic or moral court of appeal as Reus-smit notes, constructivists claim they can place significant constraints on the actor’s conduct.311

Where realists argue that ideas mainly function as rationalisations, and as ways of masking actions motivated by the crude desire for power, constructivists claim that institutionalised norms and ideas work as motivators/inspirations in their own right, because of the moral force they have in a given context.312 The précis of our discussion is that, as an IR approach, constructivism offers a critique of the materialist explanation of international politics by suggesting that material

306 Ibid., p.172.
307 Ibid., p.198.
308 Ibid., p.198.
309 Ibid., p.198.
310 Ibid., p.198.
311 Ibid., p.198.
312 Ibid., p.198.
forces can be understood when viewed through the social concepts that define their meaning for human life.\textsuperscript{313}

Constructivism equally emphasises that state interests are socially constructed, because the processes leading to interest formation are social, and that a states’ foreign policy ideas are shaped by pre-existing dominant ideas and their relationship with experienced events.\textsuperscript{314} Similarly, the approach teaches us that actors acquire identities, relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self, by participating in collective meanings.”\textsuperscript{315} And that agents and structures are mutually constituted, and it also offers an explanation on the multiple logics of anarchy. According to constructivists, anarchy only exists because states see each other as rivals over scarce goods, and not as friends.\textsuperscript{316}

However, our conceptualisation of constructivism in this thesis is built on Wendt’s social construction(s) thesis, and its emphasis on how identity shapes the environment within which international actors, such as South Africa and Nigeria, interact. This is because South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour has been significantly identity-themed since 1994 after the demise of apartheid, while that of Nigeria has gravitated towards an identity-based means of engagement since its return to democracy in 1999. In the meantime, let us briefly explore Wendt’s conceptualisation of identity which we will return to in chapter seven when we focus on its utility in explaining both countries’ foreign policy behaviour/intervention mechanism in Africa.

In international politics and domestic environments, identities are necessary to ensure some minimal level of predictability and order.\textsuperscript{317} Scholars have, in fact, noted that “a world without identity is a world of chaos, a world of pervasive and irremediable uncertainty, a world much more dangerous than anarchy”.\textsuperscript{318} Within any defined society, identity, as Tajfel notes, performs

\textsuperscript{315} Ibid., p.397.
\textsuperscript{318} Ibid., p.175.
a number of functions—tells you who you are, tells you who others are, and, it equally tells others who you are. In telling you who you are, identities strongly imply a particular set of interests or preferences with respect to choices of action in particular domains, and with respect to particular actors. A state’s identity, according to Eyre and Suchman, determines its preferences and consequent actions within the international community.

For example, Hopf argues that “a state understands others according to the identity it attributes to them, while simultaneously reproducing its own identity through daily social practice”. The producer of the identity, according to Hopf, “is not in control of what it ultimately means to others, rather, it is the inter-subjective structure, which serves as the final arbiter of meaning”. Nigeria has an identity within the ECOWAS bloc which her leadership does not control, but can only be measured by the level of support and reciprocity it garners from member-states when a need for a common action arises, as evident during the ECOWAS intervention in The Gambia in January 2017.

In constructivism, the concept of identity is treated as an empirical question to be theorised within a historical context, as against the neo-realist assumption that all units in global politics have only one meaningful identity—that of self-interested states. Where constructivists emphasise that in the very fundamentals of international political life, the nature and definition of the actors cannot be theorised, neorealists, through their self-interest assumptions, presume to know, a priori, just what the self being identified is. By interpretation, neorealists view the state in international politics as an entity that remains unchanging and constant across space and

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320 Ibid., p.255.
323 Ibid., p.175.
324 Ibid., p.175.
325 Ibid., p.176.
time, while constructivists contend that “the selves or identities of states are a variable, given that they likely depend on historical, cultural, political, and social context”.  

For example, while neorealists argue that Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone was premised on the need to maintain a balance of power within its West African subregion because, to them, such intervention behaviour is part of the unchanging nature of state actors, constructivists maintain that Nigeria’s intervention was necessitated by the historical, political and social identity (defined by Wendt as a set of meanings a state attributes to itself while taking the perspectives of the other into account) Nigeria and Sierra Leone share through the ECOWAS bloc.

Constructivists put great importance on identity due to the power it holds in interpersonal and international interactions, by focusing on the reciprocal relationship between interests and identity. They argue that interests are the product of identity; that is, having the identity “great power” implies a particular set of interests different from those implied by the identity European Union member. Saudi Arabia having the identity of a “great power” within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a product of its interests within the bloc, but the same cannot be said of its identity as a member of the UN because the interests are different. Identities are therefore “multiple, constructivist logic which precludes acceptance of pregiven interests”.

Thus, “by making interests a central variable, social constructivism explores not only how particular interests come to be, but also why many interests do not. Interests are absent where there is no reason for them and where promised gains are too meagre”. Wendt views identity as “a subjective view of international actors which motivates a generation of behavioural disposition rooted in their self-understandings”. Identity, according to Wendt, goes beyond a unit or subjective level since understanding about “self also depends on others understanding and

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326 Ibid., p.176.
327 Ibid., p.176.
328 Ibid., p.176.
329 Ibid., p.176.
330 Ibid., p.176.
representation of it”. This brings about an “inter-subjective or systemic” view which qualifies identity and the construction by both internal (self) and external structures (others).

Wendt, reemphasising the place of identity in constructivist thinking, calls it “the basis of interests, adding that actors (Nigeria and South Africa) do not have a portfolio of interests they carry along, but defines its interests in the process of defining solutions”. In essence, the notion of permanent identity does not exist for state actors, as they can evolve or be redefined based on prevailing conditions. Similarly, constructivists see institutions as a “relatively stable set or structure of identities and interests, codified in formal rules and norms, with a motivational force only in virtue of actors’ socialisation with, and participation in, collective knowledge”.

Institutions, as Wendt argues, “are fundamentally cognitive entities that do not exist apart from actors’ ideas about how the world works”, and while their existence or objective is not in question, they remain nothing, other than beliefs. Accordingly, interests are in part products of those identities, given that the social constitution of interests encompasses all the ways that actors’ interests and identities might be influenced by their interactions with others and with their social environment. This, as Hurd notes, includes the processes of socialisation and internalisation, the drive for social recognition and prestige, the effects of social norms on interests and behaviour (including the desire to create norms that legitimise one’s behaviour, and the presence or absence of a sense of “community”.

Noteworthy is that identity and interests make up an institution, and an institutions’ rules are only sustainable where there is a sense of collective identity among the actors involved,

333 Ibid., p.224.
334 Ibid., p.224.
335 Ibid., p.224.
337 Ibid., p.379.
338 Ibid., p.379.
339 Ibid., p.379.
particularly on how institutions should function. For example, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as an institution and its laws only exist because there is a collective identity among the member-states, and it is this unity of purpose that enables the institution to function. Without this identity and interests, as constructivists claim, there will be no SADC. The same applies to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose membership and continuing survival are hinged on the geographical bond between member-states.

Wendt has identified four identities: (1) Personal or corporate (2) type identity (3) role identity, and (4) collective identity.\textsuperscript{343} In personal identity, the focus is on “self-organizing and balanced functional structures”, and it isolates (the) “self” from others, by carving out a sense of “I”, or a personal view.\textsuperscript{344} When denoted as corporate identity, it is captured from a state or actor perspective and transits to a sense of “we”, and it is often representative of a group/bloc. The personal or corporate identities are constituted exogenous to that “other”.\textsuperscript{345} The second in Wendt’s classification, “type identity,” applies to the social category, and it is defined by characteristics such as outward look, mannerisms, attitudes, values, and dexterities comprising language, knowledge, opinions, experience, and similarity of history, among others.\textsuperscript{346}

For “type identities” to be formulated, Wendt notes that they are partially dependent on the understanding and perception of others.\textsuperscript{347} Situated within the discourse on international system/politics, the “type identity” is analogous to “regime types”, or “forms of states” such as democratic, theocratic, authoritarian, capitalist, and communist states.\textsuperscript{348} The existence of role identity is defined by culture and expectations, and premised on the relational aspect with the others, as it cannot be constituted solely by “self” because it exists through one’s placement in a “shared social structure” and under an observation of “behavioural norms” as postulated against others manifesting differing “contradicting identities”.\textsuperscript{349} Lastly, the notion of collective

\textsuperscript{344} Ibid., p.224.
\textsuperscript{345} Ibid., p.224.
\textsuperscript{346} Ibid., p.225.
\textsuperscript{347} Ibid., p.225.
\textsuperscript{348} Ibid., p.225.
Identity utilises type and role identities through the blurring of self and others. Thus “self” and “other” are combined to form a single identity, and the identity of “other” is configured in part, as self, thus leading to a philanthropic behaviour.\(^{350}\)

The point being made by Wendt is that a clear identification leads to motivation of interests, and while identities formulate who the actors are, interests stipulate the desires of the actors. Wendt presupposes identity because without knowing who one is, it would be impossible for the actors to know what they want. Wendt further observes that identities would have differing degrees of cultural content and therefore translating into equally varying interests. In the presence of interests, as he argues, identities would have a motivational force emanating from an amalgamation of desire and belief.\(^{351}\) The forgoing leads us to ask: what does identity tell us about Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour? This will be explored in chapter 7, where we will examine the extent to which structural realism and social constructivism explain Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa.

### 3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the essential issues embedded in structural realism and social constructivism as IR approaches. By elucidating the fundamental premises on which realism in general and structural realism in particular are founded, the chapter finds that the focus on national interests by state actors and material structures such as power, dictates how a state’s foreign policy is constructed and how its actual behaviour is shaped. The chapter further examined the linkage between regionalism and realism and established that the state-centric assumptions and power-projection tendencies embedded in realism equally exists in a regionalist order. These tendencies, as the chapter found, partly explains the motivation behind a regional order where a major player within the region or subregion (as evidenced in Nigeria and South’s Africa’s case in the West and Southern Africa) uses its soft power resources to advance its national interests through established subregional and national institutions.

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\(^{350}\) Ibid., p.229.

The chapter also explored the social constructivism debate in international politics from the systemic, unit level and holistic perspectives, with a specific focus on how interests are formed and pursued in international politics through the construction and reconstruction of identity. The chapter established that, unlike structural realism where the struggle for power and the protection of the interest(s) determine(s) the pattern of behaviour and interaction of states the international scene, thus creating anarchy; constructivism argues that interests are, partially, products of those identities. It is this social constitution of interests which defines the way actors’ interests and identities are influenced in their interactions with others within their social environment. In the latter part of the study (chapter 8), we will explore Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention roles and foreign policy behaviour from the essential principles embedded in both IR approaches.
Chapter 4: Nigeria’s Foreign Policy and its Conflict Intervention
Behaviour in Africa

4.1 Introduction
The previous chapter surveyed aspects of two theoretical approaches – structural realism and social constructivism – that are of relevance in assessing Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention role and foreign policy behaviour. Fundamental issues such as realists’ interpretation of national interests and the quest for relative power, and their answer to why a state pursues power in international politics and its multiplier effect on foreign policy behaviour, formed the basis of our discussion on structural realism. In social constructivism, we appraised the underlying philosophy behind the constructivists’ definition of interests, and how interests are formed on the basis of identity and normative inter-subjectivity, and how identity and inter-subjectively-constituted normative structures influence a state’s foreign policy behaviour.

We will return to these theoretical concepts in chapter seven, where an attempt will be made to highlight the relative value of these seemingly opposed theoretical frameworks in understanding the behaviour of the two regional powerhouses that we are looking at. In this, and in the next three chapters, the focus shifts to a discussion of the general features of Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention role in Africa, and their specific interventions in Sierra Leone and the DRC. The stated insights (chapter 3) of the two theoretical perspectives act as the guiding light in terms of which selected aspects of Nigeria and South Africa’s roles are highlighted. No attempt is made to provide a comprehensive treatment of the foreign policies of these two states.

Overall, the objective of the chapter is provide an analytical background to the case study undertaken in chapter five, and to prepare the ground for the ultimate purpose of the study, which is to assess the contributions that both theoretical perspectives can make to our understanding of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention role in Africa. Together with this introductory remark, the chapter is divided into five parts. The second part examines the essential issues embedded in Nigeria’s foreign policy. In the third, Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa takes centre stage. The fourth section takes a leap
further, by interrogating how the personalised nature of Nigeria’s foreign policy making reflects in its conflict intervention roles in Africa. We offer our concluding thought in the final section.

4.2 Nigeria’s foreign policy

Evolving from the amalgamation of its northern and southern protectorates by the British colonial authorities in 1914, and its independence on October 1, 1960, the Nigerian state has remained arguably one of the few African states that have consistently maintained an African-centred foreign policy orientation. This orientation is reflected in many of the foreign policy initiatives that we will highlight below. At the same time, as structural realist will emphasise, one can only understand Nigeria’s behaviour if you also foreground the fact that it is a regional hegemon, a “Giant of Africa” on account of its huge population, geographical size, and relatively large economic and human resources.\footnote{Adebajo, A. (2008). “Hegemony on a Shoestring: Nigeria’s post-Cold War foreign policy”. In Adebajo, A. and Mustapha, R. (Eds.) Gulliver’s Troubles, Nigeria’s Foreign Policy after the Cold War. Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, p.12.}

The narrative on Nigeria’s foreign policy points to four concentric circles, composed essentially of (1) the country’s contiguous states—Benin, Chad, Niger, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea); (2) its West African neighbours; (3) the African continent; and (4) the international community and the rest of the world.\footnote{Folarin, S.F. (2015). “National role conceptions and Nigeria’s African policy, 1985-2007”. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Covenant University, Otta, Nigeria.}

Basking in the euphoria of its oil boom of the 1970s, its 250,000-strong army, which in 1975 was nearly four times the size of the combined armies of thirteen independent states in West Africa, and a 1974 gross domestic product figure of $19.7 billion, which was larger than the combined economies of all of black Africa, Nigeria assumed a lead role in West African politics, and expanded its regional influence in Africa.\footnote{Ibid., p.8.}

These lead roles undertaken by Nigeria are presumably influenced by an Africa-focused foreign policy disposition which in turn shapes its conflict intervention roles in Africa. However, as will be recounted below, no account of Nigeria’s foreign policy will be sufficient if it ignores the


\footnote{354 Ibid., p.8.}
specific role of leadership attributes and ambitions. In fact, one can say that it is through the specific channels of leadership ambitions that Nigeria’s commitment to its African identity, and its preponderance as a regional hegemon, are played out.

As outlined under the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy in Section 19, Chapter 11 of Nigeria’s 1999 constitution, Nigeria’s foreign policy is focused on the following objectives: (1) promotion and protection of the national interest, (2) promotion of African integration and support for African unity, (3) promotion of international cooperation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations, (4) respect for international law and treaty obligations seeking settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication, and (5) promotion of a just world economic order.

However, on assumption of office on October 1, 1960, the government of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa came up with a set of principles intended to guide Nigeria in the pursuance of these foreign objectives. These principles include: (1) respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all states, (2) principle of non-interference in the affairs of other states, (3) recognition of the rights to self-determination and sovereign equality of all African states, (4) seeking membership of international organisations as a means of promoting functional cooperation, and (5) a general commitment to the principle of non-alignment and a just world order.³⁵⁵ These principles are now summarily examined below.

4.2.1 Respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all states

This principle is premised on the assumption that states are at the heart, and are primary actors of the international system; and that Nigeria’s strong allegiance to the defence of its sovereignty is only justified on the moral obligation of its respect for the territorial sovereignty of states. More crucial to the definition of statehood, as argued by Jennings and Watts, is the sacrosanct place which a territory occupies and that a state without a territory is not possible. It could thus be argued that the need to respect this principle within the international system is non-negotiable. By way of interpretation, Nigeria has demonstrated its commitment to this principle by expressing its willingness and readiness to conduct its external affairs with other states according to civilised rules of interaction.

In addition, Nigeria’s commitment to this principle has been affirmed by its respect for decisions reached at the UN. Scholars have noted that Nigeria’s commitment to this principle and its respect for, and adherence to, the dictates of international law and civilised rules of behaviour is fundamental to ensuring the security of newly-independent and weak states in a world laden with intense competition between antagonistic superpowers. Evidence from the literature suggests that Nigeria’s allegiance to this commitment has remained constant, a development traceable to its early years of independence. For example, Prime Minister Balewa stated that “[Nigeria] shall never impose ourselves upon any other country and shall treat every African territory, big or small, as our equal because we honestly feel that it is only on that basis that peace can be maintained in our continent”.

358 Ibid., p.563.
361 Ibid., p.42.
Balewa’s assurances to Nigeria’s neighbours and the rest of Africa were intended to prevent any of these nations from falling into the embrace of the progenitors of the Cold War to protect its hard-fought independence and those of its contemporaries from the overtures being made by Kwame Nkrumah, through his Pan-African movement. For Balewa, any attempt to join either of the camps could lead to a loss of sovereignty, thus returning Africa to the pre-colonial age, hence his argument that “Nigeria is certainly big enough and does not need to join others and that if others wish to join forces with the country, their legal standing and positions would be made clear to them in such a union”.362

4.2.2 Principle of non-interference in the affairs of other states

This principle expresses Nigeria readiness and desire not to interfere in any domestic dispute in other African countries, unless invited by a supra-national authority, and when Nigeria’s national interests are threatened. In international politics, the legal justification for such intervention(s) is today rooted in the doctrine of the “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P).363 It is within this context that Nigeria’s intervention in conflicts, despite its stated foreign policy principle of non-interference, can be understood. However, since independence in 1960, Nigeria has struggled to distinguish between the circumstances which necessitate intervention, and behaviours which amount to unjustified interference in the affairs of those states. This is of course a perennial dilemma for all interventions and R2P has done little to resolve it.

Undertaking a summary of the main issues in intervention is thus useful in understanding the basis for Nigeria’s intervention in conflicts. In intervention, there are basically two approaches within which the context can be best understood—the normative and the physical perspectives. In the normative approach to intervention, considerable emphasis is placed on how disputes can be effectively resolved through various peacebuilding mechanisms and dialogue, and without the use of force, because of the non-forcibility of the action on the warring parties. This approach is

362 Ibid., p.44.
363 The concept of R2P reconciles sovereignty and intervention by accepting that there could be very serious conditions when human life is threatened on a mass scale and domestic measures may not represent enough guarantees. It therefore advances the need for such a state to accept that international engagement is necessary in order to collectively save human life beyond its borders.
often termed peacemaking, and for this to happen, the neutral party is expected to possess some charismatic and political authority which must be generally respected by, and acceptable to the warring factions.\footnote{364 Lieblich, E. (2011). “Intervention and Consent: Consensual Forcible Interventions in Internal Armed Conflicts as International Agreements”. \textit{Boston University International Law Journal}, 29(2), p.344.}

This much is evident in the mediatory efforts of former President Mandela in Burundi in 2003 and that of former President Olusegun Obasanjo in São Tomé and Príncipe in 2003. The “physical” intervention perspective on the other hand, occurs when an independent party wades into a conflict between two parties, through dialogue or through the use of force when such efforts are seen as yielding no concrete result.\footnote{365 Ibid., p.344.}

This was exemplified by Nigeria’s deployment of troops to Sierra Leone after its unsuccessful mediatory role in the dispute between Foday Sankoh’s RUF and the Ahmad Tejan Kabbah-led Sierra Leonean government. A major distinguishing factor between both approaches is that a “physical” intervention involves the use of force and could occur without any supra-national approval, particularly when such approval is not forthcoming or when the intervening state fails to get approval based on the motive/interest behind its intervention, as South Africa did in Lesotho in 1998. When this happens, it is called interference—a term defined by Pogoson as “an unsolicited and illegitimate intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign state”.\footnote{366 Pogoson, A.I. (2009). “New dimensions in Nigeria’s foreign policy, 1999–2009”. \textit{Journal of African Culture and Civilization}, 2(1), Pp.58-73.}

But when an intervention becomes legitimated by a decision of an acceptable and recognised supra-national authority for the purpose of forestalling further humanitarian tragedy, it becomes peacekeeping.\footnote{367 Ibid., Pp.53-73.} When located within the discourse on Nigeria’s conflict intervention role in Africa, the majority of these interventions fall within the precincts of peacekeeping, given that it is often backed by a supra-national institution. This is evidenced by Nigeria’s active role in the United Nations peace keeping mission in the Congo in 1960, its role in the resolution of the Liberian (1990-1997) and the Sierra Leonean civil wars (1991-1998), among others.
4.2.3 Recognition of the rights to self-determination and sovereign equality of all African states

Scholars have argued that Nigeria’s commitment to this principle dates back to its emergence as an independent country on 1 October 1960, most notably through its rigorous campaign against colonisation, racial discrimination and apartheid. This commitment has seen Nigeria emerge as an advocate of self-determination and the recognition of the rights of other states to self-governance. In December 1960, Nigeria adopted the resolution on the “Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People” code-named “UNGA 1960”, and played a lead role in the anti-apartheid struggles in Southern Africa through its support for liberation movements.

As a consequence of Nigeria’s commitment to the principle, Washington courted Nigeria, as part of its Africa policy; Southern Africa’s Frontline States invited Nigeria to their meetings; Lagos chaired the UN’s Special Committee against Apartheid for over two decades; Nigeria was instrumental in formulating OAU’s positions; and member-states of ECOWAS accepted Nigeria’s leadership in West Africa. Nigeria has been rewarded by the international community at different fora for leading the struggles which culminated in the defeat of apartheid. Practical examples of such recognitions are its chairmanship at different times of the United Nations Special Committee against apartheid which Akporode Clark, Joseph Garba, Ibrahim Gambari, Yusuf Maitama, and Edwin Ogbu presided over at different times.

4.2.4 Seeking membership of international organisations as a means of promoting functional cooperation

This principle explains Nigeria’s readiness to enter into mutual engagement and interaction with the international community on the assumption that it would provide some form of protection for its national interest, owing to the existing bipolarity in international politics at that time. Nigeria’s

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369 Ibid., p.44.
adherence to this principle is influenced by the overriding advantage which functional cooperation has, over a subscription to an African political union, which at that time could not guarantee a certain future for the country.\textsuperscript{371} This principle therefore explains Nigeria’s membership of organisations such as United Nations (UN), Commonwealth of Nations, Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the African Union (AU), and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Nearly six decades after (1960-2017), Nigeria has continued to demonstrate its support for the organisations, in consonance with its belief that any distortion in the international political or economic order should be resolved through these institutions. This belief is evident for example in the lead role played by Nigeria in the formation of the OAU (1963), the ECOWAS (1975), the setting up of the Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance of Defence in 1981, the eventual transitioning of the OAU to the African Union in 2001, the 1999 ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, the 2001 Protocol on Democracy and Good governance (2001), and the 2002 Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED), among others.

\subsection*{4.2.5 Commitment to the principle of non-alignment and a just world order}

This principle was designed to ensure that Nigeria maintains an independent posture and judgment at the level of the OAU, and the United Nations Organisation (UNO) on issues bordering on human rights and dignity, and it is motivated by the bipolarity in world politics which existed at the time of Nigeria’s independence in 1960 and beyond. As Fawole argues, “the world was precariously bifurcated into two antagonistic ideologies of capitalism, as supported by the United States (US) and communism, which was championed by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)”\textsuperscript{372} Mindful of this situation, and informed by the desire to protect

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its nascent independence, Nigeria opted to be non-partisan in the power play between the East and the West.

However, scholars have argued that this principle was respected in theory, more than in practice. It bears mentioning that the Tafawa Balewa government which conceived the idea did little to respect it, as his administration was rabidly pro-British and concomitantly pro-Western.\textsuperscript{373} Balewa adopted a conservative and a pro-Western policy, making the policy of non-alignment the guiding principle of his engagement with the rest of the world but showed little commitment to it.\textsuperscript{374} Cases in point in this regard were the signing of the 1961 Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact which granted Britain “unrestricted” flying and air rights in Nigeria,\textsuperscript{375} Nigeria’s failure to abide by the Addis Ababa December 3, 1965 resolution over the Rhodesian rebellion of 1965,\textsuperscript{376} the granting of funds to Western missions in Lagos while communist countries were prevented from obtaining even accommodation for same, and the rejection of communist literature and scholarship awards from Eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{377}

The point must be made however, that Balewa’s inability to detach himself from British imperialism is understandably so, in view of the imported structures, ideas and models of government bequeathed to Nigeria by colonialism. Thus, the immediate post-colonial Nigerian leadership was not able to radically extricate itself from the appendages of colonialism, even in foreign relations. The next section examines Nigeria’s foreign policymaking process. The next section focuses on Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa, with a view to ascertaining how its self-confessed Afro-centric foreign policy disposition reflects in its conflict intervention roles in Africa.

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\textsuperscript{373} Ibid., p.42.
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4.3 Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa

As argued in chapter one, Nigeria’s intervention role in Africa, is largely categorised under the broader spectrum of unilateral intervention—defined by Teson, as the “proportionate international use or threat of military force, undertaken in principle by a liberal government or alliance, aimed at ending tyranny or anarchy, welcomed by the victims, and consistent with the doctrine of double effect.” It is useful to note that Nigeria rarely performs a normative role while intervening in a conflict. In other words, Nigeria, less often employs persuasive tactics or mediatory mechanisms as its currency of negotiation, or its abundant soft power resources in its West African sub-region. Nigeria employs a physical or armed intervention in conflicts between opposing parties.

A physical intervention, as we argued in chapter one, involves the use of force, in resolving a sustained, and large scale violence between two or more factions, challenging the maintenance of governmental authority in a particular state. Implicit in the foregoing is that Nigeria’s conflict intervention mechanism in Africa falls within the purview of Terry Nardin’s definition of what constitutes an armed humanitarian intervention. That is, an intervention intended to protect innocent people who are not nationals of the intervening state from the violence perpetrated or permitted by the government of the target state”, albeit under the auspices of a supra-national institution.

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379 The doctrine (or principle) of double effect is often invoked to explain the permissibility of an action that causes a serious harm, such as the death of a human being, as a side effect of promoting some good end. According to the principle of double effect, sometimes it is permissible to cause a harm as a side effect (or “double effect”) of bringing about a good result even though it would not be permissible to cause such a harm as a means to bringing about the same good end.


382 Ibid., p.1.
When backed by a supra-national authority, Nigeria’s interventionary role in Africa aligns with Petr Valek’s definition of a unilateral humanitarian intervention, given that all of its interventions have had more than one state involved, none has been without the use of force, and a number of its interventions have lacked the backing of United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Prominent examples in these regard include Nigeria’s involvement in: Liberia, (1990-1997), Sierra Leone (1991-1998), Guinea Bissau (1998-1999), and in The Gambia in January 2017.

Similarly, in Nigeria’s conflict intervention history, there have been instances where its intervention roles have assumed a multilateral dimension. Worth noting, and as we argued in chapter one is that a multilateral intervention shares nearly all the features of unilateral intervention, except that its mandate, scope and operation must be backed by the UN through a Security Council resolution. For example, and as the table depicting some of Nigeria’s conflict intervention roles in Africa below suggests, classifying Nigeria’s conflict intervention roles in Africa shows an oscillation between both divides.

384 Ibid., p.1227.
Table 4.1 Nigeria’s conflict intervention episodes in Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Conflict Type</th>
<th>Intervention Mode</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Regime Type</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Partially Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>Civil unrest</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tanganyika</td>
<td>Civil unrest</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Partially Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1990-1997</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1991-1998</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Partially Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Partially Successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>Troop deployment</td>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s compilation.

Obvious from the table above is that Nigeria’s intervention mechanism is largely subsumed under the auspices of peacekeeping, although some scholars have argued that the act of peacekeeping may not necessarily qualify as an intervention.\(^{385}\) To be sure, it is pertinent to note that Nigeria’s intervention role in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) in particular, and in all the conflicts it has intervened, same as South Africa’s in the DRC (1997-2005), meets what Raymond Vincent

identifies as the basic requirements to be met for an act to qualify as intervention. First, by intervening in the affairs of other states through peacekeeping, Nigeria is exercising its authority with the intent of achieving some political, moral or legal objective.

Second, the power relationship between Nigeria as an intervening state, and the target state, is often unequal, as we saw in Sierra Leone. Lastly, most of Nigeria’s interventions are limited in scope and time, as the example of Sierra Leone and Liberia has shown. It is imperative to note also that Nigeria’s seeming preference for the “use of force” to resolve conflicts, particularly in its West African subregion, is not without antecedence. First, Nigeria’s long experience with military rule meant that its leaders at that time saw every opportunity to intervene in conflicts as an avenue to further Nigeria’s relative power pursuit, and as a platform to project their image as fearless leaders in West Africa (we shall get back to this in the later part of the chapter).

Second, Nigeria’s experience with colonialism, particularly the British indirect rule system, played an influencing role in its Africa-centred foreign policy focus, which was targeted at weakening the after effects of the divide and rule legacy of colonialism. Third, Nigeria’s conflict intervention role in Africa is often seen by successive Nigerian leaders as an expression of a philosophy known as Pax Nigeriana, coined by Bolaji Akinyemi to imply how Nigeria’s demographic preponderance, its economic and natural endowments, and its staggering human resources can be utilised to provide leadership for Africa.

Finally, Nigeria’s conflict intervention role in Africa appears to have been motivated by the role played by the British in influencing its foreign affairs as early as 1958 with the recruitment of the first batch of Nigerian foreign services personnel, which placed Britain in a position to infuse her prejudices and her nuances into the character and orientation of the Nigeria’s external relations. Thus, after the attainment of independence, these prejudices continued to exert pressures on Nigeria’s relations with the outside world. As the literature suggests, Nigeria’s

foreign policy under the Balewa government was focused on ensuring that Nigeria followed an independent foreign behaviour founded on its interest, and consistent with moral and democratic principles, and in line with its constitution.\(^{390}\)

Balewa had stated inter alia:

> It is the desire of Nigeria to remain on friendly terms with all nations and to participate actively in the work of the United Nations Organisations. Nigeria, by virtue of being the most populous country in West Africa has absolutely no territorial or expansionist ambitions. We are committed to uphold the principles upon which the United Nations is founded. Nigeria hopes to work with other African countries for the progress of Africa and to also assist in bringing all African countries to a state of independence.\(^{391}\)

To Balewa’s credit, Nigeria committed itself to the liberation struggles in South Africa, although Nigeria never sent an expeditionary force in that struggle, it generally offered more than rhetoric to the African National Congress (ANC), by taking a committed tough line against the regime in Pretoria.\(^{392}\) Similarly, the Congo crisis of 1960 afforded Balewa the opportunity to demonstrate his government’s commitment in this direction. Balewa made spirited diplomatic efforts to organise the African group at the United Nations and sent a contingent of Nigerian troops as part of the UN forces in the Congo.\(^{393}\) In 1964, when the Congo crisis flared up once more, Nigerian troops returned to the Congo under the aegis of the United Nations.\(^{394}\)

The Tanganyika army rebellion in 1964 against the Nyerere government presented another test case for the Balewa administration, which acted on the February 1964 resolution of the OAU Council of Ministers, and dispatched a battalion of troops which resolved the conflict in


Tanganyika’s favour.\textsuperscript{395} Thus under Balewa, between 1962 and 1965, Nigeria’s foreign policy, at a stroke, achieved three things: It demonstrated its willingness and capability to sustain the authority of the new continental organisation; it assisted sister-states in mortal danger of civil war and disintegration; and it demonstrated that Nigeria was solidly committed against neo-colonialist influences in Africa, by word and deed.

These three principled issues have remained consistent in Nigeria’s foreign policy. Balewa was toppled by a Major Kaduna Nzeogwu-led coup on 15 January, 1966, which lasted just six months before the Yakubu Gowon-led counter-coup of 27 July, 1966. During the Nigerian civil war between 1967 and 1970, Israel and France’s support for the secessionist Biafra group, Britain’s hesitant support for Nigeria, and America’s condescending dismissal of Nigeria as a “British sphere of influence”, led Nigeria to a more activist, less naïve post-war foreign policy.\textsuperscript{396} Gowon’s foreign policy focus was made relatively predictable as a consequence of the oil windfall of the 1970s, which strengthened the regime’s capacity to fully implement Nigeria’s non-aligned stance and position of neutrality in international events.

By implication, Gowon had the enablement to exercise a relatively-hegemonic authority within the West African subregion and Africa. His regime’s severance of diplomatic ties with Israel and France over their support for secessionist Biafra, thus lent credence to Gowon’s structural realist orientation, and indicates why and how states seek power and calculate interests in terms of power. By sanctioning both the Israeli and French governments, Gowon improved Nigeria soft power capabilities, thus enhancing Nigeria’s image within the committee of nations. At the regional front, the regimes’ foreign policy behaviour reaffirmed Nigeria’s foreign policy priorities established at independence.

Nigeria participated in several UN-led initiatives, advocated for pan-African solidarity through the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), supported regional cooperation and anti-colonial and liberation movements besides adopting a policy of non-alignment in the East-West conflict.\textsuperscript{397}

\textsuperscript{395} Ibid.
Also in 1975, Nigeria and the government of Benin Republic provided the platform for the formation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Under Gowon, oil which was Nigeria’s mainstay, was discounted at subsidised rates for those the regime considered friendly to Nigeria, with Togo getting a petroleum refinery and a presidential palace in Lomé at Nigeria’s expense, and Niger Republic had electricity supplied to its citizens from Nigeria’s Kainji dam.

When juxtaposed with what Gambari argues as “Balewa’s timid and mostly moderate foreign policy perspective, the foreign policy behaviour of the Gowon regime appears relatively more activist and influential in the early 1970s”. Gowon was overthrown in a coup led by General Murtala Mohammed on 30 July, 1975. The Mohammed-Obasanjo regime is credited for setting for Nigeria a well-defined, articulate, coherent, and explicit policy for Africa that was neither tainted with fear nor deference to any bloc or country. Delivering a fiery speech at the 1975 General Assembly of the OAU in Addis Ababa, Mohammed gave notice of Nigeria’s direction and position on Africa under his leadership, arguing that Africa has come of age; it is no longer in the orbit of any continental power. It should no longer take orders from any country however powerful. The fortunes of Africa are in our hands to make or mar.

Under his leadership, Nigeria called the bluff of the Unites States over the latter’s support for the União Nacional para a Independência total de Angola (UNITA) rebels, against the OAU-backed “Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA). The regime made it clear that Nigeria’s national interest would not be negotiated or sacrificed in the articulation of its foreign policy posture towards Africa. To demonstrate Nigeria’s commitment to this cause, the Murtala regime acted swiftly against South Africa when it invaded Southern Angola over the ownership

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398 Ibid., p.4.
of Cunene dam. The Angolan independence from the Portuguese remains the defining foreign policy moment for the regime. Not only did Nigeria provide financial and material assistance to Angola, it also extended huge political and diplomatic support to the MPLA-led government.

Consequently, the Murtala regime became a de facto spokesperson for the Angolan government within Africa, sponsoring delegates to several international meets to lobby support and recognition for the MPLA. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding continued to feature prominently as a conflict intervention mechanism for Nigeria, as evidenced in its involvement in the conflicts between Tanzania-Uganda, Western Sahara and Morocco, and in the Ethiopia-Somalia war.

Similarly, in Namibia, Nigeria supported the South West African Peoples’ Organisation (SWAPO) led by Sam Nujoma, against the other political parties sponsored by South Africa and the West to victory. Under the Murtala Obasanjo regime, the South African Relief Fund was launched, the SWAPO and Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe received increased support, with Nigeria donating about USD20m to Zimbabwean liberation movements, and equally sent military equipment to Mozambique to help the newly-independent country suppress the South African-backed RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana) guerrillas.

Murtala Mohammed was assassinated in the coup of 13 February 1976, and the succeeding Obasanjo regime sustained the foreign policy behaviour, among which were the nationalisation of a number of Western assets, particularly Barclays Bank and British Petroleum. Obasanjo handed over to a civilian government led by Shehu Shagari on October 1, 1980. The Shagari presidency kept to its predecessor’s anti-apartheid and decolonisation campaigns in Southern

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404 Ibid., p.25.
405 Ibid., p.25.
Africa. Sanctions and seclusions were imposed on Pretoria, while Nigeria’s support for liberation movements in Southern Africa significantly rose to about $5 million in aid yearly.409

In what appears a significant shift from Nigeria’s subscription to an Afro-centric foreign policy disposition, the Shagari administration deported those it classified as “aliens” (Ghanaians and citizens from other West African countries) to their countries.410 In sum, and as elsewhere argued, Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour under the Shagari administration, lacked the zeal and competence to keep up with the pace it had inherited.411 His administration’s foreign policy behaviour, was largely a “routine observance of existing relations and obligations”,412 an excuse given for its overthrow on 31 December, 1983 by the Muhammada Buhari inspired coup. For the Buhari-Idiagbon regime, its foreign policy priority was to restore Nigeria’s tattered economy, and redirect it on the path of moral rectitude.413 Relying on Nigeria’s Afro-centric foreign policy commitment, the Buhari regime accorded state recognition to the Polisario government in Western Sahara (Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic), and “re-launched Nigeria’s deep commitment to the cause of freedom and liberation struggles particularly in South Africa”.414

Economic diplomacy became a defining foreign policy behaviour for the regime, as it was during this period that quadripartite agreements involving Nigeria and its neighbours—Benin, Ghana and Togo was signed.415 While the regime tried to maintain an Africa-focused foreign policy approach as priority, it contradicted itself when it deported those it categorised “as illegal aliens” from Chad and Niger Republic to their countries.416 The regime’s decision to close down Nigeria’s borders, as a measure against smuggling and money laundering in the fight against

411 Ibid., p.60.
415 Ibid., p.60.
corruption, eventually led to its overthrow by the Sani Abacha-led, but Ibrahim Babangida-motivated coup of 27 August, 1985.

Babangida’s foreign policy behaviour focused on an issue-based pursuit, reflecting a package of objectives and goals tied to the nation’s security and the well-being of Nigerians. The Technical Aid Corps (TAC) programme, Concert of Medium Powers initiative, the adoption of economic diplomacy as the regime’s foreign policy thrust, and the activation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Citizens under Babangida’s chairmanship testify to Babangida’s foreign policy towards Africa. The regime equally reversed its predecessor’s border-closure policy, and enhanced Nigeria’s role as the arrowhead of the subregional organisation through its intervention in Liberia.

According to Shaw and Ihonvbere:

Nigeria not only provided the bulk of the material and logistic support for ECOMOG operations but also the bulk of the personnel. Apart from the first Commander who was a Ghanaian, all subsequent Commanders were from the Nigerian military. That today Liberia is a united country owes much to the foresight and sacrifice of Nigeria … the Babangida regime gave ECOWAS institutional relevance by not only donating land for the building of the ECOWAS Secretariat but also contributed 4.5 million dollars towards its construction.

In all, the regime was credited with the following achievements. First, for reviving Nigeria’s active commitment to ECOWAS and encouraging the lifting of boundary closures and restoration of free movement between member-states. Second, for actively intervening in inter-African affairs and conflicts, especially in West Africa, and establishing and funding the Technical Aids Corps (TAC) initiative, which sends highly-trained Nigerian personnel at little or no cost to needy African states and other places. And, lastly, for its lead role in the formation of the Lagos Forum of Medium Powers. In keeping with Nigeria’s afro-centric foreign policy focus, the Babangida regime led 32 other countries in boycotting the Commonwealth games in Edinburgh.

in 1986 in protest against Britain’s patronage of the regime in Pretoria, and made financial donations to major anti-apartheid movements in Southern Africa.

For example, the sum of US$1.5 million in aid was given to the South West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO), while the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) received donations of US$1 million and US$600,000 in 1989 respectively.\footnote{Osaghae, E. (1998). \textit{Crippled giant: Nigeria since independence}. India: Hurst, p.32.}

Babangida’s annulment of the 12 June, 1993 elections reversed the warm relations he had enjoyed from the international community, leading Nigeria to one of the darkest periods in its national history with the assumption of office of the Sani Abacha regime. Abacha’s foreign policy behaviour was shaped by the global tilt towards liberal democracy, and the international community’s stiff opposition to the palace coup which ousted Ernest Shonekan’s interim national government.

Thus, his foreign policy behaviour was largely reactive and isolationist in orientation, a situation further compounded by the regime’s brutal execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others. The international community responded to Abacha in kind, with Nigeria’s traditional allies—Britain, United States, France, Germany, Canada and South Africa, withdrawing their diplomatic representations from the country, while the Commonwealth also suspended Nigeria’s membership.\footnote{Akintola, B. (2007). “Nigeria and the World: A Review of Nigeria’s Foreign Policy (1960-2007)”. \textit{The Nigerian Army Quarterly Journal}, (4), p.462.}

In response to the isolation from the West and its allies, Abacha turned to Asia and many fringe states across the world, thus further ostracising Nigeria from rest of the world. Abacha’s death left Nigeria in a lurch of international isolationism, and the succeeding regime of General Abdulsalami Abubakar appeared more concerned with rescuing Nigeria from the self-inflicted international isolation than in perpetuating itself in power.

Abubakar’s foreign policy behaviour was focused on the pursuance of a “policy of rejuvenation in a bid to redeem Nigeria’s image abroad, particularly on the human rights front”.\footnote{Ibid., p.463.} The summary of Obasanjo’s foreign policy articulation in his second coming as civilian president was anchored on four major planks, which are to (1) reposition Nigeria as the leading nation in Africa; (2) ensure democratic consolidation and the promotion of political stability in Africa; (3)
intensify the drive for economic integration and cooperation of Africa; and (4) facilitate the peaceful resolution of conflict and African regional integration.\textsuperscript{423}

On the first plank, Obasanjo embarked on aggressive diplomatic shuttles employing his influential personality to attract recognition for the country in the international arena, thus attracting in the process, huge foreign direct investments (FDI). In furtherance of Obasanjo’s drive for democratic consolidation and political stability in Africa, Obasanjo was part of several international delegations set up by the AU and the UN to mediate in conflicts in Africa and other parts of the world. His administration also resisted undemocratic regime changes in Africa, as seen in the case of São Tomé and Príncipe, when President Fradique Mendez was ousted, while on a state visit to Nigeria in 2003.\textsuperscript{424}

A mediation team set up by Obasanjo eventually got Fradique Mendez reinstated. His administration also teamed up with other countries to ensure the restoration of democracy in Guinea-Bissau, following the sack of the Kumba Yala-led government.\textsuperscript{425} Economic integration and cooperation among African states featured prominently as the main foreign policy focus of the Obasanjo administration. The Nigerian-South African Bi-National Commission instituted in 1999, Nigeria-Congo Joint Commission established in 2001, the transitioning of the OAU into the African Union (AU), and the formation of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), are all testament to Obasanjo’s pursuit of an economic diplomacy-themed foreign policy behaviour.

On conflict intervention, Obasanjo favoured a peaceful approach to conflict resolution, in contrast to his regime’s aggressive foreign policy behaviour during his first stint in office (1976-1979). Under Obasanjo’s watch, Liberia’s Charles Taylor was handed over to the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Nigerian army assumed an observer mission in Sierra Leone in 2003, the Mano River dispute between Liberia, Guinea and Sierra-Leone was resolved, and the

\textsuperscript{424} Ibid., p.59.
\textsuperscript{425} Ibid., p.59.
Constitutive Act of the African Union with the NEPAD as its economic variant was adopted by AU. Obasanjo was succeeded by Umaru Yar’ Adua on 29 May, 2007.

The Yar’Adua administration adopted a citizen-diplomacy-styled foreign policy behaviour, with Africa remaining the corner-piece of Nigeria’s foreign policy, while the interests of Nigerians took pre-eminence over subregional, continental and global issues. These ideas were at their conception stage when Yar’ Adua died in office on May 5, 2010, and was succeeded by his deputy—Goodluck Jonathan. Except for Nigeria’s strong opposition to the undemocratic change of government in Mali and Guinea Bissau in 2011, the deployment of troops to Mali in 2012 and the construction of military clinics and barracks its army, and Nigeria’s recognition of Transitional National Council (TNC) in Libya, after Gadaffi’s ouster, Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour suffered a terminal decline under the Jonathan presidency.

Based on the forgoing, it is thought that a cursory overview of the personalised nature of Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour could be useful to the understanding of Nigeria’s conflict intervention roles in Africa.

4.4. The personalised nature of Nigeria’s foreign policy

I have tonight been advised by the Council of Ministers that they had come to the unanimous decision to voluntarily hand over the administration of the country to the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic with immediate effect. All Ministers are assured of their personal safety by the new administration. I will now call on the General Officer Commanding, Major-Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi to make a statement on the Policy of the New Administration.426

The above excerpt by the then Acting President of Nigeria, Orizu Nwafor, marked the beginning of what later became the military incursion into the murky waters of Nigeria’s politics. In the end, the era spanned 33 years (15 January 1966 to 28 May 1999) in between which Nigeria had a civilian interregnum between 1 October 1979 and 31 December 1983. In terms of foreign policy articulation and execution, much of the events which panned out during this era were largely a product of individual leadership idiosyncrasies and ideological orientation, although each of the

regimes still moderately anchored their foreign policy actions on the constitutionally-backed and Africa-centred foreign policy orientation.

Another factor which further evinces the personalised nature of foreign policy-making under the military is the interpretation of “national interest”, a concept defined by Krasner as “a set of societal goals perceived over time with a consistent ranking of importance, thus serving as a guideline for the conducting of a country’s foreign policy and its relationship with the external environment”.427 In Nigeria’s instance however, and more specifically under military rule, the interpretation of the concept is subject to the ideological/personal and leadership orientation of the “big man” in office. Foreign policy decision-making under the military was totally at variance with constitutionalism by virtue of the fusion of the executive and the legislative arms of government under one central authority.428

This arrangement created a situation where the head of state wielded absolute powers by virtue of being the commander-in-chief (C-in-C), and the highest-ranking officer/general whose decisions are final, and any deviation from such orders by the subordinates was punishable by court-martial.429 From 1966 to 1999, the military ran its show in Nigeria through a command structure and totalitarian decision-making body couched under different appellations. The command structure was called the Supreme Military Council (SMC) under the regimes of Generals Aguiyi Ironsi, Yakubu Gowon, Murtala Mohammed, Olusegun Obasanjo and Muhammadu Buhari (January 1984-August 1985).430

The succeeding Ibrahim Babangida regime preferred a change in nomenclature and adopted the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) before changing it to the National Defence Council (NDC) towards the end of his regime. Generals Sani Abacha and Abdul-Salami Abubakar preferred the term Provisional Ruling Council (PRC).431 Regardless of these name changes, one

431 Ibid., p.12.
major constant in their foreign policy decision-making is that the absolute will of the individual in power always prevailed—a phenomenon Fawole argued as a consequence of the military’s hierarchical structure, discipline and espirit de corps.\textsuperscript{432} This explains how the Yakubu Gowon regime (1966-1975) was able to articulate a tripartite foreign policy posture on (1) African continental issues, (2) a domestic regional policy, and (3) a global level policy.\textsuperscript{433}

On the continental front, the Gowon regime, premising its action on the violation of Nigeria’s commitment to the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states, severed diplomatic relations with African countries such as Gabon, Côte d’Ivoire, Tanzania, Zambia, the Israeli, Portuguese and French governments over their recognition of, and support given to, the secessionist Biafra group\textsuperscript{434} during Nigeria’s 1967-1970 civil war.\textsuperscript{435} Gowon did not also mince words on his regime’s intention to turn the heat on the backers of the remaining vestiges of colonisation in Africa, including apartheid South Africa.

Gowon had warned:

> Let no one deceive himself that South Africa is spending $540million for defense purposes and seeking to acquire nuclear capability only to come to terms with independent Africa and grant the right of self-determination to her African population. South Africa is growing an octopus. It is reaching beyond its territories. It is exporting its racist policies. It is being used by the imperialists’ powers to regain their foothold on Africa.\textsuperscript{436}

To curb Pretoria’s apartheid-motivated hegemonic tendencies, and as shown below, Gowon increased Nigeria’s strategic and financial support to liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia and South Africa.\textsuperscript{437}

\textsuperscript{432} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{434} The Republic of Biafra was a secessionist group in south-eastern Nigeria from 30 May 1967 to 15 January 1970, taking its name from the Bight of Biafra (the Atlantic bay to its south). The inhabitants were mostly the Igbo people who led the secession due to economic, ethnic, cultural and religious tensions among the various peoples of Nigeria. The creation of the new state that was pushing for recognition was among the causes of the Nigerian Civil War, also known as the Nigerian-Biafran War.
\textsuperscript{435} Ibid., p.34.
\textsuperscript{437} Ibid., p.37.
Table 4.2: Nigeria’s contribution to the OAU liberation committee from 1963 to 1966 and 1970 to 1973

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donation (USD)</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>222,000</td>
<td>252,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>380,000</td>
<td>360,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:438

It is also worth noting that Gowon operated a highly-personalised foreign policy, as evidenced in a number of decisions the regime took. These includes: the (aborted) decision to dispatch Nigerian troops to Niger in 1972 to forestall a coup against his friend, President Hamani Diori; the sponsoring of numerous Technical Aid Schemes to the countries under the ACP grouping; the support Nigeria gave to the creation of ECOWAS; the regime’s politics of oil diplomacy, where oil was sold at concessionary rates to countries sympathetic to the Nigerian cause during its civil war; the concession of Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon in 1975; the road projects executed in Benin Republic; the sugar factory constructed in Senegal, among others.439

Continuing Gowon’s legacy, but exhibiting a more aggressive posture towards Western imperialism, Nigeria’s foreign policy decision-making, under Murtala/Obasanjo, was equally at his behest, with occasional insignificant inputs from his major advisers in his ruling council. This development explains how a strong-willed and self-opinionated ruler like General Murtala Mohammed was unilaterally able to recognise the MPLA in 1975, without recourse to the views of his colleagues at the SMC.440 The same also goes for the Olusegun Obasanjo regime, which single-handedly nationalised the assets of British Petroleum (BP) in 1979, and declined visiting Britain during his regime in protest against Britain’s continuous denial of independence to Rhodesia.441

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For Muhammadu Buhari, closing Nigeria’s borders against fellow West Africans, described as illegal aliens from neighbouring Chad in 1985, remains the most important exemplification of the personalised nature of foreign policy decision-making. Under his watch, Nigeria’s borders were closed, despite the repeated pleas by the governments of Niger and Chad, whose economic survival depended on cross-border transactions and commerce.\footnote{Akinrinade, S. (1992). “From Hostility to Accommodation: Nigeria’s West African Policy, 1984-90”. \textit{Nigerian Journal of International Affairs}, 18(1), Pp.52-54.} His foreign policy rigidity was so pronounced that not even the offer of the chairmanship of ECOWAS to him could change his stance.\footnote{Adebajo, A. (2008). “Hegemony on a shoestring: Nigeria’s post-Cold War foreign policy”. In Adebajo, A. and Mustapha, R. (Eds.) \textit{Gulliver’s Troubles, Nigeria’s foreign policy after the Cold War}. Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, p.8.} The Babangida regime was equally not exempted from this personalised foreign policy decision-making pattern, in view of the way ECOWAS was made to function under his watch. As argued by Adebajo, Babangida, through the instrumentality of ECOWAS, sought to create for himself an image of “a fearless, brave and great leader” whose memory he hoped would remain indelible in Nigeria’s contemporary history.\footnote{Ibid., p.87.}

Babangida employed the Nigerian Army as a platform to demonstrate to the international community that Nigeria had the capacity to maintain peace within its constituency.\footnote{Ibid., p.87.} A further manifestation of his personalised foreign policy decision-making orientation was his decision to unilaterally register Nigeria as a member-country of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, despite wide protests from the Christian dominated South, and the constitutional description and recognition of Nigeria as a secular state.\footnote{Olukoshi, A. (1990a). “The Long Road to Fez: An examination of Nigeria’s decision to become a full member of the Organization of Islamic Conference”. In Olusanya, G.O. and Akindele, R.A. (Eds.) \textit{The Structure and Processes of Foreign Policy Making and Implementation in Nigeria, 1960-1990}. Lagos: Vantage Publishers Limited and NIIA.} General Sani Abacha towed the Babangida path, but this time, disruptively. As Fawole argues, “not only was Abacha paranoid at home, he also suspected that there was an insidious international conspiracy against his regime”.\footnote{Fawole, W. (2003). \textit{Nigeria’s External Relations and Foreign Policy under Military Rule (1966-1999) in Nigeria}. Ile Ife, Nigeria: OAU Press Ltd, p.16.} Abacha saw
foreign policy-decision-making as a vital opportunity to “hit back” at his “foreign enemies” and an avenue to crudely act in defiance of international opinion about his regime.\textsuperscript{448}

Under Abacha, Nigeria effectively became a pariah state and was expelled from the Commonwealth, in the light of his maximum rulership and the execution of the “Ogoni 9” in 1995, despite a massive international plea for their release.\textsuperscript{449} The last trace of military rule in Nigeria was the Abdulsalami Abubakar regime which had a marginally different approach to foreign policy execution, maintaining a balance between personal ambition and utilitarianism. As a consequence, Nigeria got re-admitted into the committee of nations, to democracy in May 1999.\textsuperscript{450}

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter reveals that there appears to be a nexus between Nigeria’s foreign policy principles and objectives, and the decisions taken by its leaders to intervene in conflicts in Africa, most of which have been tied to Nigeria’s age-long commitment to an African-centred foreign policy orientation. The chapter shows that while the substance of Nigeria’s foreign policy remained the same, Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa varied from regime to regime depending on the orientations of the political leadership. In addition, the prevailing domestic (political, economic and socio-cultural realities) and international environment have also been identified as major determinants of Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour in the period under review. The chapter finds in the early years of Nigeria’s independence, the framers of its foreign policy exhibited a strong sense of collective identity, as evident in the support they gave to the United Nations Organisation (UNO) and the OAU.


\textsuperscript{449} Ken Saro-Wiwa, A Nigerian writer and environmental activist for the Ogoni people and eight others were arrested after four former leaders of their Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) were murdered in May 1994. In a case widely reported to be a legal farce, they were found guilty of their murder by a military tribunal and sentenced to death in October 1995. They were hanged while Commonwealth heads of government were meeting in New Zealand, a day after the former South African president Nelson Mandela appealed for a stay of execution.

\textsuperscript{450} Ibid., p.13.
Evidently, Nigeria’s leadership at that time sought to build bridges across the divide and arguably harboured no ambitious or hegemonic intentions. The chapter also notes there was a gradual shift from a conservative foreign policy orientation in the early stages of independence to a more assertive posture when the military took over in 1966, and that a number of Nigeria’s foreign policy objectives at independence were laden with ideological values which are not necessarily realist in orientation. As seen for example in its (foreign policy) provision which seeks to promote African unity, and all other forms of international cooperation conducive to the consolidation of universal peace, and mutual respect and friendship among all peoples and states, and is its desire to pursue the collective promotion of the values of cooperation and peaceful coexistence in Africa and maintain a principle of nonalignment in interaction with the rest of the world.

Similarly, claims by Nigeria that it has a moral obligation to respect the territorial sovereignty of states, respect civilised rules of interaction in its engagement with the rest of the world, and a general commitment to internationally-agreed mechanisms of resolving conflicts, shows the inadequacy of a single approach in explaining Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour, as these commitments are built around the notion of collective identity. To a considerable extent, and as demonstrated in this chapter, individual leadership idiosyncrasies and ideological orientation of Nigeria’s past and present leadership, culminated in a personalised foreign policy behaviour with little or no evidence of a clear-cut guiding principle, as these behaviours were at the discretion of the “big man in Abuja”. Under military rule, for example, a number of Nigeria’s conflict intervention roles in Africa, particularly in Liberia and Sierra Leone, have been interpreted in some circles as hegemony-laden, which structural realism could explain. Yet, sustained attempts were made during this time to strengthen economic ties, and provide technical assistance to Nigeria’s contiguous states, and other states in Africa, and this is evidently antithetical to the dictates of structural realism.

The chapter also evinces that Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour since its return to civil rule in 1999, though assertive, has progressed towards a more identity-themed approach to conflict intervention, in contrast to what obtained during military rule. Since 1999, more attention has been paid to subregional and regional integration through the domestication of a number of ECOWAS treaties and African Union resolutions. Nigeria and South Africa’s role in the
institutionalisation of NEPAD is very apt in this regard. Perhaps a clear demonstration of this behavioural shift was the role played by Nigeria during the election crisis in the Gambia in January 2017, where it demonstrated an “unusual patience”, while the negotiations lasted. As evinced in this chapter, employing the eclectic approach—a combination of both structural realism and social constructivism approaches to interpret Nigeria’s foreign policy principles and objectives and foreign policy behaviour, has the potential to mitigate the analytic complexities that could arise if the chapter had relied on only one of the IR approaches. We will focus more on the analytic utility embedded in eclecticism in chapter eight of the study. Nigeria’s conflict intervention role in Sierra Leone between 1991 and 1998 is the focus of the next chapter.
Chapter 5: Nigeria’s Conflict Intervention Role in Sierra Leone 

5.1 Introduction

In chapter four the study examined Nigeria’s foreign policy from the perspective of its principles and objectives. Specific attempts were made to examine Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa, and how the personalised nature of its foreign policy affects its conflict intervention roles. This chapter focuses on Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone with a view to ascertaining the extent to which the intervention aligns with its Africa-centred foreign policy as established in the previous chapter. This is achieved by assessing the causal factors and central issues which defined Sierra Leone’s civil war between 1991 and 1998, and Nigeria’s response, through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Without necessarily conceding, our argument in this chapter is that structural realism helps us to appreciate the relative power pursuit of Nigeria’s leaders (although we will return to this in detail in chapter eight), in its country’s intervention role in Sierra Leone. At the same time, it is clear that structural realism can take us only so far, as Nigeria’s behaviour also illustrates that its commitment to African values and solidarity is more than just a smokescreen for the specific regional hegemonic interests that Nigerian leaderships have been pursuing. Of course, the waters are muddied from a constructivist perspective, that is—by the large role that the personal commercial interests of Nigeria’s Sani Abacha had in precipitating Nigeria’s intervention.

This chapter is divided into five sections, together with this introduction. The second section focuses on the centrifugal and centripetal issues which led to the conflict in Sierra Leone. The third undertakes a retrospective appraisal of the role played by ECOWAS/ECOMOG in the conflict episode. In the fourth section, we examine the contending explanations for Nigeria’s involvement, in particular, whether its intervention was motivated by a humanitarian responsibility to protect the civilian population or certain personal interests. The fifth section offers its concluding remarks. We begin our discussion with a summary of the remote and proximate causes of the Sierra Leone conflict.
5.2 The Sierra Leone civil war: causes and issues

At independence in 1961, Sierra Leone had all the legal trappings of a functioning democratic state: a democratically-elected parliament by universal franchise, a relatively-independent judiciary, an executive and a parliament, and a relatively-efficient civil service. However, Sierra Leone’s promising future suffered a setback in 1967, after the general election when an army commander stepped in to prevent the opposition All People’s Congress (APC), which won the elections, from succeeding the ruling Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP). That singular act marked the beginning of the state-failure crisis of Sierra Leone, which peaked in 1991, and led to the outbreak of a civil war. By the time the war broke out, Sierra Leone had become a failed state where all vital social and political institutions had either collapsed or had ceased to function, and the economy had gone bankrupt through neo-patrimonial politics and kleptocracy.

The civil war in Sierra Leone started as a spill over from the Liberian crisis which began in 1989, and two broad explanations have been advanced as to its remote cause—the long term and immediate causes. According to Zack-Williams, the long-term cause of the conflict was predicated on the feelings of alienation by Sierra Leoneans towards the uninterrupted spell of autocracy witnessed under the All People’s Congress (APC). The APC, under Siaka Stevens, unseated the Sierra Leone’s Liberation People’s Party (SLPP), but was prevented from assuming power, following a putsch led by Brigadier David Lasana.

452 Ibid., p.3.
454 Sierra Leones’ APC was formed in 1960 by a breakaway group from the Sierra Leone People’s Party who vehemently opposed the idea of election before independence, but instead supported the idea of independence before elections.
455 The SLPP was formed in 1951 and it dominated Sierra Leone’s politics from its foundation until 1967, when it lost the parliamentary election to Siaka Stevens led All People’s Congress (APC). In 1996, the SLPP returned to power when its leader Ahmad Tejan Kabbah won the Sierra Leone presidential election. The party was in power from 1996 to 2007, when it again lost to the All People’s Congress (APC), led by Ernest Bai Koroma in the presidential election.
In May 1967, Major A.T. Juxon staged a coup (on behalf of Siaka Stevens) to oust Brigadier Lasana. Stevens’ return to power marked the beginning of Sierra Leone’s constitutional degeneration, the rise of personal rule, and economic decline. His regime was greeted by growing economic crisis and challenges from counter-hegemonic forces such as the labour and student unions on the polity. This produced an anti-theses of growing political authoritarianism and repression of the civilian population. Sierra Leone’s gradual descent into a failed state became more apparent when the regime lost the ability to impose discipline on the elite involved in the smuggling of its diamonds and gold.

Stevens’ governance failures, as Adebajo argues, “were exacerbated by an economic crisis brought about by political corruption and a difficult international economic climate. A rapacious Sierra Leonean political class and a parasitic Lebanese business clique, combined to loot the country’s diamond revenues, even as agricultural production collapsed”. This loss of legal sovereignty rattled the rank and file of the ruling APC, and forced Siaka Stevens to hand over power to his force commander, Major-General Joseph Seidu Momoh in 1985. Under Momoh, Sierra Leone’s economy further plummeted, while the government declared a state of economic emergency, and introduced stiffer anti-corruption measures, and plans to check illegal gold mining and diamond smuggling.

Momoh’s political relationship with the political elite in the APC worsened, after treason charges were brought against Francis Minah, who was subsequently executed, having been accused of planning to topple the Momoh-regime. Minah’s execution widened the belief held by leaders of the southern province that Momoh’s politics of divide-and-rule and ethnic favouritism was a

459 Ibid., p.17.
460 Ibid., p.17.
461 Ibid., p.17.
463 Ibid., p.81.
464 Ibid., p.81.
calculated attempt to deny them the presidency.\textsuperscript{466} The government also attempted to stifle public criticism by maintaining a hard-line posture to agitations from labour unions, and their leaders, among whom was Foday Sankoh—a rural itinerant photographer and student activist, who later led a rebel movement known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).\textsuperscript{467} Although Foday Sankoh’s RUF portrayed itself as a political movement promoting a better Sierra Leone, in reality the movement was no more than a group of thugs who killed, raped, looted and used the precious diamond mines as a means of exchange for arms and ammunitions.\textsuperscript{468} To most Sierra Leoneans, “the RUF was a movement whose method of revolutionary struggle served to alienate the larger society from its so called revolutionary agenda”\textsuperscript{469}

The RUF, as Abdullah notes, defied all available typologies of guerrilla movements. It was neither a separatist uprising rooted in a specific demand, as in the case of Eritrea, or a reformist movement with a radical agenda superior to the regime it sought to overthrow.\textsuperscript{470} Nor did it possess the kind of leadership necessary to qualify as a warlord insurgency. Rather, it was a peculiar guerrilla movement without any significant national following or ethnic support.\textsuperscript{471} The notoriety of the group has been aptly captured by Ryan Lizza, when he described the RUF as “a group that would typically enter a village, round up children, with girls as young as ten getting raped, while the boys are forced to execute village elders and sometimes their own parents. Once the past was cut off from the children, they are hooked on speed”.\textsuperscript{472} By 1991, the RUF had captured most of the eastern part of the country and created a refugee crisis. People fled into the capital of Freetown and into other neighbouring countries.\textsuperscript{473}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{467} Gberie, L. (2005). \textit{A Dirty War: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone}. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
\item \textsuperscript{468} Ibid., p.7.
\item \textsuperscript{471} Ibid., p.172.
\item \textsuperscript{472} Ibid., p.172.
\end{itemize}
In March 1991, motivated by the desire to sack the Momoh regime, Foday Sankoh’s RUF successfully attacked the town of Bormalu, Kailahun district, in the south-eastern corner of Sierra Leone near its border with Liberia. On 29 April, 1992, a coup led by Captain Valentine Strasser ousted the Momoh regime on the pretext that the regime was incapable of dealing with the challenges posed by the Sankoh-led RUF. Like the Momoh regime, Strasser was unable to counter the RUF insurgency, despite the expansion of the army’s capacity to about 14,000 soldiers and the recruitment of young Sierra Leoneans he had earlier described as the “lumpen youth”\(^{474}\) and thugs.\(^{475}\)

In a bid to counter Strasser’s renewed military offensive, Foday Sankoh’s RUF enlisted the support of Charles Taylor, a long-time ally he had known during their guerrilla warfare trainings in Libya, where the idea of challenging the APC rule was first mooted.\(^{476}\) By then, Foday Sankoh had gained control of Sierra Leone’s major economic bases, particularly the Kono, Moyamba and Bonthe districts housing the diamond, bauxite, and rutile mines. Taylor wasted no time in acceding to Sankoh’s request, which he saw as an opportunity to extract his pound of flesh on the Momoh regime, who had earlier declined his request to use the north of Sierra Leone as a launch base for his armed insurgency during the Liberian civil war.\(^{477}\)

So for Charles Taylor, providing support for Foday Sankoh was a matter of personal interest, and an opportunity to expand his sphere of influence in a country he considers vital to the continuity of his reign of terror in Liberia. Scholars have therefore summarised the motivations behind Charles Taylor’s support for the RUF along the following lines: (1) force the withdrawal of Sierra Leone from ECOMOG, (2) help install his Revolutionary United Front (RUF) allies in power in Freetown, and by so doing, hope to (3) profit from the diamond trade in Sierra Leone.\(^{478}\)


\(^{478}\) Adebajo, A. (2002). “Sierra Leone, a Feast for the Sobels”. In Adebajo, A. \textit{Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau}. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., p.82.
Furthermore, a deeply destabilised Sierra Leone, as Richards argue, would be in Taylor’s interest in economic terms, since the border region between Sierra Leone and Liberia was abundant in natural resources, including diamonds.\textsuperscript{479}

By November 1994, the RUF had successfully launched several “hit-and-run attacks all over the country and also established new forward camps”.\textsuperscript{480} The Strasser regime responded by reaching out to a South Africa-based mercenary group known as Executive Outcomes (EO) to help with the training of its army and the Kamajor militias.\textsuperscript{481} This effort achieved moderate success, as the mines were reconquered in August 1995, but it was not enough to stop a palace coup led by Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, Strasser’s Chief of Defence Staff, and the deputy head of the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) from toppling him.\textsuperscript{482} The Bio regime caved in to international and local pressure, especially from the British and US ambassadors, who called for the restoration of democracy, while the Sierra Leone Women’s Movement for Peace (SLWMP), remained defiant through its anti-military demonstrations, in the face of a strong military opposition by the Democratic Consultative Conference (Bintumani II).\textsuperscript{483}

Ahmed Tejan-Kabbah emerged victorious from the Presidential election held in February 1996, under the banner of the SLPP, even though voting did not take place in the north and eastern parts of the country.\textsuperscript{484} As it was with previous governments, Kabbah had no effective and loyal army that could challenge the RUF’s control of the diamond-rich zones they held.\textsuperscript{485} An attempt to resolve the crisis through the “Abidjan Accord” of 30 November 1996, brokered by Côte d’Ivoire, where a Neutral Monitoring Group (NMG), aimed at disarming the warring factions, withdrawing the South African mercenaries (Executive Outcomes), and repatriating all foreign

\textsuperscript{479} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{481} Ibid., p.4.
\textsuperscript{482} Adebajo, A. (2002). “Sierra Leone, a Feast for the Sobels”. In Adebajo A. \textit{Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau}. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, p.84.
\textsuperscript{485} Adebajo, A. (2002). “Sierra Leone, a Feast for the Sobels”. In Adebajo, A. \textit{Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau}. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., p.82.
troops from Sierra Leone, achieved little or no result. This action led to the collapse of the agreement reached at the Abidjan Accord.\textsuperscript{486}

Responding to the breakdown of the Abidjan accord, the Nigerian government, acting under the auspices of the ECOWAS-Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), assumed full responsibility for Kabbah’s protection, particularly after the latter’s expulsion of EO, and increased the troops it stationed in Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{487} Notwithstanding the increased security presence in Freetown, Kabbah’s government was toppled by Major Johnny Paul Koromah in a putsch known as “the Sobel Coup” on 25 May, 1997. A combination of five nations, led by Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire, and later Liberia, acting under the auspices of ECOWAS, imposed sanctions on the junta in Freetown, which the troops from Nigeria, Ghana, and Guinea were asked to implement.\textsuperscript{488} Similarly, the international community refused to recognise the Koromah junta, despite the Commonwealth’s invitation of the latter to its 1987 Edinburgh summit, while the OAU (as it then was) condemned the coup, and barred the junta from all its summits.\textsuperscript{489}

The Koromah regime responded by discontinuing talks with ECOWAS,\textsuperscript{490} (details of which are explained below), leading to the establishment of a sub-regional peacekeeping force—ECOMOG II—in Freetown, during which all ships and aircrafts movements were barred from entering the country while the United Nations Security Council imposed an oil and arms embargo on Sierra Leone in October 1997.\textsuperscript{491} There was also increased activity on the diplomatic front, with talks on a possible peaceful resolution of the conflict, held in Conakry, Guinea. Meanwhile, the Nigerian troops had begun their military assault on RUF, and sustained it until their expulsion in March 1998.\textsuperscript{492} The combination of both military and diplomatic efforts eventually led to the

\textsuperscript{486} Ibid., p.87.
\textsuperscript{487} Ibid., p.87.
\textsuperscript{489} Ibid., Pp.8-10.
\textsuperscript{491} Ibid., p.88.
Conakry agreement which restored Ahmed Tejan Kabbah to power on 22 April, 1998. The table below provides a summary of the other actors involved in the civil war.

Table 5.1: The actors in the Sierra Leone civil war

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Formed</th>
<th>Represents</th>
<th>Affiliated to</th>
<th>Supported by</th>
<th>In Conflict with</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Nimbas, Makeni Bikolo/Illiciti diamond miners, and other marginalised youths</td>
<td>Ousted leaders of Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and their sympathisers, and the AFRC in 1998.</td>
<td>Liberia, Burkina Faso, Libya, France, Ukrainian Mercenaries</td>
<td>Government of Sierra Leone, ECOMOG, the Kamajors, and the civilian population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamajors</td>
<td>Kamajors rural Militias</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Mende ethnic Group</td>
<td>Sierra Leone government and ECOMOG.</td>
<td></td>
<td>RUF/AFRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLLP Govt</td>
<td>Sierra Leone’s People’s Party</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Mende ethnic group in the South of Sierra Leone.</td>
<td>Kamajors and ECOMOG</td>
<td>ECOMOG, UK US, and the EO.</td>
<td>RUF/AFRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA/AFRC</td>
<td>Renegade faction of the Sierra Leone Army led by Major Paul Koroma/A FRC</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>John Koromah Loyalists</td>
<td>RUF</td>
<td>Liberia, Burkina Faso, Libya, France, Ukrainian mercenaries</td>
<td>The Sierra Leonean government, ECOMOG and the Kamajors militia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 494

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493 Ibid., Pp.188-207.
Obvious from our explanations above is the indispensable role played by ECOWAS, through its conflict intervention mechanism, ECOMOG, in the conflict. The succeeding discussion assesses this role in detail.

5.3 ECOWAS/ECOMOG intervention in Sierra Leone

The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) is the peacekeeping/intervention force of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which was established in May 1975, as a sub-regional economic institution aimed at achieving an economically and politically stable and developing region. Upon its formation, ECOWAS was mandated with the task of forging economic integration among its member-states. The journey towards the creation of a subregional security force began at an ECOWAS summit in Lomé in 1980, where the governments of Togo, Senegal, and Nigeria pushed for a common defence pact.\(^{495}\)

This development led to the adoption of the Protocol Relating to the Mutual Assistance on Defence (MAD) at an ECOWAS summit in Freetown on 29 May, 1981, although the governments of Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Mali declined to ratify the protocol. The main thrust of the 1981 protocol was the promise of “mutual aid and assistance for defense” in the event of an externally instigated or supported armed threat or aggression against a member-state. The protocol subsequently called for the establishment of an Allied Armed Forces of the Community (AAFC), consisting of standby forces from ECOWAS states and other supporting institutions,\(^{496}\) but it was not until 1993 that the organisation revised its treaty to also

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accommodate security matters, although, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was activated in 1990.

ECOMOG, according to Maxwell Khobe, is a non-standing military force consisting of land, sea and air components, set up by member-states of ECOWAS to deal with the security problem that followed the collapse of the formal state structure in Liberia in 1990. The formation of ECOMOG is therefore believed to be a response to West Africa’s notoriety as a hotbed of political, economic and social agitation, and a means to counter the growth of insurgent and revolutionary movements often supported by economically-marginalised youths and estranged members of the elite.

At conception, the force was known as the Allied Armed Forces of the Community (AAFC), which according to Article 4(b), provides for collective response where a member-state is a victim of internal armed conflict engineered and supported actively from outside, and which is likely to endanger the peace and security of other member-states. According to the Protocol, the AAFC would be used as follows: (1) where two member states are in conflict, the Community will interpose the Allied Armed Force of the Community (AAFC) between them as a peacekeeping force; (2) Where a member state is the victim of internal armed conflict supported from outside and its head of state has requested military assistance from the Community in writing, the AAFC will be sent to resolve the conflict as an intervention force.

Although the Protocol was invoked with respect to the Liberian crisis of 1989/90, the AAFC never materialised. Rather, a smaller group of ECOWAS member-states put together an intervention force known as ECOMOG. ECOMOG’s operational structure is categorised into three broad categories—intervention; peace enforcement; and peacekeeping. At the intervention stage, the mission involves combat action against insurgents or factions which resist

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498 Ibid., p.1.
499 Ibid., p.1.
500 Ibid., p.1.
501 Ibid., p.1.
502 Ibid., p.1.
503 Ibid., p.1.
the authority of the de jure government. In the course of its peace-enforcement mission, ECOMOG monitors and enforces the provisions of the ceasefire. When these ceasefire agreements break down, ECOMOG missions change from intervention to peace enforcement.504

Lastly, in the course of its peacekeeping missions, ECOMOG only intervenes when general anarchy has set in, with a primary mandate to protect the lives and properties of the civilian population by all means necessary. ECOMOG is thus perceived as a liberator by the larger society.505 It is within this context that the ECOMOG mandate in Sierra Leone can be understood. ECOMOG’s voyage into Sierra Leone is believed to be in response to the ousting of the Kabbah regime by Major Johnny Paul Koromah in May 1997. The international community spoke loudly in condemnation of the coup. The O.AU, at its 33rd summit in Harare, Zimbabwe, called the action “a setback for Africa’s transition to democracy” and that “the development would not be welcome in Africa”.506 The UN similarly condemned the coup, noting that “Africa can no longer tolerate and accept as fait accompli, coups against elected governments, and the illegal seizure of power by military cliques”.507

ECOWAS responded by moving hundreds of its troops in Liberia to bolster the skeletal ECOMOG force stationed at Lungi Airport, Freetown.508 Following the inability of the diplomatic moves led by Nigerian and British High commissioners to resolve the impasse, Nigerian naval vessels stationed off the coast of Freetown began shelling the capital on 2 June, 1997,509 despite the strong opposition from Ghana, and Burkina Faso, who described the Nigerian action as unilateralist.510 However, that move resulted in heavy casualties and humiliation for the Nigerian forces, as the combined troops of RUF and AFRC, known as “The

504 Ibid., p.1.
505 Ibid., p.1.
509 Ibid., p.111.
510 Ibid., p.111.
People’s Army”, successfully repelled the attack, and took with them about 300 Nigerian troops as hostages.511

Public opinion on the ECOMOG intervention in Sierra Leone is divided. Some saw the ECOMOG troops as “as heroes, who prevented the takeover of their state by marauding, savage RUF rebels,” while others contended that ECOMOG was merely an imperial army of occupation which plundered their resources, impregnated their women, and failed to guarantee the security of their capital.512 Motivated by the desire to deflect these criticisms, Tom Ikimi, the Nigerian Minister Foreign Affairs launched a diplomatic offensive aimed at soliciting support for the Nigerian initiative. At the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Heads of government meeting that took place in Harare Zimbabwe (June 3, 1997), Nigeria’s Foreign Minister at the time, Tom Ikimi, denied that Nigeria was meddling in the internal affairs of Sierra Leone.

Ikimi argued that:

This is not interference. We at ECOWAS have always been interested in explosive situations that take place in our region which we see as endangering civilian lives and disturbing peace. Together with the international community we must not allow such a situation to continue. Nigeria is going to ensure that peace, stability and legitimate government are restored in Sierra Leone.513

These calls later paid off, following the early reinstatement of the legitimate government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, the return of peace and security, and the resolution of the issues of refugees and displaced persons.514 In August 1997, ECOWAS foreign ministers formally mandated ECOMOG to “monitor the ceasefire, enforce sanctions and embargo, and secure peace in Sierra Leone”.515 That new Force, as Kabia notes, became known as ECOMOG II.516 The Force subsequently adopted a three-pronged strategy, namely, negotiation and dialogue, imposition of sanctions and enforcement of embargo, and the use of force, as its conflict-

511 Ibid., p.111.
515 Ibid., p.111.
516 Ibid., p.111.
resolution mechanism in Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{517} Appointed to drive this mechanism were the governments of Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire and, later, Liberia.\textsuperscript{518} With respect to negotiation and dialogue, the process started with meetings between ECOWAS representatives and the AFRC junta from July 17-18, 1997, and from July 29-30, 1997. The talks later collapsed when the AFRC Chairman, Johnny Paul Koromah, announced a four-year timetable for the return of democracy and elections in Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{519} The temporary setback notwithstanding, both parties were able to arrive at a comprehensive agreement known as the Conakry Accord in October 1997.\textsuperscript{520}

The accord among other things sought to: (1) reinstate the legitimate government of President Tejan Kabbah within a six-month period; (2) ensure immediate cessation of hostilities; (3) ensure the cooperation of the junta with ECOMOG in order to peacefully enforce the sanctions; (4) process the disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants; (5) ease the provision of humanitarian assistance; (6) ensure the return of refugees and displaced persons; (7) provide immunities and guarantees to the leaders of the 25 May, 1997 coup; and (8) map out modalities for broadening the power base in Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{521} The Conakry Accord soon hit another brick wall, when the junta reneged on the earlier agreed terms, and its additional demand that: (1) Foday Sankoh be unconditionally released, (2) that the Nigerian troops withdraw from ECOMOG, and (3) that the AFRC troops be exempted from DDR.\textsuperscript{522}

As a response, ECOWAS, rising from its 28-29th August meeting in Abuja, imposed “a general and total embargo on all supplies of petroleum products, arms, and military equipment to Sierra Leone, with the exception of humanitarian goods vetted by ECOMOG, and weapons and ammunitions meant for their use”.\textsuperscript{523} ECOWAS further campaigned vigorously within the international community, calling on member-states to respect and help enforce the sanctions.\textsuperscript{524}

\textsuperscript{517} Ibid., p.111.
\textsuperscript{518} Ibid., p.111.
\textsuperscript{520} Ibid., p.111.
\textsuperscript{521} Ibid., Pp.111-112.
\textsuperscript{522} Ibid., p.111.
\textsuperscript{523} Ibid., p.111.
\textsuperscript{524} Ibid., p.111.
The UN responded through UNSCR 1132, and asked neutral states such as Kenya, Sweden, and Costa Rica to oversee the implementation of the sanctions. The question which arises from the forgoing is: to what extent did the sanctions change the existing situation?

This becomes necessary given that the main essence of sanctions, as Oudraat argues, is its ability to deter warring parties from engaging in certain detrimental actions or compel them to reverse certain political or military acts. In Sierra Leone, ECOMOG did remarkably well in enforcing the blockade on arms and ammunition to the rebels, notwithstanding the lack of modern patrol and reconnaissance equipment. After initial lapses, which led to breaches of the embargo by a few vessels and aircraft using an old airstrip in Magburaka, northern Sierra Leone, ECOMOG, was able to prevent would-be sanction busters from entering the Freetown port, while its air patrol team intercepted arms supplies from Monrovia. However, this was not without incidents, as ECOMOG’s heavy-handed approach made the sanctions counter-productive, with allegations from human rights groups that the ECOMOG Force shelled vessels carrying food and other humanitarian aid.

In February 1998, the ECOMOG troops mounted Operation Stand Storm, in response to the AFRC-led attack on its Jui Garrison and ousted the Koromah regime, barely a week after the operation commenced. According to Kabia, the rapid success recorded by ECOMOG in Sierra Leone has been attributed to a number of factors. First, there was a massive civilian and rank and file military opposition to the Koromah led coup, thus the ECOMOG Force benefitted from sensitive intelligence report from state soldiers who acted as spies for the mission. Second, the civil defence force, especially the Kamajors were actively involved in the running the pro-

525 Ibid., p.111.
528 Ibid., p.113.
529 Ibid., p.113.
530 Ibid., p.113.
531 Ibid., p.113.
532 Ibid., p.113.
Kabbah “Radio Democracy” on air, presenting programmes which did not only demoralise the ragtag “people’s army”, but also helped instil confidence in the civilian population.533

Third, the AFRC fighters had lost the support of the civilian population due to their largely undisciplined and unprofessional conduct; hence the ECOMOG troops were able to infiltrate their camps through civilian moles.534 Lastly, the RUF and the Sierra Leone Liberation Army (SLA), suffered a clear breakdown of command structure, due to the “pleasure” they derived from inflicting gross human rights abuses on the civilian population, and the looting of state assets.535 Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was reinstated back to office in February 1998, barely one month after the Nigerian led-ECOMOG troops launched a major offensive against the AFRC soldiers and the RUF rebels. The succeeding discussion examines the motivating factors and contending explanations for Nigeria’s involvement in the conflict.

5.4 Nigeria in Sierra Leone: exercising the responsibility to protect or protecting personal interest?

Scholars are unanimous in their argument that Nigeria’s conflict intervention roles in Africa are intricately linked to its Africa-centred foreign policy orientation and the silent role of what Bolaji Akinyemi calls the concept of Pax Nigeriana.536 This Pax Nigeriana philosophy articulates how Nigeria’s demographic preponderance, its economic and natural endowments, and its staggering human resources have been utilised to provide leadership for Africa.537 To be sure, nearly all of Nigeria’s military leaders have regarded Nigeria as a benevolent hegemon, “big brother” and

533 Ibid., p.113.
534 Ibid., p.114.
535 Ibid., p.114.
536 The concept of Pax Africana was coined in 1970 by Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, Nigeria’s former minister of foreign affairs between 1985 and 1987, to describe Nigeria’s leadership role in the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now known as the African Union (AU).
“Giant of Africa,” with a manifest destiny and responsibility to provide security and help spread prosperity in Africa.\textsuperscript{538}

The reasons for this are not farfetched. In the years when the military held sway, according to Alade Fawole, Nigeria’s external relations went through a series of twists and turns, depending on both the character of the regime in power at any point in time and the personal idiosyncrasies of the different leaders, thereby influencing the choices that the country made, and the strategies and methodologies adopted for accomplishing their set objectives.\textsuperscript{539} This philosophy perhaps informs Nigeria’s commanding role in its various peacekeeping and conflict interventions in West Africa, through the instrumentality of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and its military component—ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) – and also as a launch pad for its emergence as a respected actor on the continental scene.\textsuperscript{540}

This explains Aluko’s contention that:

\begin{quote}
…the main ideas behind Nigeria’s initiative are political, security, and economic considerations. For political reasons Nigeria wants an arrangement that will put an end to colonial divisions in West Africa. Furthermore, she believes that such a step will put an end to border disputes and will be an important contribution to African unity.\textsuperscript{541}
\end{quote}

By implication, Nigeria believes that through economic unity, the West African subregion will get closer to political unity, and the enthronement of economic and political stability in member-states will greatly enhance its regional security. Nigeria’s intervention role in West Africa under the auspices of ECOWAS has therefore been argued as firmly motivated by its desire to cooperate with its neighbours who had depended substantially on foreign powers during the war.\textsuperscript{542} In fact, it has been noted that “Frances’ role in providing ammunitions and relief supplies


to secessionist Biafra from neighbouring Francophone states such as Côte d'Ivoire, Benin Republic, and Gabon, prompted Nigeria to forge closer ties with its neighbours in order to prevent the superpowers from invading the country via other West African states”.

In Sierra Leone, the argument for and against Nigeria’s military operation has continued to feature prominently in West African military literature, years after the end of the operation. While some justified Nigeria’s intervention as part of her foreign policy obligations, others have decried it for having ulterior motives. A version argues that it was a response to an attack on a Nigerian base by Koromah’s soldiers on 6 February, 1998, while another contends that Nigeria was just waiting for an excuse to avenge the loss suffered by its troops during the 1997 coup which ousted the Kabbah government. Indeed, Mortimer, and Berman and Sams have summarised the reasons for Nigeria’s intervention along the following lines: (1) Nigeria’s parochial ambitions in West Africa; (2) its desire to protect President Tejan Kabbah’s regime in Freetown; (3) its desire to protect Gen. Lansana Conté’s regime in Conakry; (4) its bid to prevent an alliance of warlords in the three Mano River states of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea; and (5) its need for a strategic presence in West Africa, and General Abacha’s desire to avoid domestic instability and a threat to his regime by diverting his soldiers to another peacekeeping mission.

These arguments have been contested. For example, Adekeye Adebajo argues that the contention that Nigeria used ECOMOG as a vehicle for the pursuit of its parochial ambitions in West Africa remains largely unsubstantiated, as Nigeria’s intervention and commitment to the war was

546 Ibid., p.88.

He argues further that a number of ECOWAS states, particularly, Guinea and Liberia, had at various times expressed their gratitude to Nigeria for the sacrifices and efforts made towards the restoration of stability to the subregion, and for rescuing both countries from the refugee crisis which they were struggling to contain.\footnote{Ibid., p.189.} By implication, Adebajo’s argument is that Nigeria’s intervention role in Sierra Leone was motivated largely by a commitment to its Africa-centred foreign policy disposition, as enshrined in its constitution, and a reflection of its avowed commitment to the ECOWAS project as a foundation member.

Similarly, the argument that Nigeria intervened in Sierra Leone because its leaders were championing Nigeria’s strategic interests through the Kabbah regime as stated by Mortimer\footnote{Mortimer, R. (2000). “From ECOMOG to ECOMOG II: Intervention in Sierra Leone Africa in World Politics”. In Harbeson, J.W. and Rothchild, D. S. (Eds.) The African State System in Flux, Boulder, CO: Westview p.199.} has also been contested. Critics contend that “Abuja” acted rather pragmatically in Sierra Leone by choosing to remain neutral in the regime change in the country between 1992 and 1995, despite the fact that Joseph Momoh was a personal friend and classmate of Nigeria’s Ibrahim Babangida.\footnote{Adebajo, A. (2008). “Mad dogs and Glory: Nigeria’s Interventions in Liberia and Sierra-Leone”. In Adebajo, A and Mustapha, A. R. (Eds.) Gulliver’s Troubles, Nigeria’s foreign policy after the Cold War. Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, p.191.} The Abacha regime, as they argue, chose to defend the Kabbah government because the latter wanted to break the diplomatic isolation it suffered following the execution of the “Ogoni 9”.\footnote{Okonta, I. (2008). “The disease of elephant: Oil-rich “minority” areas, Shell and International NGOs”. In Adebajo, A. and Mustapha, A. R. (Eds.) Gulliver’s Troubles, Nigeria’s foreign policy after the Cold War. Scottsville South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, p.116.}

In other words, a structural realist would argue that Abacha had a personal interest to protect in Sierra Leone, which he disguised in the form of re-affirming Nigeria’s Afro-centric foreign policy posture in Africa. And not necessarily according to the constructivist logic that Nigeria’s intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone can be likened to its reciprocation and recognition of the historical, political and social identity Nigeria shares with Sierra Leone through ECOWAS.
Furthermore, the argument that Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone was partly motivated by its desire to protect the Conté regime in Conakry has also been faulted. Critics argue that despite having its troops in Sierra Leone all through the Momoh, Strasser and Bio regimes, Nigeria refrained from intervening in the coups, despite having the resources to do so. And that there is no evidence to suggest that the planners of the 1996 coup attempt in Conakry would have been hostile to Nigeria or ECOMOG if they had succeeded.

Some scholars have equally advanced a “domino theory” argument as a major motivating factor for Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone. This argument is premised on the assumption that Nigeria was trying to contain Charles Taylor by preventing the RUF from taking power, and to also ensure that Guinea, and inevitably the control of the Mano River Basin, did not fall under the control of the warlords. This explanation has been found to be inadequate owing to its inability to explain why Nigeria reached an accord with Charles Taylor in 1995 and with the RUF in Lomé in 1999.

Opponents of this viewpoint argue that, while Abacha decided on a pragmatic rapprochement with Taylor in 1995 in order to cut losses in Liberia, four years down the line, precisely in 1999, the Obasanjo government opted to make peace with the RUF to allow for a safe exit of Nigerian troops from what Adebajo describes as a “bottomless Sierra Leonean cesspit”. Both Obasanjo and Abacha, as they argue, wanted to rid themselves of an intervention that was becoming

555 Ibid., p.188.
558 Ibid., 188.
560 Ibid., p.191.
561 Ibid., p.191.
increasingly unpopular at home in order to focus on the task of governance without distractions abroad.\textsuperscript{562}

Similarly, the argument made by Richards that Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone was premised on its desire to maintain a presence in West Africa, following concerns over the growing francophone influence in the region, has been disputed.\textsuperscript{563} Critics argue that it would be unfair to equate Abacha’s autocracy-motivated personal interest with that of Nigeria, and that Abacha was mainly courting France to break the cycle of the Anglo-American-led diplomatic isolation he faced at that time.\textsuperscript{564} This motive, as Francois Soudan argues, explains Abacha’s meeting with President Chirac at a Franco-African summit in Burkina Faso in December 1996, his government’s award of about $8 billion worth of contracts to French firms in Nigeria, and the announcement of French as Nigeria’s second official language.\textsuperscript{565}

Some other accounts of Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone hold that Nigeria got involved because of the opportunities available to plunder the country’s diamonds by ECOMOG soldiers.\textsuperscript{566} In response to this notion, a dissenting school of thought has argued, albeit admittedly that while some elements of the ECOMOG contingent profited from the looted goods in Liberia and may have benefited from the economic resources in Sierra Leone, this can scarcely explain Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{567} They note that, as it was the case in Liberia, Nigerian Generals had more opportunities to enrich themselves through corruption by staying close to the treasury in Abuja, than remaining in the diamond fields of Kono.\textsuperscript{568}

\textsuperscript{562} Ibid., p.191.
\textsuperscript{563} Richards, P. (1996). Fighting for the rain forest: war, youth and resources in Sierra Leone. The International African Institute with James Currey (Oxford) and Heinemann (Porstsmouth, NH), p.20.
\textsuperscript{568} Ibid., p.192.
They further contend that the allegation that some members of ECOMOG may have engaged in profiteering activities in Sierra Leone was made without any supporting evidence, and that such illicit activity is synonymous with most peacekeeping missions around the globe, and can therefore not be described as unique to Nigerian soldiers. Our final point for consideration is the explanation that Nigeria went to Sierra Leone because of the desire of the Abacha regime to divert 7000 battle-hardened Nigerian soldiers from the concluding ECOMOG mission in Liberia, in a bid to prevent them from fuelling instability in Nigeria. This argument, according to Adebajo, has been described as “quite simply unconvincing, lacking in logic, and stretching the bounds of logic, by assuming that Abacha could have predicted the coup in Freetown and timed the deployment of his troops accordingly”.

Adebajo contends further that, “since there is no evidence that Abacha possessed the gift of prophecy, it would seem more rational to assume that he was reacting to a situation that presented itself rather than acting out of any strategic motivations”. The coup in Sierra Leone, as Adebajo argues, was not of Abacha’s making, and that if it had not occurred, he certainly would have recalled his soldiers to Nigeria, as Charles Taylor demanded then. Deducible from these explanations is that there appears to be no right or wrong explanation as to why Nigeria intervened in Sierra Leone, but, there are at least two common threads running through these narrations. First, Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone appears in line with a number of constructivist arguments that: people act towards objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the world gives it; and that it is the ideational framework of identity and interests creation that informs the output of the actor to the international system.

569 Ibid., p.192.
572 Ibid., p.191.
573 Ibid., p.192.
575 Ibid., p.10.
By implication, an assessment of the contending arguments for and against Nigeria’s intervention suggests that the country intervened based on the shared identity it has with Sierra Leone through ECOMOG, and its desire to demonstrate its commitment to its Africa-centred foreign policy orientation, which sees Africa in general, and West Africa in particular has the basis of its identity. Second, while Nigeria’s interest via ECOMOG in Sierra Leone can be appreciated within the overall context of the country’s declared Afro-centric policy in general and its pursuit of sub-regional integration in particular, it must also be emphasised that the intervention was largely driven and motivated by the leadership idiosyncrasies of the Babangida and Abacha regimes, who saw the Sierra Leonean conflict episode as an avenue to “settle old scores”, and to test their popularity within the subregion through their relative power pursuits.

By intervening in Sierra Leone therefore, Babangida and Abacha, using the Nigerian army as an instrument of foreign policy articulation, appears to have fulfilled the structural realist argument which focuses on how actors pursue their goals strategically to protect their national interests, regardless of preferences. For example, it has been argued that Nigeria’s Babangida expedited the processes leading to the formation of ECOMOG to protect Liberia’s Samuel Doe (who was his personal friend), and as a vehicle to project Nigeria’s influence throughout the region.576 Thus, according to Osakwe, “with a settlement in Liberia, Sierra Leone became the frontline of Nigeria’s regional security role, Nigeria’s Sani Abacha pursued the war to ensure the survival of Sierra Leone’s democratically elected government”. 577 However, it is imperative to note that the debate on if the need to protect the national interest was a primary consideration for Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone is not a straight one.

As Ufo Uzodike notes, the notion of what constitutes a country’s national interest is rarely ever static.578 What constitutes a country’s national interest, as he argues, is “what the sitting government says it is, especially if the interests can be linked to critical issue-areas such as

576 Ibid., p.11.
578 Personal communication with Professor Ufo Okeke-Uzodike at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, on 20 May, 2016.
security, ‘bread and butter issues’ and national prosperity, because Sierra Leone and Nigeria are both members of ECOWAS.”

ECOWAS, as Uzodike notes:

…..was created in 1975 as an instrument for regional integration, which ostensibly would benefit the biggest economy within the region – Nigeria. Along the way, it became clear that such a grand scheme cannot be realized in a conflict-ridden environment. Hence, member countries sought collect security/defense arrangements, which resulted in non-aggression protocols (PNA and PMAD) in late 1970s and early 1980s along with 1992 agreement to deal with arms proliferation to stem rebellions and other criminal activities.

These instruments were bolstered with the establishment of ECOMOG, and it was largely driven by Nigeria as part of its commitment to regional integration, and the conviction that the initiative was in the national interest, with the sense that what is good for the region is good for Nigeria. Consequently, Nigeria’s decision to intervene in Sierra Leone, according to Uzodike, can be argued as being in line with the national interest if one is to be consistent about the initiatives to secure peace, integrate the economies and ensure economic growth and regional prosperity.

Beyond that, scores of Nigerians, as he mentions, were living and working in Sierra Leone at the time of the conflict, and the protection of their persons and property would (normally) be seen to be in the national interest. As aptly summed up by Uzodike, “one could quiver over the form of intervention, but Nigeria’s decision not to intervene would have had consequences of monumental proportion, and it would have been highly parochial and unfortunate, since Nigerians, by virtue of their teeming population and very mobile tendencies – are more widely represented across West Africa and the continent than any other population group”.

Evidence from the chapter also suggests that Nigeria’s motivation for intervening in Sierra Leone, as exemplified by the Abacha junta, raises a question mark on what the country’s true intentions in Sierra Leone were, and the desirability of such involvement being advanced moving forward. For example, some analysts have argued that the Abacha junta, “expended a needless amount of

579 Ibid.
580 Ibid.
581 Ibid.
582 Ibid.
583 Ibid.
energy on trying to maintain its monopoly on the country while fending off every attempt by the international community to categorize it as a pariah state”. This partly explains why Nigeria contributed 2000 of the 13000 troops to the ECOMOG mission in Sierra Leone between 1991 and 1998, and why it spent about $8 billion on both the Liberian and Sierra Leonean missions.

Given the conspicuous role Abacha played in Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone therefore, and, based on our findings from this chapter, it may be worth considering the possible personal interests the former had at stake in Sierra Leone. First, Abacha’s decision to intervene in Sierra Leone was motivated largely by his desire to break his self-imposed diplomatic isolation by demonstrating his regimes’ indispensability to peacekeeping in a region where the West was keen to avoid being drawn into humanitarian intervention. Accordingly, by helping to restore Kabbah to power, Abacha has again brought to the fore the relative power pursuits of Nigerian leaders, which he carefully disguised in the form of being a lover of democracy, despite the reverse occurring at home (Nigeria).

Abacha’s relative power pursuit was again demonstrated in Sierra Leone when he helped install Maada Bio in office, a move scholars have argued as a payback for Strasser’s decision to vote in favour of sanctions against Nigeria at the 1995 Commonwealth summit in Auckland, in the wake of his junta’s execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and nine others. Second, Abacha’s decision to bring Nigeria’s full weight to bear in Sierra Leone was based on his desire to protect his economic interest in Sierra Leone’s oil refinery, which had earlier been conceded to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) by the Kabbah regime. Third, intervening in Sierra Leone for Abacha meant an avenue for the latter to relaunch his plummeting image that had been severely damaged by his government’s poor human rights record at home. Abacha therefore wanted to use the ECOMOG mission to ward off threats of severe international sanctions against his regime in the wake of the execution of the “Ogoni 9”.

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586 Ibid., p.92.
587 Ibid., p.92.
588 Ibid., p.92.
Thus, by intervening in Sierra Leone, Abacha, (as Babangida did in Liberia) wanted to make a statement, by using the Nigerian Army to prove to the West African subregion, Africa, and indeed the rest of the world, that he was a capable leader of a country with the necessary resources and capability to maintain peace in his backyard (West Africa) as chair of ECOWAS. Finally, Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone shows that its foreign policy articulation, particularly under the Babangida and Abacha regimes, was largely an instrument for self-accomplishment, while the doctrine of what constitutes its national interest was subject to their leadership idiosyncrasies. Indeed, it would seem that Nigeria’s commitment to Afro-centrism during the period only mattered as long as it satisfied the “big man” in Abuja.

A country’s foreign policy orientation and articulation becomes questionable when it serves to fulfil the wishes of a select few, and not the larger interest. This development arguably represents a sad commentary on Nigeria’s foreign policy focus over the years, as experience has shown that its intervention in conflicts within its subregion and on the continent had always been at the discretion of its “big man”. A classic example of the influential role of the “big man” in Nigeria’s foreign policy articulation is manifested in the event which occurred between 1983 and 1985 during the Shehu Shagari and Buhari/Idiagbon governments. In those instances, Nigeria’s leadership credentials in West Africa was severely dented when it expelled from Nigeria about 2.7 million West African citizens from Niger and Chad termed “illegal aliens”. 589

This development has been interpreted as signs of Nigeria’s weakening commitment, and an increasingly-lukewarm attitude to ECOWAS, despite the regime justifying it as an economic and security necessity. 590 On a positive note, we have also seen how the leadership orientation of the head of state/government can be brought to bear on a country’s foreign policy articulation and execution. This was displayed in the lead role Nigeria assumed during the decolonisation and anti-apartheid struggles, which the regimes of Yakubu Gowon (1967-1975), Murtala Muhammed/Olusegun Obasanjo/Shehu Yar’Adua (1975-76 to 1980) spearheaded.

While the foreign policy pursuit of these regimes, to a large extent can be described as moderately altruistic, and nationalist in nature, those of the Babangida and Abacha regimes do not adequately qualify to be so defined. Despite both regimes’ foreign policy articulation being intrinsically related to Nigeria’s commitment to its Africa-centred foreign policy principle, its eventual articulation, particularly in conflict resolution within the West African subregion, leaves the impression of a hegemon trying to assert its authority on its “subjects.” This narrative played out again in Sierra Leone. Nigeria’s unilateral intervention, without recourse to the UN, according to Mortimer, provoked sharp reactions from its neighbours.\(^{591}\)

For example, Burkina Faso’s leader at that time, Blaise Compaoré, who had a strong interpersonal relationship with RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, and Charles Taylor, questioned Nigeria’s motives, asking: “just what might be the intentions of those who have employed force for the restoration of President Kabbah?”\(^{592}\) Complaining specifically about the activities of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone, Compaoré noted that the Nigerian soldiers “conducted themselves quite simply as an army of occupation, and that ECOMOG was going well beyond the mandate that was entrusted to it”.\(^{593}\) Similarly, *Sud-Quotidien*, a Senegalese newspaper in its editorial, questioned Nigeria’s “eternal quest for leadership”, and also criticised what it called Nigeria’s “opportunism” in transforming Liberia into ECOMOG II in Sierra Leone.\(^{594}\)

### 5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined Nigeria’s role in the Sierra Leone civil war between 1991 and 1998, including the causal factors responsible for the war, the various contending explanations for its outbreak, the major actors involved, and the role played by ECOMOG in the decade-long war. The chapter finds out that the tragedy of the situation in Sierra Leone can partly be traced to the country’s historical heritage which gave rise to a whole generation of young men and women who had developed a lifestyle of war and looting, built on a common cosmology of joint

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\(^{592}\) Ibid., p.199.

\(^{593}\) Ibid., p.199.

\(^{594}\) Ibid., p.200.
experiences of social exclusion. The chapter finds that the conflict in Sierra Leone is inextricably linked to the decades of social alienation, an unending neo-patrimonial rule, and the seeds of hatred implanted into the society by Sierra Leone’s political elite.

The second part of the chapter demonstrated that personalities do play an exceedingly large role in the evolution of Nigeria’s foreign policy. If there is one area in which both structural realism and social constructivism fall short, it is in dealing with the role of leadership and the idiosyncratic interests of leaders, as evidenced for example in Nigeria’s Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha role in Sierra Leone. Findings from this chapter also validate our arguments on the contentious nature of humanitarian intervention, in particular unilateral intervention in chapter one. Here, we have seen how an ambitious Sani Abacha employed the concept to achieve largely personal goals. We will examine this in detail in chapter eight, when we theoretically interpret Nigeria’s role in Sierra Leone from both structural realist and social constructivist perspectives. For now, we turn our attention to chapter six, where the focus is on the essential elements embedded in South Africa’s foreign policy.

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Chapter 6: South Africa’s Foreign Policy and its Conflict Intervention Behaviour in Africa

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, we assessed Nigeria’s conflict intervention role in Sierra Leone between 1991 and 1998. Issues such as the centripetal and centrifugal causes of the war, the underpinning philosophy behind Nigeria’s and ECOWAS’ intervention, and the extent to which the domestic political environment in Nigeria (at that time) influenced its intervention in the conflict formed the core of our consideration. However, our focus in this chapter is to replicate what we did in chapter four, where we assessed Nigeria’s foreign policy, and used same to provide an analytical background to its intervention in Sierra Leone as demonstrated in chapter four. Drawing references from this pattern, the core of this chapter is devoted to examining South Africa’s foreign policy and its conflict intervention behaviour in Africa, with a view to using it as a foundation upon which our assessment of South Africa’s intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the next chapter is premised. In the final analysis, the central objective is to prepare the ground for an examination of the extent to which structural realism or constructivism accounts for Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention behaviour in chapter seven.

South Africa is a relative newcomer to international peacekeeping, commencing its contributions in 1998 with the deployment of personnel in what it claimed was a Southern African Development Community (SADC) intervention in Lesotho. South Africa’s first UN deployment came in 1999 through the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), but its first major UN contribution came in 2004 when South African troops stationed in Burundi as part of the African Union (AU) mission there were reorganised to form the basis of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB).\(^596\) Thus, with South Africa’s increasing role and importance in multilateral engagements, it became evident that the country’s

responsibility and participation in furthering Africa’s peace agenda would expand. Although South Africa’s intervention history in conflicts is relatively new, its efforts in this regard cannot be understated.

For example, South Africa was among the first countries to deploy military forces in support of the Burundi peace process in 2003. In 2000, during the peacekeeping mission in the DRC, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) spearheaded efforts to stabilise the country’s internal politics, embarked on major reconstruction and development of infrastructure, and trained DRC troops. South Africa has similarly been a major contributor to the United Nations and African Union peacekeeping mission efforts, and has deployed troops and military observers in several of such missions, including in DRC, Burundi, Darfur, and Nepal. South Africa boasts of a number of statistics as an intervening force.

It has an armed forces strength of 62,100 officers in active service, has contributed about 2,173 peacekeepers (MONUSCO: 1,333 [6 experts, 1,327 troops], UNAMID: 817 [10 experts, 807 troops], UNMISS 23 police officers), to several international peacekeeping missions, (making it the 8th largest African contributor); and between 2010 and 2016, it has consistently spent an average of 1.20% of its GDP on defence. Thus, from an ostracised position within the international community spanning over four decades (1948-1994), South Africa has risen from an isolated international status in 1994, to one of the most-reckoned-with in Africa. Conscious of this new status, South African leaders had often argued that the country cannot survive in isolation, as its economic development and security is linked to the continent’s stability. They note that when South Africa brings about peace in the continent, it creates an environment that is conducive to reconstruction and development in its region, and enhances the possibilities of faster economic development.

598 Ibid., p.3.
Basically, two major factors account for South Africa’s re-emergence on the international scene: (1) the broadening of the democratic space, which has seen South Africa thrive as a major economy in Africa over the last 23 years (1994-2017), and (2) its foreign policy orientation and articulation which has made remarkable progress in its attempt to overcome the remaining vestiges of apartheid. This chapter reviews South Africa’s conflict intervention behaviour in Africa against the background of its foreign policy. To achieve this, the chapter focuses on how the principles and practice of South Africa’s foreign policy manifest in, and interact with, its conflict intervention behaviour.

This is intended to provide an analytical background on South Africa’s intervention in the DRC in chapter six, and ultimately, the central purpose of the study: which is to determine whether structural realism or constructivism best accounts for Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention behaviour in Africa. It is worth noting also that our examination of South Africa’s foreign policy and its conflict intervention behaviour in Africa is focused on post-apartheid South Africa. This is for two principal reasons. First, South Africa’s relevance as a major player within the committee of nations began after the demise of apartheid in 1994. Second, the timing of the events which shaped South Africa’s intervention in the DRC happened post-apartheid.

Along with this introduction, this chapter is structured into five sections. The second section undertakes a retrospective appraisal of the defining characteristics of South Africa’s foreign policy. The third focuses on the personalised nature of foreign policy making in post-apartheid Africa. In the fourth section, South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa is in focus, while the fifth contains our concluding remarks. We begin our discussion with appraisal of the essential characteristics of South Africa’s post-apartheid foreign policy.
6.2 The characteristics of South Africa’s foreign policy

South Africa’s foreign policy has significantly left the realm of the apartheid era when the Pretoria regime was considered a pariah state with an aggressive foreign policy that was focused on protecting white minority rule in an increasingly hostile regional and international environment. By 1993, an initial glimpse of the would-be focus of South Africa’s post-apartheid foreign policy had been made known by the African National Congress (ANC) in a pre-election discussion paper entitled, “Foreign Policy in a New Democratic South Africa”. The ANC’s position was hinged on the belief that “foreign policy belongs to the South African people”, and that the foreign policy of a post-apartheid South Africa would be determined by the “belief that our foreign relations must mirror our deep commitment to the consolidation of a democratic South Africa”.

This position, according to Nel and Wyk, was reiterated by the ANC in its 1991 policy conference, where it affirmed that “the foreign policy of a democratic South Africa will be primarily shaped by the nature of its domestic policies and objectives directed at serving the needs and interests of our people”. In 1994, former President Nelson Mandela announced an ethical foreign policy meant to establish South Africa as a “model global citizen”, and also help transform South Africa from the preserve of a racist, unjust, and authoritarian regime to a non-racial, just, prosperous and democratic nation. Scholars have therefore attempted to situate the principle on which democratic South Africa’s foreign policy is constructed. For example, Schoeman has argued that South Africa’s foreign policy focus during the Mandela years was

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603 Ibid., p.60.

604 Ibid., p.60.

605 Ibid., p.60.
inspired by an Afro-centric orientation and pattern that is very visible in the design of its foreign policy.  

Schoeman’s observation was informed by former President Mandela’s argument that “South Africa cannot escape its African destiny. If we do not devote our energies to this continent, we too could fall victim to the forces that have brought ruin to its various parts”. The ANC’s adoption of an African aligned foreign policy orientation is not without antecedents, given its long history and struggle with the White supremacist regime. For example, its 1994 foreign policy perspective in a democratic South Africa argued that the country’s economic and political destiny is intrinsically tied to that of its coexistence and the consolidation of the African continent. This normative position, as advanced by the ANC, is that South Africa, all through its apartheid years, fell short of acceptable national and internal standards of foreign policy and international relations conduct.  

Motivated by the need to depart from this norm, Mandela advanced the following values as the essential planks on which post-apartheid South Africa’s foreign policy rests: (1) a reflection of Africa’s interest in South Africa’s foreign policy choices, (2) the belief that the enthronement of democracy globally is crucial to finding a just and lasting solution to the myriad of problems confronting the human race, (3) the need to view the human rights discourse as inalienable, and as such beyond political, economic, social, and environmental debates in international relations, (4) the need to respect the sacrosanct nature of justice and international law in international relations, and as a guide in the conduct of relations between nations, (5) ensuring economic development is dependent on growing regional and international economic cooperation in an interdependent world, (6) the notion that peace is the goal for which all nations should strive, and where this breaks down, internationally agreed and non-violent mechanisms, including effective

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arms-control regimes, must be employed, and lastly, (7) a belief that South Africa’s foreign relations must mirror a deep commitment to the consolidation of its democracy.\textsuperscript{610}

Named in the DFA annual report document of 2003/2004, the following were similarly identified as central to what should constitute the basic tenets of the country’s foreign policy: (1) Foreign policy is an integral part of government policy, and it is aimed at promoting security and improving the quality of life of all South Africans, (2) a commitment to the African Renaissance project through the African Union, and its programme for Africa’s development, namely, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, (3) a commitment to economic development through regional integration and development in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), (4) interact with African partners as equals, (5) pursue friendly relations with all peoples and nations of the world, and (6) safeguard South Africa’s territorial integrity and sovereignty.\textsuperscript{611}

By 2004, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) redefined South Africa’s foreign policy focus to reflect a broad vision which focuses on supporting the country’s key strategic priorities, including the speeding up of its service-delivery process, stimulating economic growth and employment, combating crime and corruption, transforming the state and building a better Africa, and demonstrating a commitment to a just and better world.\textsuperscript{612} As contained in the DFA Strategic Plan March 2004, South Africa’s foreign policy was defined as “a multidimensional set of policies, principles, strategies, objectives and plans” which “cannot be easily packaged into a neatly prescribed formula”.\textsuperscript{613} The document further identifies the general orientation of South Africa’s foreign policy that serves to define South Africa’s national values.\textsuperscript{614}

Specifically, the following principles were identified as guidelines for the conduct of South Africa’s foreign relations: (1) a commitment to the promotion of human rights; (2) a commitment to the promotion of democracy; (3) a commitment to justice and international law in the conduct

\textsuperscript{610} Ibid., Pp.86-97.


\textsuperscript{614} Ibid., p.18.
of international relations between nations; (4) a commitment to international peace and to internationally agreed upon mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts; (5) a commitment to Africa in world affairs; and, (6) a commitment to economic development through regional and international cooperation in an interdependent (and globalized) world.\textsuperscript{615} These principles were later revised by the DFA in its Strategic Plan 2007-2010 to accommodate the following: (1) consolidating the African agenda, (2) strengthening South-South cooperation, (3) strengthening North-South cooperation, (4) ensuring South Africa’s participation in the global system of governance, and (5) strengthening bilateral political and economic relations with all countries of the world.\textsuperscript{616}

In 2011, the DFA was restructured to accommodate the changing dynamics of international politics, and was renamed the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). Thus, in line with its transformation objectives, DIRCO, in 2011, released a White paper on South Africa’s foreign policy to serve as a framework for moving forward the country’s foreign policy articulation. Titled “Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu”, the document sought to: (1) promote South Africa’s national interest in a complex and fast-changing world, (2) shape and strengthen its national identity, (3) cultivate a new sense of national pride and patriotism by addressing the injustices of its past, including those of race and gender, and (4) help bridge the divides within the South African society to ensure social cohesion and stability, and ultimately, the growth of its economy, and the development and upliftment of its people.\textsuperscript{617}

Essentially, the document reaffirmed that South Africa’s national interests remain the principal driver of its foreign policy and a major determinant of its manner of engagement and interaction with the rest of the world. The document claims that, “in pursuing our national interests, our decisions are informed by a desire for a just, humane and equitable world order of greater security, peace, dialogue and economic justice”, and that “as the country engages with its region,

\textsuperscript{615} Ibid., p.18.
continent and the international community, it seeks to build an environment in which it can realise its national socio-economic agenda as well as its political and security interests”.

While reflecting national interest, the document adds that South Africa’s foreign policy will continue to: (1) recognise that states are interdependent and promotes cooperation over competition and collaboration over confrontation, (2) remain committed to the spirit of internationalism, pan-Africanism, and South-South solidarity, (3) reject colonialism and other forms of oppression, (4) pursue the quest for the unity and economic, and political and social renewal of Africa, (5) promote poverty alleviation around the world, oppose structural inequality, and abuse of power in the global system, and lastly, (6) pursue the enthronement of democracy within the international system of governance. Though a number of similarities exist between previous foreign policy documents and the 2011 White paper, the latter is however distinct in the sense that it moves away from the “universalistic role of bridge-building middle-power that was associated with South Africa’s foreign policy under Mandela and Mbeki, and focuses more on a solid commitment to a narrow range of national interests above all else”.

In effect, the 2011 Ubuntu-inspired foreign policy document portrays South Africa in a “sovereignist” light, and recognises it as a regional power, in contrast to the “middle-power bridge-builder image” it was painted in previous foreign policy documents. By interpretation, South Africa is demonstrating its readiness to help Africa shift away from the economic advantages of globalisation synonymous with bridge-building, through its strategy of issue entrepreneurship, to organising and mobilising the region to secure its national interests first and foremost. South Africa’s adoption of this stand was perhaps informed by the realisation that, making its national interests the central priority of its foreign policy focus, will afford it an opportunity to provide regional public goods, such as the provision of peacemaking and

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618 Ibid., p.10.
620 Personal communication with Professor Philip Nel of the Department of Politics, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand on August 14, 2017.
621 Ibid.
peacekeeping resources, offer protection against foreign intervention, and representing Africa in global governance fora.623

Since 2011, South Africa, at every opportunity, particularly at the UN, has continued to maintain its sovereignist approach to international politics, as reflected in its pattern of voting, where it had shown “an increasing hesitance to criticise states for behaviour that could be construed as breaches of human rights and other international liberal norms”.624 As Philip Nel contends, “this sovereignist turn did not originate with the Zuma presidency, but had gradually been gestating in the 2000s in contrast with South Africa’s early commitment to the promotion of human rights, which the Mandela presidency elevated to a specific aim of the new South Africa’s foreign policy”.625

Though South Africa “continues to be quite consistent in voting for and promoting thematic human rights concerns in various UN bodies”, it is increasingly hesitant to support country-specific resolutions that could be construed as interference in the domestic affairs of member states, or that manifest a broad interpretation of the interventionist terms of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter.626 In other words, South Africa has consistently put itself forward as a stickler for the respect for the rule of law, and as a defender of the African continent from Western imperialism disguised along the lines of the interventionist terms of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. Inferable from the foregoing is that South Africa’s post-apartheid foreign policy behaviour appears to be defined along the lines of the leadership idiosyncrasies of the “big man” in Pretoria. This brings into relevance the need to examine the personalised nature of foreign making in post-apartheid South Africa. This is the focus our next discussion.

624 Personal communication with Professor Philip Nel of the Department of Politics, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand on August 14, 2017.
625 Ibid.
626 Ibid.
6.3 Personalised nature of foreign policy making in post-apartheid South Africa


On assumption of office as South Africa’s first post-apartheid leader, Mandela through the ANC did not mince words in declaring that South Africa will devote its resources to the accomplishment of democratic ideals throughout the world.627 As Thabo Mbeki, the then head of the ANC’s Department of International Affairs argues, “South Africa cannot escape its African destiny. If we do not devote our energies to this continent, we too could fall victim to the forces that have brought ruin to its various parts”.628 South Africa, as he adds, is inextricably part of southern Africa, and its destiny is linked to that of a region, which is much more than a mere geographical concept.629

However, Mbeki’s attempt to describe South Africa’s foreign policy focus as Africa-centred has been disputed in the literature. Scholars have in fact argued that former President Mandela’s foreign policy style and articulation was particularly a contested territory within the diverse ranks of the ANC alliance.630 This class division, as Barber argues, was between the camps of the populists and ideologues and the pragmatists and neo-liberals.631 The reason for this, as Barber notes, is not unconnected with the perception in some quarters that the whole idea of the foreign policy principles outlined by the ANC in 1994 was founded on Western Liberal thought.632

This discordant tune emanating from the ANC bloc, particularly between 1994 and 1999, and the post-revolutionary fervour associated with Mandela’s liberation policies, led to Barber’s assertion that there appears to be a normative and theoretical confusion about the articulation of South Africa’s foreign policy goals and objectives.633 Similarly, during this period, South Africa suffered from “a profusion of decision-making centres and actors, each equipped with separate

629 Ibid., p.10.
631 Ibid., p.1079.
632 Ibid., p.1079.
633 Ibid., p.1080.
agendas and operating in competition with the others”.634 This competition for influence, as Barber notes, involved the president’s office, the vice-president’s office, senior party officials, the Departments of Foreign Affairs, and Defence. Others include: the Departments for/of: Safety and Security, Interior, Finance and Trade, the Diplomatic Corps and the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs in the National Assembly.

They all competed vigorously for the privilege of conducting the “new South African foreign relations”.635 This development eventually led to a situation where South Africa’s foreign policy became disaggregated, resulting in policy uncertainty both at home and abroad, with some scholars arguing that South Africa, during the Mandela administration, had no clear-cut foreign policy pattern.636 In the midst of these contestations, Mandela was believed to have opted for an idealist foreign policy approach to guide South Africa in the course of its engagement with Africa and the rest of the world.637 Under an idealist-motivated foreign policy approach, emphasis is placed on peacemaking, dispute settlement through peaceful means, advocating international security, and assuming that the conditions within a state can be projected onto international politics.638

This idealist position, as van Wyk adds, also focuses on the importance of moral values, legal norms, internationalism and harmony of interests as foreign policy guidelines rather than the consideration of national interests and power.639 Mandela thus introduced a foreign policy approach based on new rules and norms and on a set of moral principles, which focused on a strong commitment to human rights, the promotion of democracy, and peace and security.640 Others include—a strong commitment to international law, peace and disarmament, and the promotion of democracy.641 In terms of foreign policy articulation, Mandela maintained friendly
ties with countries and organisations that were sympathetic to its cause during the struggle. In achieving this, his government took South Africa’s global diplomatic presence to a new height, from 30 in 1994, to 124 in 1996, while its membership of international organisations swelled to 45, as against the international isolation which enveloped the larger part of the apartheid regime.642

Mandela’s foreign policy charm offensive created a new wave of international reception for the administration, particularly its re-admittance to a number of international bodies South Africa had earlier been expelled from. Under Mandela, South Africa participated in several international meets, including the Non Allied Movement, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Commonwealth.643 South Africa became a member of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the OAU, and featured prominently in promoting “good causes”, as observed in its cooperation with Canada and New Zealand to eliminate anti-personnel mines, and also hosting the rugby and cricket world cups.644

In terms of peacekeeping and conflict resolution in Africa, Mandela favoured the promotion of peaceful change by negotiation, without involving the armed forces, other than as observers.645 Together with the presidents of Zimbabwe and Botswana, and under the auspices of the SADC, Mandela helped quell a military putsch in Lesotho,646 and it was also commended for facilitating the peace talks which ended the civil war in Burundi.647 Nonetheless, this impressive attempt to reintegrate South Africa into the mainstream of international politics was not without challenges,

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645 Ibid., p.1080.
beginning with the stance taken by the Mandela government over the killing of the “Ogoni 9” by Nigeria’s Sani Abacha.648

In what was initially seen as a laudable move, Mandela scored a first, when at his prompting, Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth, and his government recalled its High Commissioner in Abuja.649 Mandela further called on the West to boycott Nigeria’s oil and summoned an extraordinary meeting of the SADC where he called for a coordinated pressure on Nigeria.650 These efforts reportedly produced nothing as the West continued to buy Nigeria’s oil, and other African states had no appetite for confrontation. They saw Nigeria, not as an abuser of human rights, but as a continental leader, which had supported liberation struggles and was a major contributor to the OAU.651 The development degenerated into a significant diplomatic spat between Nigeria and South Africa, with the former referring to the latter as “horrible and terrible”, and as “a white state with a black head”.652

Similarly on the economic front, there was contention on the genuine nature of Mandela’s commitment to an African-focused foreign policy given the statistics which emanated from an analysis of the country’s balance of trade.653 Although Pretoria had always maintained that its rapid expansion of trade relations with Africa is a success, given that in 1993, the total official trade with the rest of Africa was just above R8b, by 1999, it had risen to about R27b and R47b in 2003.654 Also, between 1994 and 1999, the Mandela administration, at different times faced the challenge of defending the seeming inconsistency between the theory and actual practice of his

648 The Ogoni 9 were members of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). The group sought to champion the cause of the Ogoni people over issues related to environmental degradation. The movement was led by environmental rights activists—Ken Saro-Wiwa, and 8 others, and they were arrested by the Abacha Junta over the killing of some local chiefs. They were found guilty of the murders by military tribunal and sentenced to death in October 1995. The “Ogoni 9” were hanged while Commonwealth heads of government were meeting in New Zealand, a day after the former South African president Nelson Mandela appealed for a stay of execution.
652 Ibid., p.1080.
653 Ibid., p.1080.
654 Ibid., p.1080.
avowed commitment to South Africa’s foreign policy principle of “respect for human rights and democracy”. This much was evident, for example, in Mandela’s perceived outspoken support for leaders of decidedly undemocratic states, as in the case of Muammar Gadhaffi of Libya, Cuba’s Fidel Castro, and Indonesia’s Suharto, and the strong relations his administration maintained with China and Saudi Arabia.

His administration’s foreign policy style was also criticised for its inability to invent a credible role for South Africa in Africa, particularly after the 1998 intervention in Lesotho, its inability to reach a peaceful resolution in the DRC, when Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia sent troops in support of Laurent Kabila, and also for its failure to secure a brokering role in the Algerian civil war. Having rejected the offer of a second term in office, Mandela handed over to his deputy, Thabo Mbeki, in April 1999, and remained a father figure in South Africa and Africa until his death on 5 December, 2013.

6.3.2 Thabo Mbeki (1999-2008)

One of Mbeki’s first policy intervention was to restructure South Africa’s foreign policymaking and service-delivery machinery which had become fragmented, ineffective and too expensive to maintain. Mbeki was noted to have embarked on a major overhaul of the policy making and implementation machinery of the state. In the area of foreign policy, Mbeki, they argue, attempted to locate policymaking squarely within the president’s office, with the establishment of a Policy Coordination and Advisory Service (PCAS) with one of its five chief directorates drafted to oversee the international relations, and peace and security unit. Each of these chief directorates mirrors two sets of decision-making clusters. First, in the cabinet, a sectoral Cabinet Committee on International Relations, Peace and Security, which brings ministers and their staff

656 Ibid., p.21.
659 Ibid., p.62.
together and “allows for intensive and focused debates on difficult policy choices and the resolution of these issues by the relevant ministers before issues are taken to the full Cabinet”.

Second, there is also a cluster of directors whose functions have a bearing upon international relations, peace and security, and also ensure that the implementation of cabinet decisions takes place in a coordinated fashion. The essence of this restructuring in greater coordination is to centralise input into the foreign policy process and to make it even less accessible for the general public. It was after this restructuring that former President Thabo Mbeki launched a foreign policy approach which sought to build a South African society that could guarantee the protection of the fundamental rights of its people, through democratic means, and one which South Africans and the rest of Africa can be proud of.

Arguably, the dominant feature of Mbeki’s approach to governance, and by extension the foreign policy articulation of his government, is the notion of Africa Renaissance (AR) which first came into public discourse in Chantilly, Virginia. Since then, the concept has grown to become a philosophy upon which South Africa’s engagement with the rest of the world during his presidency was premised. As Mbeki noted:

The new African world which the African Renaissance seeks to build is one of democracy, peace and stability, sustainable development and a better life for the people, non-racism and non-sexism, equality among the nations, and a just and democratic system of international governance. None of this will come about of its own [accord]. In as much as we liberated ourselves from colonialism through struggle, so will the African Renaissance agenda be victorious, although, there is a protracted struggle that we must wage. Yesterday is a foreign country - tomorrow belongs to us.

Mbeki’s African renaissance (AR) foreign policy approach is not without antecedents. As Rautenbach and Vrey note, Mbeki had always argued that, in addition to continental realities,
South Africa has a moral obligation to plough effort back into the continent. According to Mbeki, “Africa acted in solidarity with us, with the countries of Southern Africa sustaining great losses in terms of life and property through apartheid aggression; the peoples of our region and continent did not say that support for our struggle for freedom would be too costly for themselves”. Essentially, the concept of AR, as Taylor argues, revolve around five main areas of engagement with the African continent: cultural exchange, emancipation of women from patriarchy, youth mobilization, broadening of democracy, and advocating for a sustainable economic development. This scope has been revised to include: establishing and maintaining systems of good governance; introducing economic policies that would attract investment, reducing the intrusiveness of the state in the economy, establishing regional economic pacts, and improving education, healthcare, decent housing, clean water, and modern sanitation.

As Taylor contends, Mbeki, through the AR philosophy sought to place South Africa at the forefront of solving Africa’s problems through his advocacy of the renaissance concept and active diplomacy. This culminated in the birth of New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) which, among other things, sought to promote good governance in Africa, and provide “African solutions” to “African problems”. Similarly, under the Mbeki leadership, South Africa, basking in the euphoria of its emergence as a middle power imposed on itself an international leadership role, which culminated in a distinct foreign policy, with multilateralism becoming one of its cornerstones.

668 Ibid., p.33.
669 Ibid., p.33.
670 Ibid., p. 34.
As Nel et al., observes, South Africa’s identity as an emerging middle power (during the Mandela and Mbeki administrations) displayed a characteristic multilateral diplomatic practice which included:

(1) High levels of activism in multilateral institutions, an increasing use of these institutions to achieve broader foreign policy objectives, as well as an endorsement of multilateralism as the preferred institutional form of global interaction;

(2) An attempt to revive and strengthen existing global and African multilateral institutions, especially those focusing on enhancing the interests of the developing world; and,

(3) A concerted commitment and an attempt to introduce new norms and mechanisms to address both the concerns of developing states and Africa’s marginalisation. Examples are the Fancourt Commonwealth Declaration on Globalization and People-Centred Development (1999), the Berlin Declaration on Progressive Government (2000), as well as the Skaëgen Declaration signed between the South African president and his Nordic counterparts (2000).

Other notable examples of Mbeki’s multilateral diplomacy approach are: South Africa’s chairing of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) between 1998 and 2001, the SADC, the Commonwealth (2000-2001) and the OAU (2002); and its status as a founding member and first chair of the African Union (AU) alongside the hosting of its first summit in July 2002. In the area of peacekeeping and promotion of peace and stability, the Mbeki government partnered with other states to resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Comoros, Cote d’Ivoire and the Great Lakes region. This active participation in global affairs, as Nel et al. argue, shows that South Africa under Mbeki made use

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674 Ibid., p.113.
of multilateralist diplomacy as a foreign policy instrument and as an expression of its desire as a reformist middle power to contribute actively to a new and collaborative global order.675

The Mbeki administration also had a preference for negotiating an all-inclusive government in Africa, as evidenced in the establishment of the South African-DRC Bi-National Commission (BNC), and his role in the peace deal between Rwanda and Burundi, and resolving the dispute between the North and South Sudan.676 Offering a constructive explanation as a means of understanding South Africa’s foreign policy, van Wyk argues that Mbeki used South Africa’s middle-power status and ability to generate initiatives and enforce its leadership aspirations.677 Under Mbeki, South Africa did not only style itself as a voice of the developing world and Africa, but it also initiated the New African Initiative (NAI), Millennium Partnership for African Development Programme (MAP) and NEPAD.

South Africa also played a crucial part in the peace talks in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue; began working towards the creation of a Palestinian state, and through Nelson Mandela’s initiatives (which Mbeki sustained), has been active with regard to the independence of Timor Leste.678 While Mbeki brought an ideological element into South Africa’s foreign policymaking, which Nathan identifies as “democratic; Africanist; and anti-imperialist”,679 he had a relatively poor commitment to, and respect for, “democratic” principles. Critics have argued that, for Mbeki, democracy and by extension, respect for human rights, only mattered when it suited his line of interest and ideological conviction, as exemplified by his condemnation of Mandela’s lobby against Nigeria during the “Ogoni 9 imbroglio”.680

678 Ibid., p.112.
Mbeki in fact accused the West of manipulating Mandela, and trying to expose him to ridicule, and noted that South Africa must not act alone, but in concert, as understanding was preferable to confrontation.\textsuperscript{681} Justifying his claim, Mbeki argued that the real power lies with rich states who purchase the oil and bank the vast finances involved, and that South Africa neither marketed the oil nor banked the cash. In effect, Mbeki was inadvertently stating that South Africa lacked the currency to intervene in conflicts as some critics would expect, given its unique historical experiences, and current state of its economy. With these assertions, as Barber contends, Mbeki succeeded in moving attention away from the abuse of human rights in Nigeria to criticism of the West.\textsuperscript{682}

There was the case of the state welcome given to the Deputy President of North Korea—an unreconstructed Marxist totalitarian state in March 2005 where the then Deputy President Jacob Zuma, expressed South Africa’s appreciation of its solidarity during the liberation struggle and called for stronger ties between the two states.\textsuperscript{683} Lastly, under Mbeki, Pretoria was accused of exploitation and neo-colonialism in Africa, as indicated by the trade figures suggesting that the market tilted in South Africa’s favour disproportionately.\textsuperscript{684} In 2000 for instance, South Africa’s imports from Africa totalled R4,340 million, compared with an export of R27,245 million, and by 2003, its imports had grown to R8,182 million, while its export had risen to R38,886 million. This implies that the balance of trade between South Africa and the rest of Africa tilted relatively disproportionately in favour of South Africa.

This development had prompted some scholars to ask if South Africa can be regarded as a “Partner or hegemon?”, given what Mlambo calls economic policies that disadvantage its smaller neighbours, despite its promises of partnership, particularly the seeming trade imbalance between South Africa, Southern Africa and Africa.\textsuperscript{685} On 20 September 2008, with about nine months left in his second term, Mbeki announced his resignation after being recalled by the National Executive Committee of the ANC, over allegations of improper interference in the

\textsuperscript{681} Ibid. p.1081.
\textsuperscript{682} Ibid., p.1081.
\textsuperscript{684} Ibid., p.1096.
workings of South Africa’s National Prosecution Authority (NPA), in its corruption case against his deputy, Jacob Zuma.

**6.3.3 Jacob Zuma (2009-2018)**

South Africa’s foreign policy under the Zuma presidency is best understood when located within a set of concentric circles which defines South Africa’s international priorities. Phrased as “pursuing Africa’s advancement and enhanced cooperation”, Zuma’s foreign policy objectives were couched under a series of sub-goals or sub-categories, namely: (a) closing the gap between domestic and foreign policy, (b) continued prioritisation of the African continent, (c) strengthening South–South relations, (d) strategic relations with strategic formations for the North, (e) participating in the global system of governance, and (f) strengthening political and economic relations. In terms of articulation, Zuma identified a commitment to “African Agenda”, South–South cooperation, North–South dialogue, and economic diplomacy, as core elements of his government’s foreign policy in its interaction with the rest of the world.

Like his predecessors, Zuma maintained a pro-Africanist foreign policy agenda, through its support for the strengthening of the AU and its institutions, particularly the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), and its attempt to improve the political and economic integration of the SADC. This is evidenced in South Africa’s contribution to the AU and affiliates such as the African Court of Justice (ACJ), and the African Court of Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR), African Central Bank (ACB), the African Monetary Fund (AMF), and the African Investment

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686 Concentric circles refer to a hierarchy from the inside out, or from the bottom up. Its main idea is that a country’s foreign policy has a common centre, with different, but inter-related and reinforcing foci. These different layers reinforce each other as they coexist in a symbiotic relationship. See for example: Landsberg, C. (2014). “The Concentric Circles of South Africa’s Foreign Policy under Jacob Zuma”. *India Quarterly*, 70(2), p.153.


689 Ibid., p.153.


Bank (AIB). On conflict intervention, Zuma tried to distance himself from Mbeki’s quiet diplomacy approach, albeit, in theory than actual practice, given that in the first year of his presidency, South Africa played a non-confrontational, accommodative and mediatory role in Africa, particularly in Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC.

Continently, Zuma reaffirmed South Africa’s preference for a gradual and incremental approach which focused on regional organisations as building blocks in the march towards a larger African Union government contrary to Gaddafi’s United States of Africa (USAF) push. Economic considerations became a central component of Zuma’s emerging foreign policy, as noted by Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, South Africa’s Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:

> Among our main challenges in the pursuit of our foreign policy objectives is the alignment and coordination of South Africa’s economic diplomacy across all spheres of government; strengthening economic diplomatic capacity in our Missions; and improving efforts aimed at marketing the brand South Africa and Africa abroad.

The Zuma leadership conceived its national interests in terms of a developmental approach to domestic and internationally-focused policymaking, and as Nel argues, this became a distinctive trademark of the Zuma era in South African politics. On South–South cooperation, Zuma embraced multilateralism as an instrument of foreign policy articulation, and strengthened South Africa’s commitment to multilateral institutions such as IBSA, the Non Aligned Movement (NAM), the G77Plus China formation, and the Brazil–Russia–India–China–South Africa (BRICS) group. Notably, however, the Zuma administration has come under fire for

691 Address by Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, the Minister of International relations and Co-operation to the Diplomatic Corps, at Emperors’ Palace, Kempton Park, on 20 May 2009.
693 Ibid., p.160.
696 Personal communication with Professor Philip Nel of the Department of Politics, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand on August 14, 2017.
697 Ibid.
some foreign policy initiatives it has undertook, for example, in its South–South goals and stated national objectives, which scholars consider as not clearly explained.\textsuperscript{698}

Zuma has also been criticised for not demonstrating enough commitment to NEPAD, a development seen as a consequence of the battle of Polokwane, where Mbeki lost the African National Congress presidency in 2007.\textsuperscript{699} Zuma, as Landsberg argues, was silent on the issue, and his government appeared ambivalent about NEPAD’s future for domestic political reasons, as opposed to sound foreign policy motivations, despite having been a lead state in its formation.\textsuperscript{700} The next discussion examines South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa.

\textbf{6.4 South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa}

Under apartheid, particularly in the 1980s, South Africa was unable to make any significant impact and contribution to peace and security-related issues on the continent, given the highly-militarised nature of the state itself. Rather, the apartheid regime played the reverse role, as it busied itself with a number of actions which were largely anti-peace. Pretoria, as Grundy argues, was fighting wars in Angola and Namibia, aggressively destabilising the Frontline States, and within its own borders systematic and violent official repression of the resistance movement became its defining characteristics.\textsuperscript{701} Within South Africa, a similar narrative played out as the apartheid regime in 1985, ostensibly faced with the fear of a major revolt by the Black majority, deployed over 32,000 troops in 96 of the country’s townships.\textsuperscript{702}

Similarly, between 1985 and 1988, over 5000 people were believed to have been killed in political violence in South Africa, while another 50,000 people were detained, and by the end of 1988, 32 non-violent anti-apartheid organisations had been banned.\textsuperscript{703} These developments

\textsuperscript{698} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{699} Ibid., p.158.
\textsuperscript{700} Ibid., p.158.
\textsuperscript{703} Ibid., p.20.
explain Rupert Taylor’s classification of South Africa during this period as “a terrorist state”, and why a police state (as the regime in Pretoria was at that time) could and was not expected to make any meaningful contribution to peace and security in Africa. By the time apartheid ended in 1994, an elated ANC was unequivocal of its determination to return South Africa to where it thought it belonged, as captured in the except below:

The ending of apartheid was a joyous moment in the history of our continent. Africa sacrificed much during the course of our struggle. Our people – refugees and the liberation movement were offered food, shelter and facilities to enhance the common endeavour to put an end to racist tyranny and oppression. With fellow Africans we share a vision to transform our continent into an entity that is free, peaceful and vibrant.

South Africa’s intervention in conflicts is motivated by the country’s experience during apartheid, and compels it to engage in peace missions in order to alleviate the plight of other peoples who are trapped in similar conflicts. Essentially, South Africa’s consolidation of peace and democracy, which Tonheim and Swart describe as the “South African peace model”, is premised on a firm belief in non-violent conflict-resolution with dialogue and the inclusion of all belligerent factions as its main pillar. The intention, they argue, “is to get everyone to compromise and reach a consensus on how to facilitate inclusive transitional political arrangements as part of a peace agreement”.

The mechanism for its actualisation encompasses the following: (1) a broad-based national unity government involving the warring parties, and confidence-building measures and the reform of security forces, (2) provisions to address justice issues and a timetable for the drafting of a new

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706 See for example: Department of Foreign Affairs official White Paper on South Africa’s Participation in International Peace Missions which was approved by Cabinet on 21 October 1998, and tabled in Parliament on 24 February 1999.
708 Ibid., p.1.
permanent constitution, and (3) the holding of democratic elections. This model has been tested over the years in the course of South Africa’s mediation in Burundi, DRC, Sudan, Zimbabwe and Côte d’Ivoire. It has similarly been contended that South Africa’s conflict intervention role in Africa suggests that the country prefers to assume peacemaking roles, with limited military support where inevitable, than get involved in a holistic process of peace missions and peacebuilding.

This is against the expectation of observers who argue that South Africa should form the nucleus of the Southern African regional capability for third-party intervention or help to stabilise and prevent potential armed conflicts [in its sub region], as Nigeria does in West Africa. Consequently, with the exception of its brief military foray into Lesotho, they claim that Pretoria has partially failed to deliver on these ambitious and costly expectations, given its clear preference for the world of mediation and diplomacy. Lending credence to the above, Neethling observes further that South Africa’s intervention role in Africa focuses on the use of a diplomacy-based approach to encourage parties to cease hostilities and negotiate a peaceful settlement of their disputes while refraining from engaging in peace enforcement and peacebuilding.

This is the summary of the ideological ambition which drives South Africa’s intervention role in Africa since the demise of apartheid in 1994. As a middle power, South Africa possesses the human and financial resources, and the military capacity, to function as a bridge between the West and Africa, and also serve as an interlocutor between the North and the South.

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reverse is however the case, as South Africa is yet to fully take advantage of this position to further this course as expected. It should be recalled that former President Mbeki had once noted that South Africa’s desire was to be a champion of “the invisible people of the world, where there would be a democratisation of the system of international relations and the availability of the space for the poor and the powerless within an unstoppable globalization process”.

Mbeki’s position was informed by the policy statement credited to the South African Department of Foreign Affairs that “the future of our country is inextricably linked to the future of the African continent, and that Africa remains the central area of focus in the conduct of our [South Africa’s] foreign policy”. A case in point in this regard is the support it gives to the African Union (AU), particularly the Peace and Security Council (PSC), which seeks to promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the encouragement of peacebuilding in Africa, and the Common African Defence and Security policy. This has seen South Africa, under President Mbeki, emerging as the first chairperson of the AU, and later the PSC, during which the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) initiative with peace and security as a cardinal objective was conceived.

Similarly, South Africa, through tactful diplomacy, has helped in mediating in the crises in Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. It equally provided financial and diplomatic support, indirectly through the AU, to mediators in a number West African countries, including Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast. In terms of peacekeeping, South Africa (between 1994 and 2000) although focused more on nurturing its democracy, has attempted to make its presence felt on the international scene through its contribution to the UN and African Union (AU) peace missions, committing a total of 2020 troops to 14 peace missions. South Africa also went into

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717 The Peace and Security Council is Africa’s consensual Security Council with no veto power by any country, and all the continents 55 member countries wield the same level of authority.
719 Ibid., p.179.
Lesotho in 1998 to reverse a coup attempt, and played a noteworthy interventionist role in Burundi, Sudan and Côte d’Ivoire.\(^{722}\) What the foregoing suggests is that South Africa gives the impression of being more comfortable acting as a “third party mediator”, albeit under the auspices of supra-national institutions like the SADC, AU, or the UN.

However, South Africa’s voyage into international politics and its attempt to exert its authority in Africa is not without blemish. In instances where it had unilaterally intervened, as it did in Lesotho in 1998 and in Central African Republic (2013), it has received a backlash of condemnation. Another school of thought believes that South Africa’s conflict intervention roles in Africa cannot be divorced from the events which shaped the end of the Cold War, particularly the emergence of an all-out war between rival identity groups, whose systems were dismantled following the lifting of the hold on them by the two rival superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union.\(^{723}\) Thus, South Africa, buoyed by an Africa-oriented foreign policy approach, as detailed in its 1994 ANC foreign policy document, conferred itself a “responsibility to protect” (R2P) African countries suffering from the consequences of the end of the Cold War.

This “responsibility to protect” sits at the heart of internal and external debates about South African foreign policy and, as such, provides an invaluable lens to understand change and continuity in the country’s role in Africa and the wider international system since the end of white minority-rule in 1994.\(^{724}\) Motivated by the need to fulfil this self-imposed obligation, the Mandela Presidency kick-started South Africa’s intervention history in Africa with a political intervention in Burundi on humanitarian grounds.\(^{725}\) The humanitarian intervention was designed to remain consistent with the overall agenda of the New Economic Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), which was to serve as the vehicle for collectively addressing the continent’s lack of development through the promotion of political governance, regional

\(^{722}\) Ibid., p.239.
integration and economic and corporate investment.\textsuperscript{726} Mandela employed the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA)\textsuperscript{727} instrument as a platform to make the peace process work, and ensured that the negotiations were completely inclusive.\textsuperscript{728}

Thus, in part, South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Burundi was non-confrontational, as it sought to build trust among the warring parties and confidence in the mediator. While diplomatic negotiation formed the bulk of South Africa’s intervention approach in Burundi, it also keyed into the larger African Union initiative which offered protection for returning political leaders in Burundi as demanded in the Arusha agreement. The SANDF was subsequently deployed as part of a one-year peace operation in Burundi in April 2003 – the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), where South Africa served as one of the major troop-contributing countries (TCCs).\textsuperscript{729}

Basking in the euphoria of the relative success recorded in Burundi, the Mandela administration embarked on a diplomatic intervention mission in the war in Zaire/Congo in 1997, and subsequently committed to becoming a force for stability in its own subregion through regional integration and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).\textsuperscript{730} It is imperative to note however that South Africa’s non-confrontationist approach was challenged by the coup in Lesotho in 1998. In Lesotho, scholars have argued that South Africa’s intervention was motivated by its realist interests, particularly the need to defend Katse Dam, which was a major source of electricity supply to South Africa,\textsuperscript{731} despite Mandela’s avowed opposition to military intervention in conflicts in Africa based on principle.\textsuperscript{732}

\textsuperscript{726} Ibid., p.18.
\textsuperscript{727} CODESA is a bargaining forum where all South African political parties and groupings were represented to shape its transition.
\textsuperscript{729} Ibid., p.19.
After Mandela’s exit in 1999, South Africa neither abandoned international activism nor its strong views about intervention, as the succeeding Mbeki administration prioritised foreign policy throughout his presidency, propagating an “African Renaissance philosophy” which he shared with his predecessor.\textsuperscript{733} The Mbeki government invested heavily in achieving an “African solutions to African problems”, taking the lead in organising the continent around the AU and getting member-states to sign its Constitutive Act, which embraced a humanitarian interventionist logic, following the principle of “non-indifference” although South Africa’s subsequent intervention in the DRC under his presidency (1999-2005) appears not to bear full credence to this principle\textsuperscript{734}

Mbeki, as Verhoeven, et al. argue, developed “a Pan-African ‘right to intervene concept’ to tackle the conflict–underdevelopment–misrule orientation of the West towards Africa, and the ‘Out of Africa’ pessimism of the international community”.\textsuperscript{735} Drawing inspiration from his “African Renaissance” philosophy, the Mbeki administration urged African leaders to adopt an agenda for security, development and intervention, as a matter of urgency and dignity, and to rely less on the international community, which persistently fails the continent.\textsuperscript{736} This philosophy perhaps explains South Africa’s quiet diplomacy approach to the electoral crises in Zimbabwe in 1998, and the lead role Mbeki played in the formation of a government of national unity which effectively restored normalcy to Zimbabwe.

Mbeki’s African Renaissance ideology, particularly his “quiet diplomacy tactic” in Zimbabwe was greeted with strong criticism, with some arguing that “Pretoria’s unwillingness to solve the political crisis in neighbouring Zimbabwe revealed that the emperor wore no clothes”.\textsuperscript{737} Others


\textsuperscript{736} Ibid., p.518.

have asked: What good use was it to argue that the continent was turning a corner, if neither the AU nor South Africa were able nor willing to broker, and if necessary, to impose a durable political settlement in Zimbabwe? The image of Mbeki and Mugabe, shaking hands, as they contended, damaged Pretoria’s claims of a value-driven visionary policy.\(^{738}\) Mbeki was succeeded by Jacob Zuma in 2008, and his presidency marked a defining moment in South Africa’s intervention history in Africa, with South Africa’s intervention in the Central African Republic in 2013.

### 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has assessed South Africa’s foreign policymaking process and its conflict intervention behaviour since 1994. The chapter finds that there is an inextricable relationship between the leadership orientation of South Africa’s post-apartheid leaders, and its foreign policy formulation, articulation and implementation. The chapter established that South Africa’s engagement with the rest of Africa, particularly its Africa-inclined foreign policy orientation is a demonstration of its appreciation of the solidarity it got during its anti-apartheid struggles. This, to a large extent, explains how its post-apartheid leaders have responded to issues bordering on peace and security in Africa. For example, Mandela’s engagement with the rest of the continent can be argued as moderate and conservative in orientation. This explains the seeming foreign policy inactivity of the administration until 1997, when his deputy, Thabo Mbeki, began a major reform of South Africa’s foreign policy machinery.

The Mbeki administration, as the chapter evinces, maintained an offensive foreign policy orientation, with a specific mission to make Africa an indivisible union through his African renaissance philosophy. Mbeki’s interpretation of democracy was a function of his personal conviction, and the existing interpersonal/inter-country relationship between South Africa and the state in question. Equally, the Jacob Zuma-led administration had a foreign policy orientation that was pinned largely to the ANC’s position, given his often institutional approach to foreign policy issues. A number of examples illustrate this point. The first is, South Africa’s stance on

the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973, which enforced a no-fly zone on Libya. The second is his government’s decision to “look the other way”, by ensuring a safe passage for Omar al-Bashir out of South Africa, despite a High court order which demanded his arrest, in the wake of the ICC warrant on the former.

In the second part of the chapter, we demonstrated that South Africa’s post-apartheid foreign policy, as articulated by its leaders, though institutionalised, remains largely personalised and subject to their leadership idiosyncrasies and this largely reflects in its unilateral conflict intervention roles in Africa. Given this realisation, it is evident that leadership idiosyncrasies play a significant role in South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention role in Africa. Similarly, and as this chapter has shown, there is evidence of ideological inconsistency in the foreign policy behaviour, and conflict intervention mechanisms of South Africa’s post-apartheid leaders, as examined here. For example, despite the abundance of evidence in this chapter that South Africa’s foreign policy is themed along the notion of collective identity, influenced considerably by its apartheid history, a number of its leaders, particularly the Zuma administration, appear guilty of what structural realists would argue as relative power pursuit, often intended to suit their individual ambitions and personal interests.

The lack of ideological consistency on the part of South Africa’s post-apartheid leaders, particularly in their foreign policy and conflict intervention behaviour, thus reinforces the validity of our central argument in chapter one, that it is only by examining its foreign policy from more than one IR perspective can one gain a fuller understanding of South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and the underlying motivations for its conflict intervention roles in Africa. Findings from this chapter therefore highlight the relevance of an eclectic approach to the understanding of South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles. We shall return to this in chapter eight. In the interim, we turn our attention to South Africa’s role in Democratic Republic of Congo between 1997 and 2005 in the next chapter.
Chapter 7: South Africa’s Conflict intervention Role in the Democratic Republic of Congo (1997-2005)

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we examined South Africa’s foreign policy and its conflict intervention behaviour in Africa. By examining the characteristics of South Africa’s foreign policy, the personalised nature of its foreign policymaking since the demise of apartheid in 1994, its conflict intervention history, and its foreign policy behaviour towards Africa, we demonstrated that there is an inextricable relationship between the leadership orientation of South Africa’s post-apartheid leaders and its foreign policy formulation, articulation and implementation. Consequently, the purpose of this chapter is to examine South Africa’s involvement in the DRC with a view to ascertaining the extent to which its conflict intervention behaviour in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) aligns with its foreign policy objectives, as interpreted through the structural realist and the social constructivist perspectives employed here. This interpretation will be made in Chapter eight, once we have surveyed in the current chapter why and how South Africa became involved in the drawn-out, often messy domestic conflict in the DRC. We start by looking at the origins of the conflict.

Located within the Great Lakes Region, which has been a theatre of conflict since the 1960s, DRC has seen the most intractable conflict in the region. The DRC is bordered by several countries, in the west by the Republic of the Congo, by Angola in the southwest, Zambia in the southeast; Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Burundi to the east, South Sudan to the northeast, and by Central Africa Republic to the northwest. The DRC is one of Africa’s richest in terms natural resource endowments, as it possesses 50 per cent of Africa’s forests, underscoring “its potential role as an economic power in central [Southern] Africa”.\(^{739}\) Natural resources provide the backbone of its economy, with mining as its single largest source of export income. Other

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export commodities include wood products and coffee. The highest contributions to its gross domestic product (GDP) are agriculture (44.2 %), industry (22.6 %) and services (33.1 %).\textsuperscript{740}

The magnitude of the DRC’s informal economy exceeds its official economic activity, growing dramatically as economic and social conditions deteriorate, and as purchasing power drops.\textsuperscript{741} Smuggling and other unofficial activities constitute the real economy of the DRC, and the “second-economy” activities are fully-institutionalised and in most respects, more rational and predictable than official trade and production activities.\textsuperscript{742} The second economy provides access to goods and services unavailable in the official economy and compensates for the deficiencies of the official system.\textsuperscript{743} For a larger part of the DRC’s statehood, corruption and misguided policy have fostered a clandestine economy in the country. Individuals and businesses in the formal sector operate with high costs under arbitrarily-enforced laws. As a consequence, the informal sector now dominates the economy.

In terms of economic growth, the DRC’s growth forecast for 2017 was estimated at 3.5 per cent per annum, with a GDP market price estimate of about US$41.9 billion.\textsuperscript{744} These positive indicators notwithstanding, at least 63.6 per cent of the DRC population live below the poverty line, placing its people among the poorest on earth—a development attributable largely to poor institutional development during the colonial era and beyond.\textsuperscript{745} Similarly, the DRC is ranked 176\textsuperscript{th} out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index for 2016, and also home to about 7.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.\textsuperscript{746} A number of reasons have been advanced to explain the DRC conflict. These include: the struggle for power, and international battle over resources,\textsuperscript{747} the disruptive actions by belligerent groups from neighbouring countries, and the region’s lack of security, ethnic prejudice, poor governance, and political

\textsuperscript{740} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{742} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{743} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{745} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{746} For more on this, see: http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD [Accessed 27 April, 2017].
unscrupulousness. The DRC’s descent into decades of deteriorating political tension and civil war has been so intense that there has been a succession of peace interventions from the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and other non-governmental organisations, bodies and individual countries. The Republic of South Africa led the conflict intervention team of the SADC between 1997 and 2005.

Together with this introductory remark, the chapter is divided into five main sections. The second section appraises the causal factors of the DRC conflict from 1960 to 2005. The third focuses on the attempts made by the international community to resolve the impasse, with a specific emphasis on the Lusaka Peace Accord. The fourth section assesses the fit between South Africa’s foreign policy and its conflict intervention role in the DRC, with particular reference to the Sun City Accord of 19 April, 2002. The fifth section offers the chapter’s concluding thoughts.

7.2 The origins of the DRC conflict

In May 1960, national elections were held in the then Zaire, but the processes and its eventual outcome were shrouded in controversy. The Patrice Émery Lumumba-led Mouvement National Congolais (MNC) won the majority of votes, but the party soon disintegrated following its failure to effectively manage its post-independence and elections intra-party bickering. Arguably, this led to the MNC’s coalition with Joseph Kasavubu’s Bakongo Alliance, ostensibly to avert an electoral impasse and defuse the political tension at that time. The Congo’s high susceptibility to prolonged and negative impacts of conflict dates back to 1960, shortly after it gained independence. Since then, the Congo has been a battlefield, a development largely fuelled by ethnic tensions and animosity between the Banyarwanda and Congolese ethnic groups in North-Kivu, after the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1960.

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749 Banyarwanda are Congolese of “doubtful” nationality many of whom reside in the Kivu region. This community had several groups inside: the autochthonous (arrived before the colony), the immigrants arrived during the colony, the clandestine immigrants arrived before and after 1960, the Hutu and the Tutsi refugees. In the 1990s, the
By 1965, Zaire had effectively become a single-party state, under Lieutenant Colonel Mobutu, who was also the Commander-in-Chief of Zaire’s armed forces. Faced with mounting protests and international criticism of his rule, Mobutu was forced to abandon Zaire’s one-party system for a multi-party system, while the country’s constitution was also created. As a consequence, a prolonged crisis instigated primarily by the tussle for power among different ethnic clans led to the outbreak of its first civil war in 1960, destabilising in the process, the country’s nascent democracy. Barely a week after independence, the Force publique (the erstwhile armed wing of the Belgian military, which was later renamed Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC), revolted. This development led to violent confrontations between the Belgian colonial lords and the Congolese on one hand, and Congolese ethnic groups on the other.

Hostilities, sustained all through colonialism, fed into ethnic hatred and civil strife, with the Moise Tshombe-led separatists in Katanga proclaiming the secession of the province. The Belgians responded instantaneously by deploying ground troops to Katanga, “ostensibly to protect Belgian citizens and mining interests”. This development set the stage for subsequent foreign military interventions, which later became the defining characteristics of the DRC. Consequently, and as Nzongola-Ntalaja argued, external forces composed mainly of White mercenaries from apartheid Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), South Africa, France and the United States through the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC [July 1960-June 1964]), clandestinely backed Moise Tshombe’s efforts to cut out the mineral-rich Katanga province from the Congo. This development arguably marked the beginning of Congo’s seemingly intractable crisis, a crisis that has oscillated largely between covert and overt foreign interventions over the last five decades (1964-2016).

Banyarwanda Hutu and Tutsi fought against one another and with the rest of the population in Kivu, who considered them as a danger for the survival of their traditions, their land properties, etc.

750 Mobutu Sese Seko was a military ruler turned dictator of the then Zaire between 1965 and 1997. He ruled for more than 31 years before he was overthrown by rebel forces led by Laurent Kabila. He was reputed to be one of Africa’s most flamboyantly corrupt rulers. He later died in exile in Morocco, on September 7, 1997.


752 Ibid., p.95.


The DRC’s most recent conflict began in 1996, in the wake of the violence perpetuated by exiled Rwandan Hutu genocidaires, thus marking the commencement of the DRC’s “First World War”.755 A major political casualty of that crisis was “Emperor” Mobutu Sese Seko, who was overthrown when rebel forces loyal to Laurent-Desire Kabila entered the capital with the support of Ugandan and Rwandan forces. Laurent Kabila’s coup was characterised by hostilities and violence, and frequent incursions from Rwandan and Ugandan forces who had earlier pitched tents with a number of tribal forces.756 Laurent Kabila was later assassinated by his bodyguard in 2001, and was succeeded by his son, Joseph Kabila.

One major explanation attributed to the DRC’s intractable conflict in particular, and the Great Lakes region as a whole, is deeply rooted in the colonial, political and economic system struggles which entangled the country shortly after independence.757 It has indeed been argued that the colonial explanation for the DRC crisis stems from its brutal colonial history dating back to the 1880s when King Leopold II of Belgium took personal control of the territory.758 King Leopold II saw the country as his personal fiefdom, and called it the Congo Free State (but ironically never went there himself). Indeed, it took about 75 years of colonial rule before Belgian overlords were forced to relinquish political rights to the people of Congo in 1960. However, the necessary economic rights were not there for the country to flourish.

Following Joseph Kasavubu and Patrice Lumumba’s election as president and prime minister of the Congo respectively, the struggle for power led to a countrywide armed rebellion, made worse by secessionist movements in the Katanga province and the Southern Kasai, culminating in a declaration of independence from the new republic.759 That declaration plunged the Congo into a crisis of unimaginable proportions, as warring factions battled to fill the power vacuum created

756 Ibid.
by the exit of the Belgians. Ultimately, the struggle for power and control over mineral resources, which had been at the heart of the country’s problems since independence in 1960, dragged the Congo into the politics of the Cold War. Alarmed by the rising human cost of the war, the Lumumba and Kasavubu-led government requested military assistance from the United Nations Organisation (UNO) (as it then was) to protect the country from the hostility of resident Belgian troops and to re-establish state sovereignty.

On 14 July, 1960, the UNO, through its Security Council Resolution 143, approved the deployment of Organization des Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC). That intervention notwithstanding, the Congo’s political and economic stability worsened, claiming the life of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba in January 1961. That development marked the beginning of the reign of terror of General Mobutu Sese Seko. By the time ONUC ended its mandate in 1964, Lumumba had been assassinated in a coup d’état staged by Mobutu Sese Seko, with allegations of complicity on the part of the United States and its Cold War allies.

Mobutu later pronounced himself head of state and commander-in-chief of the Congo’s armed forces in 1965, following a successful revolution, which gave rise to the renaming of the Republic of Congo to Zaire. Until the early 1990s, Mobutu’s administration received huge support from the West, which provided the government with weapons, ammunition and military support, which the government used in suppressing the people and exploiting the economy for decades. Mobutu, as Akrou argues, became extremely wealthy by diverting state funds, misappropriating funds generated from state assets, bribing foreign diplomats and misusing foreign loans. Analysts have often pointed accusing fingers at the United States as the primary backer of Mobutu’s regime, ostensibly because of the latter’s desire to protect and secure its economic resources, and strategic interests in the region. For the US, Mobutu’s authoritarian rule

and disregard for the fundamental rights of his people meant little or nothing, as long as it did not pitch the country at opposing ends with the Soviet Union’s interests and influence in Africa.  

It bears noting that one of the fundamental causes of the DRC conflict is what North et al. describes “as the discriminatory nature of the limited access society prevalent in most resource rich countries”. In a functioning limited-access society (such as the DRC), members of the dominant coalition include economic, political, religious, and educational leaders (elite) whose privileged positions create rent, which guarantees their cooperation with the dominant coalition and creates the organisations through which the goods and services produced by the population can be mobilised and redistributed. Under this arrangement, as North et al. contend, members of the dominant coalition (in the case of DRC—Mobutu Sese Seko and the ruling elite), the primary source of rents within the coalition is used to enforce arrangements within the organisations of the coalition members (the masses which they govern).

Arguing further, they note that it is the rent created by those exclusive privileges that binds the agreements between the organisations, limits access to enforcement of rules by the coalition, create rents, and shapes the interest of the players in the coalition (government). Essentially, the argument of North et al., when contrasted with the DRC, reminds us of a country that had been programmed to fail from conception by the Belgian colonial overlords. Indeed, on attainment of independence in 1960, evidence of state fragility—absence of law and order, weak governmental institutions and structures, and corruption, among others, were the defining characteristics of the newly-independent country. This development inarguably explains why a class system of the bourgeois and the proletariat became operationalised in the country in 1960, and ultimately, one of the underpinning motivations behind the Congolese civil war of 1960.

Other accounts for the DRC’s state failure debacle holds that concerns and agitations over economic control and segregation believably led to ethnic tensions and feelings of deprivation.

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766 Ibid., p.5.
767 Ibid., p.5.
768 Ibid., p.5.
among the DRCs multi-diverse society. As Huggins et al. note, land disputes as conceived by most organisations especially at district levels, contribute considerably to the outburst of violence, impede on peace processes, and are seen as, “sustaining conflict, through the use of profits or political capital from natural resource extraction or redistribution for purchase of arms, or mobilization of human and diplomatic resources for war”.  

The North Kivu province, for most of the DRC’s history, remained one of its most volatile provinces, and among the well-documented ethnicity-motivated conflicts was the Banyarwanda revolt against the Zairian population in Masisi district. According to historical accounts, Banyarwanda rose against the established local authority and called for the creation of an independent Rwandan state in North Kivu. The justification behind this quest for autonomy, as Reyntiens argues, was reiterated in a 1981 letter addressed to the United Nations Secretary General and signed by a group calling itself People of Rwandan origin in Zaire. The signatories requested permission to create a separate, independent state in North-Kivu, in the hope that the UN and OAU would recognise their self-determination. This quest for self-determination and its subsequent intractability indeed underpins the cumbersome nature of conflict resolution, particularly when it becomes intertwined with an underlying identity of cultural crises.

Similarly, and about the same time that persecution and discrimination against the Banyarwanda people was ongoing, a number of other Zairian politicians, particularly those of the Hunde, saw their political power wane, following the choice of more Banyarwandas for party posts in Zaire’s ruling party—the Mouvement populaire de la révolution (MPR). Consequently, the debate over the nationality of Banyarwanda immigrants in Zaire became an important political trump card in the hands of those who wanted to exclude Rwandan representation in Zaire’s political process. This development was worsened by a 1981 citizenship law which repealed the Zairean—

769 Ibid., p.5
citizenship rights earlier granted to the Banyarwanda people living on Congolese territory at the time of independence.774

As expected, the Banyarwanda people protested against the implementation of the law because of its retroactive nature, but many Zairians supported the law, and called for its full enforcement. This stance, more than anything else, added to the existing tension and conflict in Zaire, and laid the foundation for what would later become a complex peace process, with which MONUC was encumbered. By 1989, a presidential order announcing the municipal elections in North Kivu had to be suspended until an identification operation and a population census was conducted, forcing the regional authorities to organise an identification operation, with the aim of delineating Zairians from non-Zairians in North Kivu.775 Violent protests spearheaded by the Banyarwanda people halted the operation and no census has been conducted since then, despite the official requirement that one be conducted prior to every municipal and national election.776 This situation notwithstanding, Zairian and Banyarwanda political leaders alike hoped that the nationality question would be resolved permanently during the 1992 Conférence Nationale Souveraine (CNS).777

However, the CNS Commission on population, statistics and documentation, as Van Acker notes, upheld the 1981 nationality law and simply recommended that the law be put into application. No specific action has been taken since then.778 Consequently, ethnicity rather than political competence became a principal determinant in choosing delegates from North Kivu who

774 See for example: Law No. 71-020 of March 26, 1971 relating to the acquisition of Congolese Citizenship by foreign Burundian and Rwandan Nationals resident in the Congo before June 30, 1960 and Law No. 81-002 of June 29, 1981.
776 For more on this, see: Law No 82-061 of May 15 1982 relating to the audit of citizenship.
777 The Sovereign National Conference started on 7 August 1991 and was the largest with its 2,842 delegates. The aim of the conference was to put an end to the top-down approach used by the Mobutu’s regime to control and delay democratic transition in the DRC. This symposium aimed to introduce a democratic dispensation that ensured freedom of expression by all parties on the process of political transformation. The conference reviewed the history of the country, laid down the fundamental principles of governance, adopted a constitution, and designated transitional authorities, including a Prime Minister, the transitional parliament and its speaker. For more on this, see: DRC: Re-Democratisation and the endless transition to the Third Republic. http://www.iesa.org.za/WEP/drctransition.htm. [Accessed 6 April, 2016].
were to participate in the CNS. During preparations for the conference, an alliance between Hutu, Hunde and Nande politicians was forged, which successfully managed to exclude the Tutsi from participating in the conference.\textsuperscript{779} Eventually, the Hutu-Hunde alliance broke down and, from that moment, Hutu politicians in Kinshasa called on their constituents in North Kivu to defy the local administrative authorities. Similarly, cultural associations originally intended to encourage economic development began to play a more political role.

By 1993, the \textit{Mutuelle Agricole des Virunga} (MAGRIVI), the Hutu cultural association,\textsuperscript{780} had become political, and it helped organise civil disobedience in Zaire. These ethnic dissensions and Mobutu’s attempts to disenfranchise the Banyarwandas made Northern Kivu ungovernable and created an arena for several ethnic fights which incapacitated the country’s ability to adequately exploit the resources in the region.\textsuperscript{781} The government’s lack of will and capacity to deal with the Banyarwanda problem was further exposed with every renewed episode of violence, which as a consequence unrelentingly erased whichever possibilities of peaceful resolution of the conflict.\textsuperscript{782}

By the end of the Cold War, Mobutu’s regime was shackled by a growing opposition, international criticism and an economic crisis. The 1992 Sovereign National Conference representing various political parties on August 15, 1992 elected \textit{Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba} as Prime Minister for the transition\textsuperscript{783} (the first of its kind since Mobutu’s rise to power). Despite this, Mobutu still built up a rival government with its own prime minister. The removal from office of Etienne Tshisekedi in 1993, which was based on suspicions that he had put into circulation the new five million Zaire note, created further crisis. Ensuing from the crisis was the High Council of the Republic-Parliament of Transition (HCR-PT) in 1994, a merger of

\textsuperscript{779} Ibid., Pp.79-98.
\textsuperscript{780} In the 1990s, when the MAGRIVI was first formed, it exclusively represented Hutu from Rutshuru district and explicitly excluded Hutu from Masisi. The Rutshuru Hutu claimed that they were the first Hutu inhabitants of Kivu and considered themselves to be Zairian nationals while Hutu from Masisi were not. As a result of the broken alliance between the Hutu and the Hunde during the CNS, however, leaders of the MAGRIVI decided to incorporate Hutu from Masisi into their association in 1993.
\textsuperscript{782} Ibid., Pp.79-98.
both the Tshisekedi and Mobutu governments. The HCR-PT retained Mobutu as head of state and scheduled several failed presidential and legislative elections during the next two years (1995 and 1996). 

Despite this 1994 consolidation of government, Zaire remained unstable, and the conflicts in the DRC since then are closely related to the incidents in neighbouring Rwanda. These conflicts have escalated with each attempt to resolve it, and these attempts have culminated in new trajectories and complications to the plot and build-up to the conflict. The conflicts in the Congo, whether in the Bas-Kongo region or in South Kivu, all have their origins in the 1981 citizenship law which disenfranchised a part of the population and stalled government attention from service delivery to fighting nationalist wars about who should be included or excluded from the enjoyment of Congolese resources. Tragically, the situation was one which foreign governments soon took advantage of and which led to what has since been given the pseudonym the First and Second Congolese wars.

### 7.3 The first and second Congolese wars (1996-2003)

The violence that erupted in the DRC in 1996 marked the first Congolese war. This violent outbreak dates back to the civil war which broke out in Burundi in 1993 and the Rwandan genocide between the Hutus and the Tutsis in 1994, leading to the influx of a large number of refugees into Zaire. In April 1994, Hutus acting through the instrumentality of ethnic militia—Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi—launched genocide against the Tutsi minority population, leaving about 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus dead. In what was seen as a reprisal attack, forces loyal to the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which had never hidden its intention to gain control of Rwanda since the 1990s, with support from Uganda, invaded Rwanda arguably to avenge the massacre of the Tutsis. The RPF eventually defeated the Rwandan

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784 Ibid.
785 Ibid.
army and the militia, and took control. However, the genocide and civil war forced about two million civilians to flee the country mainly towards Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi.\textsuperscript{788}

It should be mentioned that while in Zaire, Hutu refugee camps functioned as the base for the Interahamwe and the Rwandan army, from where incursions into Rwanda were made. Motivated by the desire to prevent further incursions into its territory, and to protect the Tutsi Congolese from further attacks by the Hutus, the newly-formed Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) entered Zaire in 1996.\textsuperscript{789} This development marked the beginning of Congo’s first war. This war was further aggravated by the support which Laurent-Désiré Kabila’s rebel movement—the Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre (AFDL), enjoyed from Uganda, Angola and other anti-Mobutu Congolese revolutionary groups struggling for power. This struggle for power culminated in the ousting of the Mobutu led-government in May 1997, seven months after the war began.\textsuperscript{790}

By July 1998, Kabila’s relationship with his foreign supporters had begun to decline, as evidenced in his sacking and replacement of the Tutsis in his government with members of his Katanga clan, and his request for the withdrawal of all foreign troops. This development, as Kisangani argues, led to the abrupt end of military cooperation with Rwanda and Uganda, and subsequently to the instigation of an anti-Kabila revolution that started in August 1998.\textsuperscript{791} That revolution marked the beginning of the second DRC war. With the support of the Rwandan and Ugandan army and the Rwanda-backed rebel group, Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD, later on also called RCD-Goma) anti-Kabila groups advanced towards Kinshasa with the objective of ousting Kabila. However, owing to the intervention of Angolan, Zimbabwean and Namibian forces, Kabila was able to remain in power.\textsuperscript{792}

\textsuperscript{788} Ibid., Pp.1-26.
\textsuperscript{792} Ibid., Pp.1-2.
This intervention forced the Rwandans and the RCD rebels to withdraw to the eastern part of the DRC from where they launched sustained attacks on state assets and government forces. Similarly, another rebel movement known as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) sprang up in Eastern Congo, with the support of the DRC government. The FDLR forces are composed primarily of key members of the Rwandan genocide, Hutu members of the former Rwandan army, as well as a mix of displaced Rwandan Hutus. The disintegration of the DRC intensified in February 1999 when Uganda backed the formation of a rebel group called the Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC), which gained control over the northern part of the DRC and ignited the Congo’s second intractable War.

The bases of the widespread violence in the DRC in 1998, as Shah mentions, are multifaceted, given that it was instigated by sovereign state players that used rebel groups as an indirect means of achieving state goals. Summarily, the conflict involved at least seven African nations, apart from the number of insurgent groups within the DRC itself. It resulted in more than 5.4 million deaths, and has been labelled the world’s deadliest conflict since the Second World War. The complexity of the DRC conflict is what informs its description as Africa’s First World War, and has continued to defy various efforts made to resolve the conflict and broker peace among the belligerent factions. These ventures, as Oliver and Mokoena note, included the Frederick Chiluba-led effort to resolve the conflict, and the 1999 Lusaka Ceasefire Accord negotiated under the patronage of Southern African Development Community (SADC). Both mediations led to the establishment of two major arrangements - the UN Organisational Mission to the Congo (MONUC) and the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD).

Regardless of these mediations, the DRC crisis continued unabated, with Kabila consistently refusing to cooperate with the UN, and also failing to acknowledge the provisions of the Lusaka agreement which requested that all parties, including government forces, enjoy the same status in the inter-Congolese dialogue. This increasingly contributed to the lack of peace and unstable

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political peace processes. On January 16, 2001, Laurent-Désiré Kabila was assassinated in a failed coup d’état and was succeeded by his son Joseph Kabila. Once in power, Joseph Kabila immediately embarked on the revitalisation of the national dialogue, which was launched in February 2001 in Sun City, South Africa.\textsuperscript{796}

As a consequence of this peace initiative, and by the end of 2003, troops from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia, stationed in the north of DRC, as well as those from Rwandan and Ugandan in the East, had completed their withdrawal.\textsuperscript{797} On June 30, 2003, Kabila approved the formation of a transitional government—a decision believed by many to have unofficially terminated the DRC’s second war. Building on this political reconfiguration, the DRC in March 2003 officially adopted a transitional constitution, and by July 30, 2006, it held its first free, democratic, multi-party elections in more than 40 years.\textsuperscript{798}

The first ballot of that election produced no clear winner, and Kabila was later confirmed as the DRC’s democratically-elected president after a second ballot. However, the eastern part of the DRC remained turbulent as former Interahamwe members feared a return to Rwanda and decided to stay in the forests of eastern Congo, where they terrorised the local population.\textsuperscript{799} Similarly, the UN peacekeeping operation which had been deployed in the DRC from 1999 until the formation of the 2003 transition government failed to comprehensively end the DRC conflict. In the succeeding section, we examine the efforts made by the international community towards resolving the DRC crisis.

7.4 The DRC crisis and the Lusaka ceasefire agreement (1999)

For peace accords to be successful, there are a number of prerequisites and conditions to be met, particularly the indispensability of face-to-face negotiations between the warring parties and the mediators to meet, without which it may be difficult to find lasting and just solutions to any

\textsuperscript{797} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{798} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{799} Ibid., p.12.
This necessity is informed by Reiff’s contention that “intractable conflicts are seldom laden with ethnic or religious components, and that their resolutions are contingent on the nature of the government institutions and the power distribution among the communities within these states”. Consequently, identifying the main causes of the conflict and the issues involved, deducing the specific problems faced by the parties to the conflict, ascertaining the validity of the mechanisms through which the problems will be overcome, and planning how the agreements will be implemented are all necessary steps toward peace.

In the DRC, therefore, the commitment of international players to the cause of helping the country arrive at a political and negotiated solution to the crisis has led to the signing of a number of agreements, including the Lusaka Agreement and the Sun City Accords, as the cornerstone of the DRC peace process. The Lusaka Peace accord was the first in the series of the international community’s attempt to resolve the DRC conflict. It was conveyed under the auspices of the SADC mediation committee which had representatives from the DRC, Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda as members, and the government of Zambia, and representatives of the OAU and the United Nations (UN), as witnesses. It should be noted that the conflict itself was caused primarily by Laurent Kabila’s decision to detach his government from Ugandan and Rwandan leaders who supported him to overthrow Mobutu. The conflict ended with a Ceasefire Agreement in Lusaka under SADC’s mediation.

According to Bouvier and Bomboko, the agreement was premised on an anticipated six-week-long national dialogue involving armed and unarmed Congolese groups about the country’s future and interim government of the Congo as a corresponding process to the disarming of armed groups and the departure of foreign armies. Notwithstanding the cumbersome and difficult political climate under which the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement of July 10, 1999 was negotiated, it marked the beginning of the resolution of the conflict and the institutionalisation of relative peace and stability. Signatories to the agreement included the DRC, Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. The government of Zambia, SADC and OAU, and

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801 Ibid. p.367.
802 Ibid. p.367.
the United Nations (UN) signed the agreement as witnesses. The two main rebel movements—RCD and Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC)—only endorsed the agreement on 1 and 3 of August 1999, after initially refusing to sign—a gesture which threatened the prospects of the peace accord.

Essentially, the Lusaka Accord, as Lumumba-Kasongo observes, was negotiated under the auspices of the SADC, and it consisted of three main articles: the ceasefire component, security, and other general principles of the agreement. On the whole, the Agreement sought to address issues related to the cessation of hostilities; the release of hostages and exchange of prisoners; the orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces on the ground; national dialogue; reinstatement of the state administration over the territory of the DRC; the establishment of joint-military commission (JMC); the United Nations peacekeeping mandate; the disarmament of the armed groups; the formation of the national army; the redeployment of the parties to defensive positions in conflict zones; and the stabilisation of the security situation along the common borders between the DRC and its neighbours.

According to the stipulations of Article 19 of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, the DRC government, the armed opposition, RCD and MLC, and a number of other unarmed opposition groups, were expected to have the same status in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. As it would later turn out, Laurent Kabila was apparently dissatisfied with this arrangement and consistently refused to cooperate with the United Nations representatives, and the dialogue’s facilitator, Botswana’s former President, Masire Kabila eventually shut down the facilitator’s office in Kinshasa. Similarly, Kabila also attempted to make use of the politics of ethnicity and language characteristic of most African states, by accusing President Masire, an Anglophone, of favouring the Ugandans and Rwandans, and requesting that another facilitator, a Francophone, be appointed. Inarguably, Kabila’s uncooperative stance caused a considerable setback to the

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804 Ibid.
805 Ibid.
807 Ibid., Pp.21-50.
808 Ibid., Pp.21-50.
809 Ibid., PP.21-50.
Lusaka agreement, and it delayed the arrival of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue that would have probably given birth to a “new political dispensation” in the Congo.\textsuperscript{810}

Kabila’s obstinate stance notwithstanding, the fullness and significance of the Lusaka peace Accord cannot be understated. First, the agreement was the most significant initiative at the time, considering the chaos the war had already created. For the first time in conflict mediation history, African states, through a sub-regional intervention—the Southern African Development Community (SADC), attempted to set up a structure that can help resolve the crisis in the Great Lakes region. This step indicated a degree of hope for peace to be accomplished in the DRC after decades of war. For this to be achieved, a calendar for the implementation of the ceasefire agreement was presented in chapter three, specifying a total number of 270 days from the date it was signed. However, within the context of a complex conflict such as that of the Congo involving different parties with divergent interests and world views, the agreement faced persistent challenges that still causally relate to the reason for perpetual instability in Congo.

The first challenge was the failure of the Congolese to implement the agreement, a factor attributed to the absence of leadership, especially as the success of the agreement depended entirely upon the cooperation of the parties involved. According to Gerrie Swart, the main shortcoming of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement may have been the entrusting of the signatories with too much responsibility with regard to disarmament, given the level of suspicion among them and the lack of political commitment to the task of ending the war through peaceful negotiations.\textsuperscript{811} None of the signatories fully fulfilled what they had pledged to do. Each suspected the other of insincerity, and used its suspicions to justify its own duplicity. Since the signatories themselves were the ones responsible for policing the agreement, and considering that there was no external guarantor to compel their compliance, the agreement quickly became fluid and gave way to new peace accords tailored to fill the lacuna in the Lusaka.\textsuperscript{812}

These factors obscured the peace process and made it impossible for the mandated United Nations observers, who were to oversee the disengagement of forces, to deploy forces to certain

\textsuperscript{810} Ibid., Pp.21-50.
parts of the country due to the continuation of hostilities. Prospects for a successful DDR also diminished with the persistence of increased security threats. These challenges to the agreement therefore led to the prolongation of the conflict, which remained a major obstacle to the attainment of sustainable peace in the DRC. The 270 days initially specified for the implementation of the agreement gradually relapsed into more than four years of brutal conflict. Faced with a potential stalemate in the peace process, the Congo began to fragment and the conflict continued to rage. More lives were lost and an estimated additional two million Congolese were displaced as a result of inaction.

The violence fostered the growth of ethnic militarism and transformed the resource-blessed eastern region of the country into a patchwork of warlords’ fiefdoms. The territorial integrity of the Congo was threatened, and so were the foundations of nationhood which compromised the stability of its nine neighbours in the Great Lakes region. Consequently, the violence and humanitarian disaster that has erupted in the DRC since the signing of the Lusaka Agreement is mostly concentrated in the three eastern provinces, South Kivu, North Kivu and Ituri, and still greatly impacts on the peace processes in the region. It is useful to note that, apart from the Lusaka peace process which was ongoing at that time, a number of other talks such as the April 2000 Kampala disengagement were also initiated towards ending the crisis.

However, just like the Lusaka Agreement, the talks equally fell short of expectations when it excluded important stakeholders from the peace process, particularly, the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), the Mai Mai and ALiR groups. The question to ask from the foregoing is what potential impact did the exclusion of these stakeholders from such talks have

815 Formerly the largest Burundian Hutu rebel group. They signed a ceasefire with the Burundian government in December 2002. During the Congo war, the FDD had bases in Congo, and the government of Laurent-Desire Kabila supported and supplied the FDD ammunitions.  
816 Local Congolese combatants who took up arms to fight against what they saw as foreign occupation. They operate in many parts of eastern Congo but did not have a centralized command structure.  
817 Formerly Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALiR, in French Armée pour la libération du Rwanda).  
818 ALiR and MaiMai groups are critical to Harare and Kinshasa’s battle against the Rwandan and Ugandan armies and local rebel forces in eastern Congo.
on the efforts towards achieving peace and stability in the region? Did it not simply create another situation of more violence? These questions have become expedient in view of the DRC’s volatility, particularly in the eastern part of the Congo, where the country had been torn between a seemingly unending perpetration of human atrocities and a complex cluster of illegal exploitation and control of raw materials by armed and rebel groups.

Indeed, the expulsion of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), despite its being a disputant, as well as stakeholder in the conflict, constituted a substantial impediment to the resolution efforts.\textsuperscript{819} The Lusaka agreement therefore demanded the withdrawal of all foreign armies from the DRC, the disarmament of “Interahamwe” forces in the DRC, and the creation of MONUC.\textsuperscript{820} Though other stakeholders like the MLC and the Goma RCD faction endorsed the agreement, fighting soon started between the Rwandan and Ugandan armies on Congolese soil as they struggled for land and resources. This struggle, as Lunn argues, later involved other RCD factions which had earlier opposed the RCD Goma’s endorsement; for example, the “Interahamwe” together with anti-RPF Hutu groups in eastern DRC joined and formed the FDLR that worked in close collaboration with the DRC government.

As espoused above, these issues explain why the Lusaka agreement achieved very little success, thus leading to the establishment of an inter-Congolese dialogue. The ICD, which was under the auspices of the OAU, sought to employ the use of political negotiations in ending the hostilities and addressing the concerns of Rwanda and Uganda, two states actively involved in the DRC conflict, but not often considered as key players the peace process should focus on. In the succeeding section, we will examine the role of South Africa in these talks as an intervening force, beginning with an appraisal of the relationship between its foreign policy and its role in the conflict.

\textsuperscript{820} Ibid.
7.5 Reappraising South Africa’s intervention in the DRC.

South Africa, as Hendricks argues, has been at the forefront of Africa’s peace and security endeavours after 1994. It was able to quickly transform itself from international villain to Pan-Africanist peacemaker and it has since played a role in both shaping and setting the normative agenda of the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community’s (SADC) peace and security architectures.⁸²¹ South Africa has equally been an active player in conflict-management engagements, or what Van Nieuwkerk prefers to refer to as “Peace Diplomacy”.⁸²² South Africa’s decision to play this role is believed to be in tandem with her foreign policy, which according to Maite Nkoana-Mashabane is based on the “values and principles enshrined in our constitution, notably human dignity, the achievement of equity, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy and respect for the rule of law”.⁸²³ This explains why South Africa has been unequivocal about the place of Africa in its foreign policy objectives.⁸²⁴ At different times, South Africa has noted that its views on peace, security and development are inherently linked to that of Africa, and that its policies will remain “pan-Africanist” and “Afro-centric”.⁸²⁵ South Africa sees its responsibility as transforming the “global system of governance from power-based to rule-based”, ending the marginalisation of the poor throughout the world, promoting the African agenda and being the “voice of the continent internationally”.⁸²⁶ South Africa’s assumption of these self-imposed responsibilities, going by constructivists’ logic, can be regarded as an expression of its identity, capable of being a causal factor in its own right, independently of the relative power pursuits, which equally play a role in South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Africa.

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Scholars have argued that there are at least three major factors accounting for South Africa’s foreign policy focus on Africa. The first, according to Flemes, is South Africa’s recognition of the role Africa played during its anti-apartheid struggle, hence the need to make it a prime focus of future engagements, as a mark of appreciation of this role. The second factor, according to Sidiropoulos, is the evolving nature of conflict and security challenges, primarily, but not exclusively on the African continent. State collapse, migratory diseases, trafficking of arms, drugs, and people, ethnic violence, interstate warfare, crime and transnational terrorism, as she argues, combine in a conflict matrix, far more complex than that of the Cold War. The irony of this development, as Sidiropoulos asserts, is that “Africa is at once more peaceful and democratic and also more fragile and unstable than any previous point in recent history”. This explains why the South African government in its 1999 White Paper on its participation in international peace missions notes that “a radically altered post-Cold-War security environment has seen the transformation (or mutation) of classical peacekeeping operations into complex, multidimensional conflict management activities.”

The third factor shaping South Africa’s approach to conflict resolution is its unique experience in peaceful transformation from apartheid to democracy. And this experience explains why “South Africa provides the international community with a unique example of how a country, having emerged from a deeply divided past, can negotiate a peaceful transition based on its own conflict-resolution techniques and its own vision of meaningful and enduring development”. In effect, a state’s foreign policy is much more influenced by its history and experience than by structural features of anarchy or self-help. The first, strengthening Africa’s regional institutions by proactively participating in activities which promotes sub-regional/regional integration and

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830 Ibid., Pp.6-7.
831 Ibid., Pp.6-7.
832 Ibid., p.7.
833 Ibid., p.7.
834 Ibid., p.7.
development. The second aims to support the implementation of Africa’s socio-economic development programme such as the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD); and the SADC’s Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

The third focuses on strengthening bilateral relations through effective structures for dialogue and cooperation. This includes support for peace, security, stability and post-conflict reconstruction initiatives and South Africa’s participation in the implementation Africa’s peace and security agenda and the management of peace missions. To be sure, South Africa’s desire to play an active role in African politics as part of an attempt to find “African solutions to African problems”, as advanced by Thabo Mbeki, is not without precedence. As early as 1994, South Africa’s ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), has affirmed its readiness to play this role when it stated that:

The ending of apartheid was a joyous moment in the history of our continent. Africa sacrificed much during the course of our struggle. Our people – refugees and the liberation movement – were offered food, shelter and facilities to enhance the common endeavor to put an end to racist tyranny and oppression. With fellow Africans we share a vision to transform our continent into an entity that is free, peaceful and vibrant.

South Africa’s President, Jacob Zuma, has similarly noted that post-apartheid South Africa cannot exist in isolation, and needs to maintain stronger ties with Africa, given that its economic development and security is linked to the continent’s stability. South Africa’s continuing interaction with, and engagement in, Africa, according to Zuma, has the capacity to engender peace in the continent, create an environment conducive to reconstruction and development in our region, and provide possibilities for faster economic development. Indeed, South Africa has attempted to live up to this billing in Africa, as marked by its ranking among African contributors to UN peacekeeping missions around the world as at May 2017.

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838 Ibid., p.60.
Table 7.1 South Africa’s contribution to global peace missions

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<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>747</td>
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<td>800</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Inferable from the above is that South Africa has participated in numerous peacekeeping missions in Africa, including those in Darfur, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Central African Republic (CAR), Lesotho, and Burundi. Most notable among its involvement in African conflicts is the role played by South Africa in the DRC, where the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) spearheaded efforts to stabilise the country’s internal politics, including the reconstruction and development of DRC’s security infrastructure and its troops. According to Lieutenant General Vusimuzi Masondo, the Chief of the South African Army, between 1997 and 2015, the South African Army trained and provided a total of 8,413 members who are currently deployed in the DRC and the Darfur Region in Sudan as part of the United Nations and African Union mandated missions.⁸⁴⁰

Similarly, the South African Army has continued to support these missions with personnel during rotation intervals. For example, 121 South African Infantry Battalion replaced the 5 South African Infantry Battalion in the DRC, as part of the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade credited with neutralising the M23 rebels.⁸⁴¹ While South Africa may have contributed troops towards resolving the DRC crisis, its foreign policy behaviour at the beginning of the crisis was that of ambiguous neutrality.⁸⁴² For example, the Mandela administration had opted for peace negotiations, and rejected Mugabe’s resolution to send a Southern African military contingent to rescue the Kabila regime.⁸⁴₃

South Africa’s position was heavily criticised by both Zimbabwe and Angola. Critics have argued that South Africa’s decision not to intervene in the conflict was motivated by alleged arms deal between it and Rwanda.⁸⁴⁴ Additional to this was Mandela’s determination to punish

⁸⁴₃ Ibid., p.245.
⁸⁴⁴ Ibid., p.245.
Kabila for the latter’s reconsideration of the accord signed during the South African liberation struggle, which allowed South Africa’s mining companies to exploit the Congo’s minerals during the L’Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo (AFDL) regime.\textsuperscript{845} In both the first and second Congolese wars, even though Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia used the SADC organ of politics, defence and security to intervene militarily on Kabila’s side, Mandela, as SADC chairperson, preferred a political solution.\textsuperscript{846} The South African deputy foreign minister, at the time, Aziz Pahad, stated thus: “we consistently maintain that there is no military solution possible, we need to bring a political solution to all the conflict on the African continent”.\textsuperscript{847}

When it eventually did, it was done through peacekeeping under the auspices of the AU and the UN. South Africa’s \textit{modus-operandi} in DRC thus consisted of five major approaches: (1) negotiating peaceful agreements between the belligerents/warring-parties; (2) supporting the formation of inclusive transitional governments; (3) deploying peacekeepers to crisis zones; (4) providing logistic support for the DRC’s attempt towards multi-party elections after a specified period; and (5) ensuring the implementation of post-conflict reconstruction/peacebuilding programmes that concentrate on rebuilding state institutions and infrastructure.\textsuperscript{848} These approaches were to be guided by the 1998 White Paper on South Africa’s participation in peace missions which affirmed that South Africa may provide civilian assistance, armed forces and police officers for common international efforts when properly authorized by international and domestic authorities to help in such missions.\textsuperscript{849}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[845] Ibid., p.245.
\item[846] Ibid., p.245.
\item[847] Ibid., p.246.
\item[849] Ibid., p.2.
\end{footnotes}
South Africa, as the White paper noted, “will continue to support the United Nations and, where relevant, the Organization of African Unity and the Southern African Development Community by making an appropriate contribution to international peace missions”.\textsuperscript{850}

As Malan notes, “in the case of the DRC, an appropriate contribution would mean the maximum contribution possible under the circumstances”.\textsuperscript{851} The White Paper, Malan argues, clearly states that, “in principle, the level and size of South Africa’s contribution to any particular peace mission will depend on how closely the mission relates to national interests and the type of demand that exists for South Africa’s contributions”.\textsuperscript{852} Thus, according to Malan, a stable and peaceful DRC remains a foreign policy priority for Pretoria, but for its contribution to be meaningful and visible, Pretoria must deploy a full range of efforts involving civilians, civilian police, and a significant military contingent.”\textsuperscript{853} In the next section, we will be examining the role played by South Africa towards the implementation of the Sun City Accord(s).

### 7.6 South Africa and the Sun City Accord

South Africa was, and remains, a key actor in conflict management in the DRC. It has played the roles of peacemaker, peacekeeper, peacebuilder and peace-enforcer.\textsuperscript{854} South Africa’s first entry into the DRC was in 1997 when it mediated in the conflict between Mobutu Sese Seko and Laurent Kabila, but the effort was constrained by the political status quo which favoured Kabila’s forces, over South Africa’s proposal of “an orderly transition”. What followed rather

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\textsuperscript{851} Ibid., p.2.

\textsuperscript{852} Ibid., p.2.

\textsuperscript{853} Ibid., p.2.

was the ban placed on opposition parties and rulership by decree.\textsuperscript{855} Motivated by the need to break the cycle of conflict which engulfed DRC, following Laurent Kabila’s assassination by his bodyguard, and his son’s (Joseph Kabila) assumption of office, the Organisation of African Unity ([OAU] now AU) appointed President Masire of Botswana to facilitate the dialogue in December 1999.\textsuperscript{856}

However, Masire’s intercession could only formally begin in 2001, thus coinciding with the re-entry of South Africa into the mediation processes in the DRC.\textsuperscript{857} That process was driven by the Mbeki presidency in Sun City, between February 2002 and April 2002. The peace process, as Khadiagala, argues, led to the signing of an agreement between the DRC government and the Uganda-backed rebels, and it became known as Sun City 1, but it collapsed because the Rwanda-backed rebels were excluded from the agreement.\textsuperscript{858} This was followed by an Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD) which had two major purposes, which were to (1) produce a negotiated settlement to end the war in the DRC, and (2) to consolidate the democratisation process that had been disenchanted by Mobutu and Laurent-Désiré Kabila’s terms as president.\textsuperscript{859}

Kabila’s refusal to accept the implementation of the foregoing provision and his attempts at delaying the dialogue from commencing meant the talks eventually began in August 2001. On assumption of office in January 2001, Joseph Kabila took steps to revive the Lusaka process, and precisely on 4 May 2001, two weeks before the Security Council’s visit to the region, the Lusaka

agreement signatories met again in Lusaka and signed a declaration on the fundamental principles.\textsuperscript{860} This development set the stage for the commencement of talks in the Inter-Congolese Dialogues, beginning with a preparatory meeting in Gaborone on 20–24 August 2001.\textsuperscript{861} Representatives of all signatories to the Lusaka agreement and the Congolese non-violent political opposition and civil society, and observers from the UN, OAU, SADC, European Union (EU) and the Joint Military Council (JMC), were in attendance.

After some disagreements over who would participate in the talks and the venue, they agreed that the national dialogue would be held in Addis Ababa for six weeks beginning on 15 October, 2001. The peace talks opened as planned at the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) conference hall in Addis Ababa. Citing financial constraints as reasons for pruning the number of delegates, Ketumile Masire limited participation in the talks from the 330 representatives initially agreed in Gaborone to 80.\textsuperscript{862} This limited participation played into Kinshasa’s delay tactics, resulting in staging of a walk-out of the meetings in protest under the excuse of “limited attendance”. Similarly, the government in Kinshasa insisted that as a condition for its return to the negotiation table, the “Mai Mai” had to be included in the talks.\textsuperscript{863}

This condition was strongly rejected by the Congolese rebel groups which argued that only parties included in the Lusaka agreement should be invited to participate in the dialogue. Kinshasa’s objective, as the International Crisis group argued, was to weigh the talks in its favour by promoting the participation of groups it could easily manipulate.\textsuperscript{864} It took another four months for the stalemate to be resolved, and the national dialogue reopened in South Africa’s Sun City on 25 February 2002, though without the participation of one of the principal actors, the Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC), which had initially complained that the

\textsuperscript{861} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{862} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{863} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{864} Ibid.
government was unfairly sending bogus civilian opposition parties. Eventually, all of the actors participated in the talks which lasted a total of 52 days.\textsuperscript{865} The ICD therefore had two phases: the ICD I – South Africa 2002; and the ICD II – the 2003 Final Act.\textsuperscript{866}

The first phase of the ICD commenced in Sun City, from February to April 2002 and it focused primarily on how an agreement on power-sharing among the different parties could be reached.\textsuperscript{867} The ICD commenced under the supervision of Masire and was later taken over by the then South African President, Thabo Mbeki. As a framework for peace in the Congo, the Sun City agreement was negotiated over a period of seven weeks, and the outcome was a partial agreement signed on 18 April 2002 between Jean-Pierre Bemba’s MLC and the government of Joseph Kabila.\textsuperscript{868} The agreement, signed by at least 70 per cent of the 366 delegates who participated in the ICD, allowed Joseph Kabila to retain power as President and Bemba, and three others to be his deputy.\textsuperscript{869} One of the major consequences of the agreement on the political calculus of the DRC was the collapse of the anti-Kabila coalition, the subsequent isolation of RCD and its chief ally—Rwanda.

This development further emphasises the point that the organisation of a comprehensive army and the creation of a working group to develop a transnational constitution for the country remains \textit{sine qua non} to the DRC’s quest for stability. This achievement was met with disapproval, and observers also partially blamed the failures of Sun City on the facilitator, who never quite understood the dynamics and underlying relationships between the negotiating parties, a shortcoming worsened by Masire’s inability to speak French. South Africa attempted to get the \textit{Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD-Goma)} and a coalition of civil

\textsuperscript{865} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{866} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{868} Ibid., p.153.
society groups to sign the agreement. Nevertheless, the seating preferences were disputed, and the dialogue failed to achieve even a general agreement among the key actors.

This was because the RCD-Goma backed by Rwanda, along with several parties of the unarmed political opposition, including the *Union pour la Democratie et le Progres Social* (UDPS) of the veteran Congolese politician and former prime minister, Etienne Tshisekedi, refused to sign the accord. This bred concerns about a return to violence, and in fact, distorted the prerequisite political will to reach a negotiated settlement and give peace and stability a place. The reasons for the refusal to sign the accord were partly due to the heavy pressure coming from Kabila’s government and disagreements over power-sharing during the transnational phase, as the agreement was rejected by the Rwanda-backed RCD-Goma and the political opposition, both of which were marginalised by this side deal.

By marginalising RCD, the parties ignored the underlying objectives of Rwanda and its goal to establish a sphere of influence in eastern Congo through direct military occupation, proxy forces, or both, and focused instead on negotiating profitable government positions for themselves. Based on this, the parties themselves were to blame for the failures of Sun City. As noted in the UN integrated regional information network (IRIN) report, not much attention was paid to the continued violence in eastern DRC and the deal was limited between Kabila and the MLC, thereby failing to prescribe any real solutions to Congo’s problems.\(^{870}\) This situation was further complicated by the power-sharing agreement made by Rwanda’s president, Paul Kagame, who considered the deal an act of insubordination against participants of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, and that it failed to address issues such as the disarmament, demobilisation, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement (DDRRR) of armed groups.\(^{871}\)


\(^{871}\) Ibid.
The daunting effect of this misunderstanding on the peace efforts only became pronounced when President Masire remarked on leaving Sun City that “we are leaving Sun City without fully realizing all our goals”. Regardless of these shortcomings, the Sun City talks still had a number of useful outcomes, such as the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission – negotiated institutions that could potentially provide the basis for durable peace, rather than having to reinvent the wheel. These (negotiations) included the signing of a memorandum of understanding in July 2002 by presidents Kagame and Joseph Kabila to end the conflict between the DRC and Rwanda. The Sun City Accord approved a 90-day programme for the implementation of the agreement, under which Kabila would remain the interim president, with two vice-presidents from the Rally for Congolese Democracy-Gom (RCD-Goma) and Bemba’s Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC). The failure of this new deal resulted in further negotiations which began in October 2002 in South Africa, which culminated in an all-inclusive power-sharing agreement that was ratified in April 2003, thus marking the second phase of the ICD.

During this second phase of the ICD that started on 2 April 2003, delegates hoped that it would be a historic “final act,” ending more than four years of war and setting up a government of national unity. The signing of this deal was aimed at restoring democracy and stability in the DRC. Significantly, the second phase of the ICD led to the establishment of a transitional government in which Joseph Kabila remained president, having four vice-presidents and 35 ministers with their deputies. Parties renewed commitments to cease hostilities and embarked on the process of setting up an efficient and integrated army, just as the constitution and inclusive agreement were declared the only sources of power during the two-year transition to elections. Furthermore, the agreement also called for reunification, pacification, reconstruction,

872 Ibid.
874 Ibid., Pp.51-80.
restoration of territorial integrity and the re-establishment of the state’s authority throughout the country as well as transparent elections at all levels.\textsuperscript{875}

The Sun City Accord was designed to lay the foundation for a DRC with a unified, multi-party government, and a timeline for democratic elections, but as noted by former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, the “real breakthrough” in the peace process will depend on its implementation.\textsuperscript{876} The question arising from this is: how successful or otherwise was the implementation process? Indeed, a very apt response to the question is contained in Neethling and Mokoena’s submission that the warring factions, which were very central to full implementation of the agreement, were reluctant to give up power, and this worsened considerably an already-tense security situation, thus eventually delaying the implementation of the agreement.\textsuperscript{877}

Despite the success recorded in the adoption of a constitution in 2005, and the two rounds of elections in July and October 2006, which retained Kabila as president, pockets of violence continued to trouble the peace process. For example, the newly-elected government did not extend its power beyond the borders of Kinshasa; human rights abuses continued to grow in the east, with increased violence, threats to human life, forceful displacements and rape of innocent civilians as strategies of war.\textsuperscript{878} As at the time of writing (2017), there remain at least three major centres of conflict in the DRC. The first is the North and South Kivu region where a significantly destabilised FDLR continues to threaten the Rwandan border.

The second is the Banyarwanda region, where Rwanda is being accused of providing support to the RCD-Goma rebels against the government in Kinshasa, thus limiting MONUC’s ability to

\textsuperscript{876} Ibid., Pp.51-80.
\textsuperscript{878} Ibid., p.153.
contain the numerous militias and groups driving the Ituri conflict. The last is the Northern Katanga region, where the Mai Mai, created by Laurent-Désiré Kabila has slipped out of the control of Kinshasa. While acknowledging that the belligerent groups, non-armed opposition and the civil society participated in the negotiations, what remains unclear is how they intend creating an atmosphere in which their accomplishments toward democracy will be sustained in the long run. This uncertainty is evident in the longstanding ethnic violence between the Hutu and Tutsi-aligned forces, and has continued to fuel much of the conflict, with people on both sides fearing their annihilation as a race. Kinshasa continued to maintain close ties with Hutu-aligned forces so as to expel the armies and proxy forces of Uganda and Rwanda. Also, while Uganda and Rwanda-aligned forces worked closely together to gain territory at the expense of Kinshasa, competition over access to resources created distrust in their relationship.

This development explains the seeming inability of the varying peace agreements initiated by the international community in the DRC to bring about the desired stability in the country, thus making the prospects for peace increasingly elusive. It should be mentioned that, in the midst of all these conflicts, upheavals and negotiations, the UN intervention in the DRC has continued to provide humanitarian and logistic support to the DRC, particularly those in the eastern Congo, as well as providing training for its security agencies, and a number of its paramilitary agencies.

### 7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has generated two distinct conclusions concerning South Africa’s intervention in the DRC. The first reflects an appreciation of the insights gained from applying a constructivist understanding to its foreign policy behaviour, as its intervention demonstrates the country’s commitment to an African-first foreign policy orientation and its unspoken business interest in the DRC. In terms of the first conclusion, South Africa, through its intervention in the DRC, has

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879 Ibid., p.153.
demonstrated its commitment to, and interest in, peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Africa. This development inarguably reflects the argument that the thesis has espoused in chapter six, that South Africa’s conflict intervention in Africa is a by-product of its commitment to international peace and mechanisms for conflict intervention, and its respect for the promotion of Africa’s interest in world affairs. This has been defined by South Africa in its plethora of foreign policy documents as its national interest, and the ground on which its foreign policy is premised. Foreign policy commitments like these are clearly antithetical to Realist constructs, and we shall explore this further in chapter eight.

The second conclusion, as gleaned from available literature indicates that, following the end of the Cold War in 1989, there has been a general decline in the willingness of the West to intervene in conflicts pertaining to Africa. This apathy has undoubtedly imposed some level of responsibility on a number of emerging powers in the developing world to intervene. Consequently, middle powers in Africa, such as South Africa, have had an increasing level of (and also by self-design, imposed some of these) responsibilities on themselves. This scenario informs the role played by South Africa in the DRC, as its leadership saw the war as an opportunity to show the international community that it possesses the material and organisational resources to lead Africa. Realism, with its emphasis on relative material resources, provides a useful lens through which to appreciate this dimension of South Africa’s behaviour in this regard.

Also, by its involvement in the DRC, South Africa has demonstrated a willingness to accept leadership responsibilities and its attendant consequences, and that it also has the capacity to mobilise its power and resources in the interest of public good. It is imperative to note that the acceptance of responsibilities like these run contrary to what you would expect from a state whose foreign policy behaviour can be interpreted along realist lines, particularly a state with an intervention behaviour guided by self-interests. Lastly, South Africa’s involvement in the DRC has shown that social constructivism, may be useful in analysing its foreign policy behaviour, as
evidenced in its preference for negotiations, despite the pressure mounted on it by Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia to take sides with the Kabila regime.

Furthermore, and as revealed in the course of this chapter, the essential factors which shaped the DRC’s crisis since its attainment of formal independence in 1960 stems from agitations over the distribution of national wealth, which initially was not part of the root causes of the conflict. This contributed immensely to the high intensity of the conflict in the east of the country, and it has remained a major threat to the DRC’s prospects for sustainable peace in the Kivu region. Undeniably, this development is not unconnected with one of the major causal factors of the Congo’s 1960 crisis, where the claim of a permanent purchase of land from customary chiefs (without any documents to attest to this) by the Banyarwandas eventually degenerated into what is now known as Africa’s first world war, remnants of which still abound.

The chapter established and agrees with Huggins et al. in their contention that, “the limited access to land, exacerbated by unequal distribution and tenure insecurity consequently resulted into recurrent incidents of population displacement and succeeding re-distribution of land by the state”. It was equally observed in the course of the chapter that the ability of these opposition forces to oust Mobutu can also be attributed to Mobutu’s negligence to build state institutions and develop and train the army, a factor which caused the country to become dysfunctional, thus making it susceptible to intractable conflict.

The chapter further established that the DRC’s security situation (in the period under study) remained unstable due to the support which the rebel forces operating in the eastern region enjoyed from multinational corporations who worked in the hugely-endowed region. As of late 2017, the eastern part of the DRC continues to experience pockets of hostilities, which often leave millions of people displaced and insecure, thereby making prospects of peace in the DRC elusive. This, among others, reveals the intervention limitations faced by a regional leader which

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South Africa has become. Despite its commitment to promoting peace, which relates to its self-identification as an African nation with a peace-and-prosperity mission, and despite its preponderance in material resources, the success of South Africa’s intervention in the DRC ultimately depends on factors over which it has little control.
Chapter 8: Analysing Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and intervention in Africa: The value of an eclectic approach

8.1 Introduction

At the beginning of the study, our task was to examine how structural realism and social constructivism could contribute to our understanding of Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention role and foreign policy behaviour in Africa. In chapter two, we assessed the intervention debate in international politics, with a view to laying the foundation for a theoretical assessment of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and conflict intervention behaviour in Africa. In chapter three, the study identified the main features of structural realism and social constructivism, and indicated that the structural realist conception of statism, self-help and survival, and the constructivist focus on identity will serve as benchmarks for assessing Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour towards Africa.

Chapter four explored Nigeria’s intervention behaviour in Africa against the background of its foreign policy and argued that although the existing literature on Nigeria’s interventionary roles in Africa highlights a commitment to good African neighbourliness, there were clear attempts by Nigerian leaders to use its material preponderance in West Africa to fuel their personal leadership ambitions. Chapter five analysed the causal factors and central issues which defined Sierra Leone’s civil war between 1991 and 1998 by focusing on the major events which shaped the crisis, and how structural realism is useful in explaining its intervention role through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In chapter six, we focused on South Africa’s foreign policy and its conflict intervention behaviour in Africa and used the same perspective as a basis on which our exploration of South Africa’s intervention in the DRC in chapter seven was premised.
Drawing on the findings from chapters one to seven, this chapter seeks to achieve two objectives: first, to comparatively appraise Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and conflict intervention behaviour in Africa from the combined lenses of structural realism and social constructivism. Here, the central objective is to evaluate what structural realism and social constructivism tells us about both countries’ foreign policy behaviour and intervention roles in Africa. This takes us to the second goal of this chapter which is to highlight and demonstrate the relevance of the eclectic approach to the understanding and interpretation of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and intervention behaviour in Africa. The eclectic approach, in which both structural realism and social constructivism are used, helps to overcome the limitations of relying only on either of these international relations approaches to analyse Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and intervention roles in Africa. We begin our discussion in this chapter with an assessment of what structural realism tells us about Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention roles in Africa.

8.2 Structural Realism and Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and intervention roles in Africa

Notably, the discourse on structural realism, when situated within the debate on how much power a state should possess is divided along two lines: the defensive and offensive lines.\textsuperscript{881} Defensive realists argue that it is unwise for states to try to maximise their share of world power because the pursuit of hegemony is foolhardy.\textsuperscript{882} Offensive realists maintain that it makes good strategic sense for states to gain as much power as possible, and where inevitable, the pursuit of hegemony since the contention is not about the rightness or otherwise of conquest or domination,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{881} Ibid., p.72.
  \item \textsuperscript{882} Waltz, K. N. (1979). \textit{Foreign Policy and Democratic Politics}. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
\end{itemize}
but on the indispensability of power accumulation and control in ensuring a state’s survival.\textsuperscript{883} Both schools of thought however agree that the quest for survival and the desire to protect state interest(s) remain cardinal objectives of state actors in international politics.\textsuperscript{884} Mearsheimer has adduced the following five suppositions about the international system as “simple structural realist explanations”\textsuperscript{885} as responsible for why states compete for power among themselves.

The assumptions are that:

1. Great powers are the main actors in world politics and they operate in an anarchic system due to the absence of a centralised authority or ultimate arbiter that stands above all states;

2. States possess some offensive military capabilities which can be used to inflict harm on its neighbour, although these capabilities vary and change over time;

3. States can never be certain about the intentions of other states and will ultimately want to know whether other states are determined to use force to alter the balance of power to their advantage (\textit{revisionist states}) or whether they are willing to maintain the prevailing order (\textit{status quo states});

4. The main goal of states is survival. States seek to maintain their territorial integrity and the autonomy of their domestic political order, and;

5. States, as rational actors, are capable of coming up with sound strategies that maximise their prospects for survival.\textsuperscript{886}

\textsuperscript{884} Donnelly, J. (2000). "Realism" and Theories of International Relations. Cambridge University Press.
\textsuperscript{886} Ibid., Pp.72-75.
However, none of these assumptions, when considered from a unilateral perspective, affirms “that states should or will compete for power. Rather, it is the combination of these assumptions that lead to a situation where states are preoccupied with the balance of power, and how to acquire powerful incentives to gain power at each other’s expense”.\footnote{Ibid., p.74.} The above identification by Mearsheimer is what explains the notion of what Dunne and Schmidt summarised and expatiated as the “three S” of realism; Statism, Survival and Self-help—fundamental notions which considerably shape the level and manner of interaction at the international system.\footnote{Dunne, T, and Schmidt, P. (2005), “Realism”. In Baylis, J. and Smith, S. (Eds.) The Globalization of World Politics (3rd edition). Oxford University Press, p.166.} With respect to Statism, it is claimed that a state prefers to see itself as the only actor on the international stage, and considers every other state as less important.

This fact is reinforced by the belief that, in international politics, “great powers fear each other, due to the low level of trust among them, and the fear that another state might have the capability as well as the motive to attack them”.\footnote{Mearsheimer, J. (2007). “Structural Realism”. In Dunne, T. Kurki, M. and Smith, S. (Eds). International Relations Theories: Disciplines and Diversity. Oxford University Press, p.74.} Self-help presupposes that co-existence in international politics is only achieved when a state is able to maintain a balance of power, and that limited cooperation is only feasible when a state stands to gain more than others.\footnote{Ibid., p.176.} The concept of survival, the last of the “three S” in realism, focuses on the protection of the supreme national interest to which all political leaders must adhere.

Entrenched in structural realism, therefore, is the emphasis placed on the notion and protection of the national interest, and its reference to it as a cardinal reason why states intervene in conflicts, which Abegunrin defines as “the means of providing the link between trying to understand international politics and the facts to be understood”.\footnote{Abegunrin, O. (2003). Nigerian foreign Policy under Military Rule, 1966-1999. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, USA.} The foregoing implies that the size and vitality of an economy, leadership proficiency, military capability, the geographical location of a
state, and, more importantly, the structural balance of power in a specific arena is a potential explanatory logic that can be used in understanding the foreign policy behaviour of a nation. These characteristics support the claim in some quarters that as an IR approach, structural realism is a useful tool within which Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention role in Africa can be analysed. \(^{892}\)

Implicit in structural realism is the assumption that Nigeria and South Africa’s behaviour towards the external environment are anchored on the need to protect their national interests. Similarly, when considered from the point of view of their commitment to the promotion of Africa’s interest in world affairs, structural realism enables us to put into perspective the seeming correlation between their national interests and the motivations behind their intervention roles in the DRC (1997-2005) and in Sierra Leone (1991-1998). However, there are instances where the national interest of a nation could be at variance with its motive for intervening in a conflict, as the example of Nigeria in Liberia in 1990, and South Africa’s in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2013 has shown.

To understand how this conflict of interest evolves, Hans Morgenthau asks for example that, “we [should] put ourselves in the position of a statesman who must meet a certain problem of foreign policy under certain circumstances, and we [should] ask ourselves what the rational alternatives are from which a statesman may choose”. \(^{893}\) According to Morgenthau, “it is the testing of this rational hypothesis against the actual facts and their consequences that gives meaning to the facts of international politics and makes a theory of politics possible”. \(^{894}\) Deducible from Morgenthau’s explanation is that in taking the foreign policy decision of whether or not to intervene in conflicts, statesmen or actors are confronted with a difficult situation. Consequently,

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\(^{894}\) Ibid., p.48.
Understanding what drives these decisions requires a consideration of the following structural realist assumptions as highlighted in chapter three. These are:

1. The idea that a state’s behaviour can be explained rationally;

2. The claim that a state’s behaviour is conditioned by its relative position in the (regional) balance of power;

3. The argument that states seek power and calculate interests in terms of power, not relative to the nature of the international system, but relative to other significant actors in the system/sub-system.895

In answering the question of whether a state’s behaviour can be rationally explained, the key determinant for Nigeria and South Africa can be found in the arguments on what constitutes rationality in intervention and foreign policy behaviour, as well as their conflict intervention roles in Africa. For Nigeria, its foreign policy orientation is not only deeply rooted in its 1960, 1979, and 1999 constitutions,896 but also influenced by its leadership preferences and idiosyncrasies. A worthy example of the manifestation of leadership preferences in Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour is the Gowon regimes’ severance of diplomatic relations with Israel, over the latter’s support for the secessionist ambition of Eastern Nigeria during its civil war of 1967-1970.897

Similarly, we have seen how General Babangida’s 898 desire to create an image of “a fearless, brave and great leader” whose memory he had hoped would remain indelible in Nigeria’s

895 Ibid., p.39.
898 General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida was Nigeria’s Military ruler and self-declared President between August 27, 1985 and August 27, 1993. He came into power following the overthrow of the regime of Major General Muhammad Buhari in a palace coup on August 27, 1985. He relinquished power to an interim National Government.
contemporary history, became a motivating factor for Nigeria’s involvement and subsequent intervention in Liberia between 1990 and 1997. In response to the claim that a state’s behaviour is conditioned by its relative position in the balance of power, Robert Powell has offered a useful theoretical debate on why states strive to maintain a balance of power by all means necessary within their region. In his observation, Powell notes that the division between two of the most influential approaches to the study of international relations (neoliberal institutionalism and structural realism) is traceable to the importance attached to absolute and relative gains by both schools of thought. Neoliberal institutionalists focus primarily on the gains that states can achieve through participation in institutions, and these gains are conceived as absolute gains.

Rational actors, they assume, strive to maximise whatever they can get from interaction with others, irrespective of whether those gains are relatively more or less than others. Neoliberals thus claim that “whether cooperation results in a relative gain or loss is not very important to a state so long as it brings an absolute gain”. International relations is not a zero-sum game, neoliberals argue. Structural realists emphasise that the assessment of “relative gains” is what drives state behaviour, and that international politics indeed is a zero-sum activity. In light of this, states have to compete with each other to increase their relative positions of power, and it is the balance of power that brings stability to the system. Present allies, motivated by the pursuit

headed by Mr. Ernest Shonekan on August 27, 1993 following the hostilities which greeted his annulment of the Presidential election of June 12, 1993.


899 Ibid., p.1303.

901 Ibid., p.1303.

902 Ibid., p.1303.

903 Ibid., p.1303.
of greater relative gains, might thus turn out to be enemies in the future. The unwitting pursuit of cooperation may thus harm the state in its attempt to maximise its relative position.  

In reality, states always monitor each other’s relative standing, even during the honeymoon period of bilateral relations. In line with this, and regardless of the absolute gains, a smaller relative gain can be regarded as a loss for states, because the real world is too complicated to be explained by absolute or relative gains alone. Thus, according to Powell, cooperation is feasible only when the cost of doing so is less than the cost of pursuing competition. On the other hand, “when the cost of using force is sufficiently low that the use of force actually is at issue, cooperative outcomes that offer unequal absolute gains cannot be supported as part of an equilibrium even though the states’ preferences are defined only over their absolute level of economic welfare”. Realists tend to be pessimistic, therefore, and argue that it is much harder to achieve and maintain cooperation than assumed by liberals.

The concept of relative gain (or relative power), when operationalised in the context of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Africa, offers us some useful insights. Of course, one has to keep in mind that the theoretical conception of structural realism operates at a very high level of abstraction, complicating its application to explain the specific behaviour of specific states in specific contexts. Therefore, we also emphasise the importance of domestic factors such as leadership characteristics and domestic power struggles. Nevertheless, the case studies examined in chapters four and six, suggest that the interventions of both South Africa and Nigeria were driven, at least partly, by the desire (of their leaderships) to enhance their nation’s relative power position vis a vis other actors.

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906 Ibid., p.1304.
907 Ibid., p.1304.
In the case of Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone, Sani Abacha had a point to prove to an international community which had ostracised his government owing to its gross human rights violation and record at home. The Sierra Leonean intervention thus provided Abacha an opportunity to not only demonstrate to the rest of the world what Nigeria was capable of as a state with relative power and capabilities in its subregion, but also his relative power pursuit as a leader who had an ‘axe to grind’ with an international community which had written him off. By the same token, South Africa’s intervention in Lesotho in 1998 does not bear the same weight as its intervention in the DRC (1997-2005). Again, the stakes appear different, and there was no dissenting opinion from any subregional power over the latter’s intervention in Lesotho.

This essentially implies that South Africa had no competition in the exercise of its relative power over “little Lesotho,” both in terms of size and population. In the DRC however, South Africa appears to have a greater point to prove, in view of the relative interest shown in the conflict by equally powerful neighbours like Zimbabwe, Angola, and Botswana. Thus in the DRC, South Africa saw an avenue to announce to its neighbours in particular, and the international community that it was prepared to assume the regional leadership position that apartheid had denied it. Structural realists would thus argue that South Africa’s intervention in the DRC was a demonstration of its relative power and capabilities in a region where it had been considered missing in action.

As Waltz noted, “in the anarchy of international politics, relative gain is more important than absolute gain”.908 Moreover, with respect to South African and Nigerian intervention, in terms of relative gains, only counterparts matter, just as boxers at different levels cannot compete in the same match. As highlighted above, and as structural realists tend to argue, Nigeria and South Africa could be seen as aspiring dominant powers in their regions, thus to make sure that they have more scope to pursue their interests, however these are defined.

Notably, such a pursuit of relative power dominance may lead to hubris, which might lead an aspiring regional hegemon to take on more than it can successfully handle, as in the case of South Africa in the DRC. Or it can make the aspiring state to act in ways that lead to resentment on the part of its neighbours, who themselves are concerned – if structural realism is correct – about their relative gains. To be successful “leaders”, aspiring regional hegemons need followers, and the unbridled pursuit of relative gains by the aspiring hegemon, in ignorance of, or in disregard for the interests of its neighbours, may undermine, as Nigeria’s Sani Abacha and Thabo Mbeki, as exemplified in our country case studies.

In more general terms, structural realism also helps us to understand the evolution of South Africa’s foreign policy, particularly when viewed from the perspective of its engagements with the rest of the world. For example, the post-1994 South African leadership advanced the idea of carving for itself “an active and leading role” in developing and strengthening multilateral forums that would “empower the nations of the South.”909 A structural realist interpretation of the Mbeki administration’s foreign policy behaviour suggests that South Africa was trying to strengthen its relative power position in the region, by exploiting the potential created by its “special” normative position.

By taking advantage of its normative standing in the world, something that post-apartheid South Africa is never tired of reiterating, Mbeki, and also the Zuma leadership, attempted to reinforce its leadership position in a sub-region where countries like Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Angola are also potential regional leaders. Of course, as we will point out below, one should not necessarily reduce South Africa’s normative claims to being instrument in a zero-sum power game. As constructivism points out, such normative factors can be seen as expressions of a deep-seated identity conception, which in turn, can shape the interests and behaviour of a state.

The instrumental use of normative claims was also evident in the Mbeki’s administration’s support for an “African renaissance styled philosophy”, and the maintenance of a foreign policy behaviour described by Landsberg as South Africa’s “quiet diplomacy of liberation”, during the Zimbabwe crisis of 2008.\textsuperscript{910} Mbeki’s leadership preference and idiosyncrasy was equally reflected in his perceived strong dose of anti-imperialism to South Africa’s affinity for the South, having classified the nations of the world as “the dominant and the dominated”, based on the unequal distribution of political, economic, military, technological and social power.\textsuperscript{911} Worth noting also is South Africa’s commitment (as evident under the Mandela, Mbeki, and Zuma administrations) to what Geldenhuys styled as “Southernism or Southern internationalism”.\textsuperscript{912}

For example, former President Zuma once noted that South Africa remains “indebted to countries and governments of the South for their support in the past.”\textsuperscript{913} This explains why past and successive ANC governments have always acknowledged this solidarity by: (1) bestowing state recognition on these foreign leaders, (2) exchanging top-level visits, and expanding economic and other bilateral ties, and (3) refusing to criticise their old allies for human rights violations and other undemocratic practices.\textsuperscript{914} While constructivists will argue that South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour as noted above highlights the identity-determining-interests character it exhibits in the course of its engagement with the rest of the world, structural realists will argue that such foreign policy behaviour is a calculated attempt by the South African leadership to maximise its relative power within a region which its apartheid past had denied it.

In establishing a correlation between the notion that “states seek power and calculate interests in terms of power not relative to the nature of the international system, but relative to other

\textsuperscript{913} Ibid., p.34.
\textsuperscript{914} Ibid., p.34.
significant actors in the system/sub-system,“\(^915\) and the intervention roles of Nigeria and South Africa, emphasis is placed on the interplay between the primacy of the national interest and foreign policy articulation. Both countries have advanced the protection of the national interest as a cardinal objective of their foreign policy; but as structural realists point out, these interests are perceived in relative terms, not absolute ones.\(^916\) By making the protection of the national interest a key objective of their foreign policy therefore, Nigeria and South Africa are acting along the argument made by Waltz that, given the anarchic nature of the international system, there is no system-wide authority to serve as a peace enforcement agent.\(^917\)

This awareness subsequently confers on them the role of principal actors in the international system, allows them to “set the terms of the intercourse”, particularly the decision on when to (or not to) monopolise the “legitimate use of force”\(^918\) within their territories, and bestows on them the authority to conduct their foreign policy in a “single voice”.\(^919\) While exercising this authority, it is important to mention that there is a high “possibility that force will be used by one or another of the parties, because, force is said to be the ultima ratio in politics. International politics force serves not only as the ultima ratio, but as the first and constant one”.\(^920\) A classic example in this regard is Nigeria’s response to the South African Armed Forces invasion of Southern Angola in 1988.\(^921\)


\(^918\) Ibid., Pp.96-104.


Not only did Nigeria grant formal recognition to the “Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola” (MPLA),\textsuperscript{922} it also provided military and technical support to the Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola (FAPLA),\textsuperscript{923} and embarked on an aggressive and concerted diplomatic effort among OAU member states to support the MPLA government.\textsuperscript{924} Consequently, and through Angola, Nigeria asserted its authority, and protected its interest in an international political environment which was polarised along the East and West. In what could pass as a structural realist explanation of Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour, Gowon\textsuperscript{925} in his good will message to Angola in 1975, had pledged Nigeria’s commitment to the total liberation of the whole of Africa.\textsuperscript{926} Nigeria, as Gowon argues, will not fold its hands to see the people of Angola subjugated, exploited, and recolonized by the racist and imperialist South Africa and its supporters.\textsuperscript{927}

Continuing further, Gowon added “our national interest has been made quite clear; which is the need for the liberation of Angola and Africa. The federal military government has made a determined effort to pursue what it considers the correct line of action, and it is gratifying to see the extent of national consensus and agreement on this subject”.\textsuperscript{928} The above, when considered from the standpoint of structural realism, suggests that intervening in Angola for Nigeria remained a continuation of its desire to project its relative power (through its support for the

\textsuperscript{922} The MPLA was founded in 1956 as a Marxist party with a strong following in the Angolan capital, Luanda. It was led by Augustine Neto until his death and later by Eduardo dos Santos. The MPLA commenced military operations against the Portuguese in 1963.


\textsuperscript{924} Ibid., p.8.

\textsuperscript{925} General Yakubu Gowon was Head of State and Supreme Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria from 1966 to 1975. He is credited for maintaining the unity and progress of Nigeria, despite the secessionist bid for the Eastern region in 1967, and for his campaign of unity and togetherness through his policy of Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation after the war.


\textsuperscript{927} Ibid., p.8.

\textsuperscript{928} Ibid., p.8.
MPLA) vis à vis other African contenders, such as apartheid South Africa, and against external rivals, such as the United States of America, Consequently, Nigeria’s involvement in Angola was considered not only a matter of necessity, but also an avenue for Nigeria to announce to the rest of the world (having just emerged from a civil war in 1967) that it still wielded sufficient leverage in African politics, as well as possessed the required wherewithal to confront any imperialist tendency and/or encroachment on Africa.

Other than the Angolan case, Nigeria has equally intervened in a numerous conflicts in Africa in furtherance of its Afrocentric foreign policy drive, (and) and in demonstration of its commitment to African unity, most of which align with the structural realist “primacy of the national interest” explanation for intervening in conflicts. In Sierra Leone for example, a structural realist explanation of Nigeria’s role can be interpreted with a number of decisions taken by the Abacha junta. The first was Abacha’s decision to use the conflict to further his country’s Pax Nigeriana philosophy which essentially sought to advance Nigeria’s historic quest for hegemony in West Africa. Second, is the argument in some circles that Abacha employed the ECOMOG mission to ward off threats of severe international sanctions against his regime in the wake of the execution of the “Ogoni 9”.

Lastly, it has been argued that Abacha’s decision to intervene in Sierra Leone represents an attempt to break the diplomatic isolation imposed on his junta by the West. By intervening in Sierra Leone therefore, Abacha sought to achieve an important objective: demonstrate his regimes’ indispensability to peacekeeping in a region where the West was wary of being drawn

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929 The Ogoni Nine were a group of nine activists from the Ogoni region of Nigeria, including outspoken author and playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa, Saturday Dobee, Nordu Eawo, Daniel Gbooko, Paul Levera, Felix Nuate, Baribor Bera, Barinem Kiobel, and John Kpuine who were executed by hanging in 1995 by the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha and buried in Port Harcourt Cemetery. The executions provoked international condemnation and led to the increasing treatment of Nigeria as a pariah state until General Abacha's mysterious death in 1998. Saro-Wiwa had previously been a critic of the Royal Dutch Shell oil corporation, and had been imprisoned for a year prior to the executions in November 1995. At least two witnesses who testified that Saro-Wiwa was involved in the murders of the Ogoni elders later recanted, stating that they had been bribed with money and offers of jobs with Shell to give false testimony – in the presence of Shell’s lawyer.
into humanitarian intervention, and by so doing, break the diplomatic isolation constricting his regime. Abacha’s decision to bring Nigeria’s full weight to bear in Sierra Leone was therefore based on his desire to protect his personal interest, and use the avenue to launder his plummeting image given his government’s poor human rights record at home.

These motives highlight the centrality of interests in the structural realists’ explanation for intervening in a conflict. Bears mentioning that successive Nigerian governments had earlier advanced the crucial role which national interests play in its foreign policy articulation and intervention roles:

...the style of the Nigerian Foreign policy today is therefore determined largely by these two unambiguously articulated factors: African solidarity and an unflinching adherence to the principles of non-alignment. Nigeria’s new posturing has emerged as a realistic approach to the prevailing structure and condition of the international community.930

Similarly, South Africa has demonstrated its willingness and readiness to exert its influence in the balance of power politics in Africa on a number of occasions. First, South Africa alongside Nigeria was, and is still, very instrumental to the gradual success recorded by the African Union to foster active economic integration through its New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) initiative.931 The country was very pivotal in the processes which led to the signing of the Arusha Accord932 by the Tutsi and Hutu leadership in Burundi in 2000,933 and in the peace

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932 The Arusha Accord signalled the end of mediation between the Tutsis and the Hutu’s in Burundi, following the outbreak of hostilities in 2003. Former President Nelson Mandela took over the mediatory efforts after the death of the Chief mediator, and former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere.
keeping efforts in the DRC in 1997. Additionally, South Africa was instrumental to the political settlement of the Zimbabwean post-election violence of 2008, played a key role in the resolution of the constitutional crisis in Lesotho in 1998, where it deployed “boots” on the ground, and sent troops to Ivory Coast in 2003 in the wake of that country’s political unrest. The utility of the application of structural realism to South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour, as noted above, thus helps us understand the country’s attempt at maximising its relative power as a regional hegemon ahead of rivals like Zimbabwe, Angola, and Zambia, who are equally members of the SADC.

Ostensibly motivated by the need to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Sudan’s Darfur region, the South African government in 2004 also deployed limited troops to Sudan, as part of the African Union (AU) Peace monitors, and to the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2013. What these explications suggest is that when situated within the structural realist precinct of the pursuit of power and the calculation of interests in terms of power, South Africa, has demonstrated its resolve and desire, particularly within its sub-region, to remain relevant by being a key player in issues happening around its region. South Africa, through former President Mbeki, has never minced words about its leadership aspirations and the country’s readiness to be a major actor in African and world politics.

According to Mbeki, South Africa must not “allow the fact of the independence of each one of our countries to turn us into spectators when crimes against the people are being committed... We will have to proceed from the position that we are each our brothers and sisters’ keeper”. A structural realist interpretation of Mbeki’s declaration as highlighted above, reminds us of the political statements statesmen make in an attempt to disguise their actual pursuit of power, whose end goal is to maximise the relative power of their states. Structural realism, as employed here, therefore makes us rightfully sceptical about the high moral claims of state leaders, and provides us with an opportunity to see their foreign policies for what these policies really are: attempts to increase their relative power in an anarchic world. However, eclecticism warns us that this may close our eyes to what social constructivism emphasises, that is, leaders may, at the same time, be expressing an identity conception which in its own right can shape how leaders perceive their state’s interests.

Mbeki’s statement reflects a struggle to articulate an emerging identity conception of a state that emerged from a difficult past and is now confronted with expectations that it should play a leading normative role. But while structural realism alerts us that the pursuit of relative gains may be behind such normatively-clad role conceptions, constructivism warns that the reality of foreign policy cannot be reduced to the pursuit of relative power alone. Similarly, South Africa, through its Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), reaffirmed the present and future role it intends to play in Africa and on the international scene when it declared that “the future of South Africa is inextricably linked to the future of the African continent, and that Africa will continue to remain the central area of focus in the conduct of its foreign policy.”

From the above, it appears evident that the overarching goal for South Africa is to remain a force to reckon with in Africa, by carving a niche and an image for itself, through the use of Africa as the cornerstone of its pursuit of relative power. By this, South Africa will most likely be a major

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beneficiary of the popular maxim: “he who pays the piper dictates the tune”, and consequently strive to project its international standing and status in the comity of nations. However, a major shortcoming of the structural realist perspective is that it does not sufficiently explain other specific interests which a state actor protects, considers non-negotiable and willing to defend if and when threatened.

These specific interests are what Waltz941 identified as: self-help which is aimed at ensuring the survival of the state, based on the pursuit of relative power in competition with contenders, and statism, and survival—three essential components on which the structural realism thesis is premised. However, before going into their specifics, it is useful to examine why structural realists consider the three assumptions of classical realism as insufficient in explaining a state’s behaviour. A plausible explanation for this has been given by Kenneth Waltz, when he argued that, “each state pursues its own interests in ways it judges best, and force is a means of achieving the external ends of states because there is no consistent, reliable process of reconciling the conflict of interests that inevitably arise among similar units in a condition of anarchy”.942

What the above suggests is that “even well-intentioned statesmen always find that they must use or threaten to use force to sustain their objectives.”943 By intervening in Sierra Leone (1991-1998), and in the DRC (1997-2005) respectively, Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour, when situated within the framework of Waltz’s thesis on relative power, evinces that both countries employed a range of means, including the need to protect the national interest to pursue their relative power positions. These “interests” for Nigeria would be the need to fulfil its obligation(s) as a frontline state in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) by ensuring relative peace in Sierra Leone.

This “relative peace,” in the final analysis is expected to lead to greater security of the lives and property of Sierra Leoneans, facilitate economic development in the country, and by extension, the West African sub-region in line with the ECOWAS mandate. The same logic applies to South Africa, which by virtue of its standing (as a major bloc) in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has a responsibility to ensure relative peace in the DRC, and to guarantee a favourable economic and political climate within the Southern African bloc. Regardless of the above, the real insight of structural realism is that, despite the high-sounding rhetoric state leaders use to justify their actions, their overarching interest is to maximise their relative power in an anarchic system, because it is a self-help system.

This means that even humanitarian intervention, which could otherwise be seen as altruistic, must be understood in terms of its role in the pursuit of relative power. Indeed, in Sierra Leone, between 1991 and 1998, it could be argued that Nigeria saw its intervention not only as an opportunity to establish its hegemonic presence within the sub-region, but also as an avenue to boost its popularity and reputation on the international scene, using the ECOWAS (the single structure of power in West Africa) as a premise. As argued in chapter five, Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone appears motivated by three main factors—security, political, and economic considerations.

From the security perspective, Nigeria’s intervention in the conflict was executed under the auspices of the activities of ECOMOG. As in other conflicts within the sub-region, Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone, is deeply rooted in the guiding philosophy behind the formation of ECOWAS, particularly, the need to: (1) limit the ripple effects of the wars in both countries; (2) protect the West African people against mass atrocities; and (3) to relieve any humanitarian suffering in member countries.944 The Nigerian leadership had hoped to use the ECOWAS platform to expand its sphere of influence within West Africa. Nigeria believes that through

economic unity, the West African sub-region will get closer to political unity, and that the enthronement of economic and political stability in member states will greatly enhance its regional security.

In Sierra Leone therefore, Nigeria utilised ECOMOG as a tool for responding to West Africa’s notoriety as a hotbed of political, economic and social agitation, and a means to counter the growth of insurgent and revolutionary movements often supported by economically marginalised youths and estranged members of the elite. In line with structural realist arguments, Nigeria has fulfilled two major principles identified by Taliaferro et al. and Gilpin as crucial to realism. The first is, the notion that human beings cannot survive as individuals, but rather as members of larger groups that command their loyalty and provide some measure of security from external enemies. ECOWAS, and more specifically, ECOMOG, represents this larger group, and its deployment to Sierra Leone was to provide some measure of security to member states who share borders with Sierra Leone.

The second assumption, according to Gilpin, holds that “power is a necessary requirement for any group to secure its goals, regardless of whether those goals are universal domination or simply self-preservation”. Through ECOWAS, Nigeria galvanised support from member states, and translated it to power through the deployment of ECOMOG forces in Sierra Leone, with a view to ensuring the collective existence of the institution. Similarly, Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone confirms the argument by structural realists that, in taking the foreign policy decision of whether or not to intervene in a conflict, “ideology, form of government, peacefulness, or bellicosity” matters less in the scheme of things”, what does is the

“distribution of power capabilities” as a state can choose to intervene in a conflict in furtherance of its pursuit for relative power.948

In Sierra Leone, Nigeria’s national interest was linked to the critical issue of guaranteeing security for its member states, and by extension, their prosperity through the enthronement of peace and stability because Sierra Leone, as well as Nigeria, is a member of ECOWAS. The Sierra Leonean conflict episode thus presented Nigeria with an opportunity to help protect one of the primary motivations behind the establishment of ECOWAS—ensuring regional integration.949 Consequently, Nigeria’s decision to intervene in Sierra Leone, according to Uzodike, can be argued as being in line with the national interest, if one is to be consistent about the initiatives to secure peace, integrate the economies and ensure economic growth and regional prosperity.950

However, it is instructive to note that despite Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone, being justifiable as a furtherance of Nigeria’s commitment to its Africa-centred foreign policy disposition, there were also several personal/economic interest explanations for its involvement in the conflict. For example, some scholars have noted that Abacha intervened in the conflict to protect his personal economic interest and bolster his plunging image occasioned by his draconian rule at home.951 Intervening in Sierra Leone for Abacha thus presented his junta with the platform to employ the Nigerian Army as an image-building and propaganda machine aimed at convincing the rest of the world, that as chair of the ECOWAS (at that time), Nigeria under his leadership had the resources and capability to maintain peace in West Africa.952

949 Personal communication with Professor Ufo Okeke-Uzodike at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa on 20 May, 2016.
950 Ibid.
952 Ibid., p.80.
Evidence from Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone suggests that its foreign policy articulation, particularly under the Babangida and Abacha regimes, became an instrument of self-accomplishments, and the doctrine of what constitutes its national interest of pursuing the maximising of relative power was determined by leadership idiosyncrasy and personal interpretation of the President. Indeed, it would seem that Nigeria’s commitment to Afro-centrism during this period only mattered as long as it satisfied the “big man” in Abuja. Despite both regimes’ foreign policy articulation intrinsically related to Nigeria’s commitment to its Africa-centred foreign policy principle, its eventual articulation, particularly in conflict resolution within the West African sub-region, leaves the impression of a hegemon trying to assert its authority on its subjects.

A similar narrative played out in Sierra Leone. Nigeria’s unilateral intervention, without recourse to the UN, according to Mortimer, provoked sharp reactions from its neighbours, particularly from the leadership of countries which had strong interpersonal relationship with the RUF leader, Foday Sankoh.\(^{953}\) More than anything else, such overbearing influence arguably earned Nigeria the appellation of a hegemon, which imposed its will on the people of Sierra Leone by deploying its material preponderance and resources. On the contrary however, constructivists would argue that the motivation behind Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone was not necessarily aimed at furthering any hegemonic ambition.

In doing so, they will argue that the mere fact that “anarchies (struggle for power) are necessarily self-help systems, where both central authority and collective security are absent”,\(^{954}\) as claimed by realists, does not suffice as a comprehensive explanation for Nigeria’s intervention. Rather, according to constructivists, self-help only serves as a means of regulating state behaviour and surviving the anarchy in the system because self-help is not seen as an institution that could be


regulated by interaction based on a states’ identity.\textsuperscript{955} On Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone therefore, constructivists will argue that the former intervened based on the collective identity existing between Nigeria and Sierra Leone as members of ECOWAS. To constructivists therefore, Nigeria’s intervention in Sierra Leone serves to demonstrate their claim that identity and state-formation has a system self-regulating tendency and the ability to reduce process to dynamics of behavioural interaction among exogenously constituted actors.\textsuperscript{956}

It is this process, argued by Wendt as “capable of generating cooperative behaviour,”\textsuperscript{957} that led to the ECOWAS/ECOMOG joint intervention, even in an exogenously given self-help system as the Sierra Leone security dilemma suggested. Constructivists would thus conclude that if Nigeria’s intention was to further its hegemonic ambition in Sierra Leone, it would not necessarily have needed an intervention through ECOWAS; it could have done so as a unilateral actor, considering its relative power position in the sub-region. By interpretation, and according to constructivist logic, Nigeria’s decision to intervene through ECOWAS was borne out if its conviction that even though material strengths (hard power) still matter and the people (government) are still intentional actors (state actors), as realists claim,\textsuperscript{958} making ECOWAS the central unit of intervention shows that it is the ideational framework of identity and interests creation that informs the output of the actor to the international system.\textsuperscript{959}

In addition, South Africa has been unequivocal about the place of Africa in its foreign policy objectives, and its leadership have consistently argued that “its views on peace, security and development are inherently linked to that of Africa, and that its policies will remain “pan-Africanist” and “Afro-centric”.”\textsuperscript{960} South Africa’s intervention in the DRC conflict episode

\textsuperscript{955} Ibid., p.392.
\textsuperscript{956} Ibid., p.392.
\textsuperscript{957} Ibid., p.392.
\textsuperscript{959} Ibid., p.193.
appears consistent with this philosophy. South Africa’s involvement was premised mainly along two lines: ensuring internal political stability, and helping with the reconstruction and development of DRC’s security infrastructure and its troops. To achieve the first objective, a total of 6,000 troops was deployed, including another batch from 121 South African Infantry Battalion as part of the United Nations force intervention brigade.961

From a structural realist perspective, South Africa’s intervention could be seen as an attempt to stake its claim to be the regional hegemon in Southern Africa. This pursuit of relative power includes the obligation to provide regional public goods, including stability, otherwise the claim to regional leadership has no validity.962 At inception, South Africa’s behaviour appears consistent with what structural realists would expect of an aspiring regional power, but as the intervention continued, a number of explicitly normative issues gained in importance. These echoes and reinforces the normative self-conception that South Africa has been cultivating since 1994. For example, at the beginning of the crisis, South Africa adopted an ambiguous neutrality posture for peaceful negotiations, as evident in its rejection of Mugabe’s decision to send a Southern African military contingent to rescue the Kabila regime.963

Similarly, Mandela during the first and second Congolese wars, even though Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia used the SADC organ of politics, and defence and security to intervene militarily


on Kabila’s side, Mandela, as SADC chairperson, preferred a political solution.\textsuperscript{964} South Africa’s foreign policy players had in fact maintained that “that there is no military solution possible, and that the focus must be on how to bring a political solution to conflicts in Africa”.\textsuperscript{965} More along these lines, South Africa’s self-conception of a nation built on peace, was reflected in the specific role it played in the peace negotiations. South Africa’s decision to play this role is believed to be in tandem with her foreign policy, which according to Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, is based on the “values and principles enshrined in our constitution, notably human dignity, the achievement of equity, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy and respect for the rule of law.”\textsuperscript{966}

South Africa’s recognition of this role was informed by a number of factors. First, a belief that South Africa is indebted to the rest of Africa, following the latter’s role in bringing an end to apartheid.\textsuperscript{967} Second is the evolving nature of conflicts and security challenges in Africa, and the need to help in ending the menace. Lastly is, South Africa’s unique experience in conflict management which led to its peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy.\textsuperscript{968} South Africa thus went into the DRC to fulfil one of its long standing foreign policy objectives—to contribute to peace, security, stability and post-conflict reconstruction initiatives in Africa.\textsuperscript{969}

Having consistently maintained that there was no military solution to the conflict, except a political solution,\textsuperscript{970} and despite its involvement in the AU and UN-led peacekeeping efforts, South Africa intervened in the DRC crisis in five critical areas: (1) negotiating peaceful

\textsuperscript{964} Ibid., p.243.
\textsuperscript{965} Ibid., p.246.
\textsuperscript{968} Ibid., p.7.
\textsuperscript{970} Ibid., p.246.
agreements between the belligerents/warring-parties through its involvement in the Lusaka and Sun City Accords; (2) its support for the formation of inclusive transitional governments; (3) making peacekeepers available to support this transition process; (4) the logistic support it availed the electoral commission to ensure a smooth democratic process, and; (5) its commitment to the implementation of post-conflict reconstruction/peacebuilding programmes that concentrate on rebuilding state institutions and infrastructure in the DRC.  

South Africa’s intervention mechanism in the conflict, as highlighted above, was premised on its 1998 White Paper document, which affirmed that it shall provide an appropriate contribution to multilateral intervention efforts globally, particularly under the auspices of supra-national institutions it is signatory to. The 2008 White Paper notes further that “in principle, the level and size of South Africa’s contribution to any particular peace mission will depend on how closely the mission relates to national interests and the type of demand that exists for South Africa’s contributions”. In the DRC, therefore, an appropriate contribution, as Malan argues, meant “maximum contribution possible under the circumstance”.  

Arguably, South Africa’s approach to the DRC conflict was essentially that of peacemaking, rather than a demonstration of its relative power preponderance through the use of force. By taking up the onerous task of negotiating peace among the warring parties, South Africa appears to have challenged the rationalist assumptions on the unchanging reality of international politics, in particular, the argument that anarchy is an inevitable feature of international reality, arguing instead that it is “what States Make of it”. In the DRC, South Africa’s role, and the outcome of its intervention, appears to have confirmed Wendt’s claim that “power politics,” (quest for the

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973 Ibid., p.2.
974 Ibid., p.2
control over natural resources in DRC) are social constructions given by nature, and are not static because they could be changed as a result of human practice, (as we saw in the negotiations and the accords which South Africa spearheaded), given the dynamic nature of social reality.\textsuperscript{976}

By opting for negotiations as a means of resolving the conflict, South Africa’s action seems to confirm the constructivists’ contention that self-help and power politics, “do not follow either logically or casually from anarchy, and if we the world finds itself in a self-help situation, it is due to process, not structure”.\textsuperscript{977} Remarkably, South Africa’s intervention in the DRC is, in itself, an expression of the type of identity it shares with the DRC (given its membership of the Southern African Development Community) and the extent to which such identity shaped the environment (Southern Africa sub-region) in which it operates as a major player. Having just emerged from a “long sabbatical” in international politics due to apartheid, the DRC conflict episode provided a veritable platform for South Africa to announce to its neighbours and the rest of the world that it was no longer going to be business as usual, and that it was ready to occupy its place as a formidable force in Southern Africa politics, using the DRC conflict episode as a launch pad.

For Nigeria, while it has arguably never imposed its will on others, despite the soft and hard power resources at its disposal, its foreign policy behaviour continues to be guided by the struggle for relative power at the international and regional level. This foreign policy posture was perhaps informed by its long history of military dictatorship (1966 and 1979 and 1983 to 1999), which saw Nigeria run by military fiat. It seems apparent therefore that the need to protect Nigeria and South Africa’s national interest in Sierra Leone and the DRC, and maintain a balance of power within the West African and Southern African sub-regions could pass as a structural realist explanation for Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in both conflict episodes. While the reasons mentioned above offer us some

\textsuperscript{976} Ibid., p.391.
\textsuperscript{977} Ibid., p.392.
insights into the usefulness of structural realism in understanding Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and intervention roles in Sierra Leone and the DRC conflict episodes and, as we will see below, only provides a partial understanding.

8.3 Constructivism, identity, and Nigerian and South African foreign policy behaviour and intervention role in Africa

It is imperative to note that our exploration of the link between identity and Nigerian and South African foreign policy behaviour in this section is not a rehash of what has been said about both countries’ foreign policy behaviour in Africa, but to show how the interpretation of their interventions is not limited to structural realist insights alone. In particular, given the primacy that social constructivism places on identity and the social norms associated with it, we have to ask how an appreciation of the role of identity formation and identity affirmation can enrich our understanding of these states’ foreign policy behaviour in conflicts in Africa. In answering this question, we should keep in mind that, useful though it is, social constructivism may be more relevant in elucidating one state’s behaviour than another’s.

Constructivism is useful in analysing South Africa’s foreign policy, given the large role that a self-conception of moral exceptionalism has played in its behaviour since the official demise of apartheid.\footnote{Van Wyk, J. (2004). “South Africa’s post-apartheid foreign policy: A constructivist analysis”. Politeia, 23(3), Pp.103-136.} In contrast to structural realism, which would tend to regard normative claims made by state leaders as instruments that they use to bolster and justify their pursuit of relative power (their actual interests), constructivists see identity as a causal force in its own right, determining the interests being pursued. In the case of South Africa, for instance, constructivists would argue that we have to take the normative claims of Mandela, Mbeki and others seriously, as they give us insights into the emerging self-conception of a nation.
Constructivism is important for other reasons as well. First, constructivism helps in explaining change, by focusing on the power of ideas (such as ideas, norms and values) in defining ranges of action and interaction. Second, by focusing on the importance of identity in international politics, constructivism highlights that states have interests beyond mere material power gains. And lastly, through its focus on the mutually reinforcing relationship between an actor’s interests, identity, and behaviour, constructivism contributes to a fuller understanding of the nature of international politics and the place of states in it. In the real world of international politics, beyond the parsimonious modelling that structural realism applies, ideational concerns and the construction of inter-subjectively shared meanings eventually constitute international relations as a social world.⁹⁷⁹

In South Africa’s case, these constructivist premises are particularly relevant in trying to understand the country’s foreign policy post-apartheid.⁹⁸⁰ They noted that the context of “a double transition”⁹⁸¹ within which the “new South Africa” emerged, has shaped the country into ‘who it is, what it wants, and how it behaved’.⁹⁸² Van Wyk argues, for example, that South Africa’s transition from a “pariah state” to democracy in April 1994, meant that lessons learnt from its chequered apartheid, will continue to shape the course of its interaction with the rest of the world.⁹⁸³ This realisation by South Africa appears to be in consonance with the constructivist’s argument that an actor shapes its own social context (of shared values and norms) in terms of its identity conception, which in turn shapes the interests and behaviour of

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⁹⁸¹ South Africa’s double transition period refers to its graduation from authoritarianism under apartheid rule to democracy in 1994, and from a controlled or command economy to a market system more or less in line with the exigencies of globalisation.
⁹⁸² Ibid., p.105.
that same actor. These, through a feedback-loop, feeds back into the actor’s identity conception.\textsuperscript{984}

Analysts have noted that constructivism appears very useful in understanding South Africa’s post-apartheid foreign policy in the sense that its “double transition” created the context within which its norms, identity, interests, and interactions, were reconstructed.\textsuperscript{985} Naturally, the identity self-conception that emerged after the end of apartheid was heavily influenced by the sorrowful history of apartheid. The newly emerged identity conception was not necessarily fully formed from the outset, but is still a work in progress, and is still hotly contested by different interest groups in the new South Africa.

Two examples to illustrate the above: (1) The notion of “moral exceptionalism” as reflected in a several documents, and specifically in the notion of “Ubuntu” as the leading normative core of South Africa’s public policy (2011 White Paper). (2) To give effect to a new post-apartheid self-conception, a number of initiatives designed to align South Africa with new global realities were initiated, including the establishment of a South African National Defence Force (SANDF)—composed largely of members of the “Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK),” the Azanian People’s Organisation (AZAPO), among others.\textsuperscript{986} The effect of the personnel transformation of the SANDF to reflect South Africa’s new identity has also meant that the central focus of the SANDF post-apartheid has to be prioritised.

This among others, focused on the embracement of a more radical self-defence posture, renewed commitment to peacekeeping, and humanitarian relief operations,\textsuperscript{987} and the engagement of the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{984} Ibid., Pp.103-105.
\textsuperscript{985} Ibid., p.105.
\textsuperscript{986} Ibid., p.105.
\textsuperscript{987} Schraeder, P.J. (2001). “South Africa’s foreign Policy. From international pariah to the leader of the African Renaissance”. The Round Table, p.359.
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SANDF, as a tool for advancing its peace and security agenda in Africa. In Nigeria’s case, right from independence in 1960, successive Nigerian leaders have maintained the age-long belief that Nigeria holds a historic mission and manifest destiny to lead the rest of Africa on account of its huge socio-political and economic resources and importance to Africa. Nigeria’s identity is thus premised on its decolonisation struggles and its military-styled dictatorship which shaped its statehood shortly after independence in 1960.

This development perhaps informs the active role Nigeria played in the Congo in 1960, when it deployed troops under the United Nations Organisation (UNO) supervised peace keeping mission, and its membership of supra-national institutions such as the OAU in 1967, and later ECOWAS in 1975. By joining these regional and international organisations, Nigeria has demonstrated a sense of collective identity by committing to, and identifying with sub regional, regional and international peacekeeping commitments, and has fulfilled the three basic functions which Tajfel ascribes to identity—tells you and others who you are and it also tells you who others are.

Hopf has helped shed more light on the identity-themed nature of Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour, when he argued that the producer of an identity “is not in control of what it ultimately means to others, rather, it is the inter-subjective structure, which serves as the final arbiter of meaning”. Nigeria has an identity within the ECOWAS bloc which its leadership is not in control of, and which can only be measured by the level of support and reciprocity it garners from member states when a need for a common action arises. Put differently, and going by the

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same logic of Hopf’s explanation, Nigeria’s intervention in Liberia, and Sierra Leone can be likened to its reciprocation and recognition of the historical, political and social identity Nigeria shares with these countries through the ECOWAS bloc.

Also, Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour, by virtue of its role as a member of the Frontline states during decolonisation and anti-apartheid struggles in Africa, illustrates the constructivist argument that a state’s process of interaction within the international system is premised on the type of self-conceptualised identity the state has based on its historical experiences and the context the environment or realm it operates. In other words, by identifying with countries striving to break away from colonialism in Africa, and southern African countries battling apartheid, Nigeria discovered and displayed a sense of cross-national solidarity, shared aspiration, and a sense of collective identity with countries reeling under the shackles of oppression.

Furthermore, as if to echo its very existence as a newly independent state that graduated from the shackles of colonialism, Nigeria became a champion of the right to self-determination and the sovereign equality of all African states. To the structural realist sceptic, this may look like just another ideological mask behind which Nigeria hides its power ambitions, but, clearly, more is at play here. Through actively pursuing the normative goal of self-determination, based on its own experience, Nigeria contributed to the precipitation and solidifying of a shared African identity, which gave birth, in turn, to specific national interests that are pursued internationally. Nigeria identified with other countries to adopt resolution “UNGA 1960”, which vigorously advocated the independence of countries reeling under colonialism at that time.

Nigeria’s identification with these initiatives is a pointer to the collective identity-themed focus of its foreign policy behaviour at independence. And by extension, the raison d’être for the financial support it gave to liberation movements such as: the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA), the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), and the South
West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO) in Namibia. Equally, Nigeria’s support for, and membership of, several multilateral institutions such as the United Nations (UN), Commonwealth of Nations, Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), World Bank, and African Development Bank (ADB), is testament to the role which identity plays in shaping its foreign policy behaviour.

Nigeria’s membership of these institutions reaffirm its belief that distortions in the international system can be resolved through established mechanisms, as seen in the role it played in facilitating the institutionalisation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). By the same logic, the subscription of Nigeria to a foreign policy principle which recognises and respects the territorial sovereignty of states, respect civilised rules of interaction in its engagement with the rest of the world, and a general commitment to internationally-agreed mechanisms of resolving conflicts, suggests that structural realism as an IR approach cannot fully explain Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour, given that these commitments are built around the notion of collective identity.

Similarly, Nigeria, as a foreign policy objective, believes in the promotion of international cooperation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations, and in the elimination of discrimination in all manifestations. This collective-identity-themed philosophy has been reinforced in the numerous collaborative and cooperative engagements Nigeria has entered with governmental and non-governmental international organisations in seeking collective solutions to global problems. This is evident, for example, in its involvement in the enactment of the Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance of Defence (1981), its sponsorship of the Technical Aid Corps (TAC), the activation of the ECOWAS Protocol on

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993 The Technical Aid Corps is a human resources exchange programme which encourages the deployment of Nigerian professionals to African countries with shortage of skilled labour and human capacity

For South Africa, the relevant literature suggests that South Africa’s foreign policy orientation since the demise of apartheid in 1994 has been premised on the need to create a new identity for itself in its engagement with the rest of the world.  

For example, Van Wyk, has explained the consistency of South Africa’s post-1994 foreign policy behaviour along: Wendts’ claim that “state identity are constructed and not made”; Kratochwil’s emphasis on the place of “norm and rules” in international relations, and; Onuf’s argument that “words often make the world”. At the same time, though, a sub-strand of this literature to which the current study also belongs, emphasises that we need both a constructivist and a realist perspective to do full justice to what is going on in South Africa’s foreign policy.

Serrão and Bischoff, for instance, argue that while identity remains crucial to understanding South Africa’s foreign policy, a focus on identity alone does not sufficiently explain its foreign policy behaviour, and that a mixed focus, incorporating insights from both constructivist and materialist-based theories of IR, is necessary. Basking in the euphoria of the international goodwill which greeted the demise of apartheid in 1994, South Africa, under Nelson Mandela adopted a universalism-styled foreign policy posture which saw it constructing itself as a friend to all and enemy to none, irrespective of each country’s’ ideological stance. This posture led to

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concerted efforts by the country’s leadership to reconstruct a new national and international identity for itself through its interactions with the international community.

Van Wyk narrates how South Africa’s identity transformation aligns with Wendt’s argument that a state identity is made through interaction and not merely given.\textsuperscript{998} Van Wyk set out by drawing an analogy between the essential roles a state’s identity performs on the international level, and how South Africa’s identity transformation has measured up in this regard.\textsuperscript{999} As Van Wyk noted, by remerging as a champion of human rights and a voice of the South, South Africa demonstrates one of the core functions of identity—telling you and others who you are,\textsuperscript{1000} by refocusing its foreign policy from a hitherto protectionist orientation under apartheid, towards achieving domestic growth and a better life for all South Africans, thus fulfilling the foreign policy driving force role, which a state identity performs.\textsuperscript{1001}

Equally, South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour, through its self-proclaimed responsibility to promote an “agenda of the South”, “a rules-based international trading regime”, and its active engagement in international peace and security issues, has demonstrated what its motivations, intentions, preferences, and consequent interactions are within the international community, and this remains a core function of what a state identity does.\textsuperscript{1002} Similarly, South Africa’s multilateral foreign policy approach, and its emergence as a middle power, have led it to actively identify with various initiatives such as the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR), and the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa Cooperation (BRICS), and confirmed its foreign policy consistency with predictable patterns of behaviour, actions and interactions often identified with a states’ identity.\textsuperscript{1003} South Africa, like other states whose foreign policy behaviour aligns with

\textsuperscript{998} Ibid., p.107. \\
\textsuperscript{999} Ibid., p.107. \\
\textsuperscript{1000} Ibid., p.107. \\
\textsuperscript{1001} Ibid., p.107. \\
\textsuperscript{1002} Ibid., p.107. \\
\textsuperscript{1003} Ibid., p.107.
constructivist thinking, has over the years constructed for itself multiple identities, synonymous to the essential underpinnings of corporate, social and collective types of identity.

In terms of corporate identity, which refers to the reflection of a state’s resources, beliefs, norms, and human capital in its interactions with the rest of the world, scholars have argued that South Africa has demonstrated this by effectively reconstructing its foreign policy and foreign relations in a way that represents the different beliefs of its diverse society, operating in a context of increasing global economic interdependence and by engaging more with global actors and institutions since the demise of apartheid.\textsuperscript{1004} This move led to the recognition of South Africa as an international actor—a status further consolidated by Mandela’s iconic stature and presidency. To project this newly-found image, South Africa adopted multilateralism as a tool for relaunching itself within the international community, and its foreign policy articulation.\textsuperscript{1005}

Understanding the correlation between social identity (defined by Wendt as a set of meanings a state attributes to itself while taking the perspectives of the other into account,\textsuperscript{1006}) and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour requires an acknowledgement of the pivotal role which national interests play in its foreign policy articulation. South Africa’s national interest suggests that its interests define situations, and inform the way it acts and reacts within the international community based on the meaning it ascribes to objects, other actors, and the actions and interactions taking place among them.\textsuperscript{1007} For South Africa, the meaning of social identity, its roles and foreign relations, as Van Wyk contends, is to achieve a better life for all.\textsuperscript{1008} This ambition has been reiterated by its foreign policy decision makers, where its erstwhile Foreign

\textsuperscript{1004} Ibid., p.108.
\textsuperscript{1008} Ibid., p.109.
Affairs Minister, Nkosasana Dlamini–Zuma remarked that the key objective of the Department is “to achieve a better life for South African and a better world for humanity”.\textsuperscript{1009}

This view was re-echoed in the DFA’s “strategic plan for 2002-2005 report”, where the Department noted that “beyond Africa, it is the desire of South Africa to contribute towards the creation of a more equitable and humane world for all of human kind”.\textsuperscript{1010} To achieve this, South Africa undertook a number of remarkable changes in its foreign policy to accommodate its post-1994 identity via its Department of Foreign affairs (now DIRCO) as the implementation machinery. These changes included: (1) promoting a positive image of/for South Africa through the Thabo Mbeki-led International Marketing Council (IMC) initiative,\textsuperscript{1011} and (2) identifying itself as an “equal” and as a partner of African states through the implementation of its commitments, obligations, interests, contributions and benefits of other African states as evidenced in the leadership it has provided in New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD), the Millennium African Plan, the White Paper on South Africa’s foreign policy, titled “Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu among others”.\textsuperscript{1012}

Understandably, South Africa’s attempt towards a foreign policy role conception and redirection appears to be in fulfilment of the social identity role played by a state’s’ foreign policy, described by Holsti as “the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and the functions, if any, their state perform on a continuing basis in the international

\textsuperscript{1011} Mbeki, T. (2001b). “The state of the nation address at the opening of Parliament”. Issued by the Presidency, 8 February, p.4.
To be sure, it has been argued that a state’s role reflects its claim on the international system, and that any foreign policy change rests on a redefinition of a state’s role. For South Africa, its new role definition has helped in explaining its foreign policy preferences, its self-image and the image the world had/has of it, its expectations, definitions of specific situations and the available options it has [to respond to any developing situation].

Consequently, South Africa (post-1994) has reappraised its role prescription and conception within the international community to align with the general expectations of the international community after the demise of apartheid. At the heart of this role change is a move towards greater African solidarity and assuming responsibility. Some of these notable role changes, according to Barber, have seen South Africa: (1) adopt an aggressive image rebuilding measure which has helped in improving its relationship with the rest of the world; (2) become a middle power with an ability to consistently generate successful initiatives at regional, bilateral and multi-lateral levels, as evidenced in its personnel landmine and bloody diamond campaigns, otherwise known as the Kimberley and Ottawa process, and its voluntary nuclear disarmament.

While the concept of a “middle power” is quite problematic, as we will point out in the concluding chapter, we might allow it to pass for the time being as a conceptual “marker” of the way in which South Africa’s self-conception changed after 1994. Similarly, and as a consequence of its imposed and self-imposed international leadership responsibilities, scholars

have identified the significant impact which South Africa’s embracement of a multilateralism-styled foreign policy approach has had on its new identity. According to Nel, Taylor and Van der Westhuizen, South Africa’s identity as an emerging middle power has featured the following characteristics in its foreign policy behaviour:

(1) A concerted commitment and an attempt to introduce new norms and mechanisms to address both the concerns of developing states and Africa’s marginalisation. These attempts include its commitments to: the Fancourt Commonwealth Declaration on Globalisation and People-Centred Development (1999), the Berlin Declaration on Progressive Government (2000), and the Skagen Declaration signed between the former President Thabo Mbeki and the Norwegian government in 2000;

(2) A conscious attempt to revive and strengthen global and African multilateral institutions, especially those focused on enhancing the interests of the developing world;


(4) Its role in promoting peace and stability in Sierra Leone, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Sudan, the DRC, the Comoros, Cote d’Ivoire and the Great Lakes region, and;

(5) Its status as a founding member, and first chair of the African Union (AU) and hosting its first summit in 2002.\textsuperscript{1018}

Understanding the synergy between South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and Wendt’s notion of collective identity requires a summation of the meaning of the concept. According to Wendt, social identity generates collective interests. To exercise a collective identity, the interests of “the collective” is raised significantly higher than the interests of the state, or blurred to enable the overall interest take prominence in the course of interaction. South Africa’s interest as a sovereign state is wilfully surrendered in the interest of the SADC, when a conflict of interest arises, in order to give room for a collective decision to be taken. For South Africa, much of its attempts at reintegrating itself into the international community has been premised on the ideological stand of the African National Congress.

Indeed, the seeming collective identity-themed nature of South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour has been expressed largely in terms of African solidarity in many of its conflict intervention roles in Africa. This is evidenced in former President Nelson Mandela-led negotiations on Burundi in 1999, and later President Jacob Zuma, who took over as facilitator for the ceasefire negotiations. These negotiations eventually led to what became known as the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, which was a regional initiative. South Africa has equally demonstrated a sense of collective identity in its intervention in the DRC, both as a peacekeeper, and as the lead negotiator in the Sun City Accords, which was a sub-regional initiative.

South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in this conflict episode thus reminds us of Zehfuss’ contention that “in the exercise of a collective identity, and depending on how identities and interests are defined, collective identification with other actors is based on feelings and

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1022 Ibid., p.8.

expressions of solidarity, community, loyalty, and concern for other’s welfare and fate”. In expressing this African solidarity however, scholars have argued that South African foreign policy decision makers are equally aware of its attendant risks. The danger in such an expression, as former President Thabo Mbeki noted, is the tendency to fall victim of collective punishment should an unacceptable behaviour of one or more countries within the bloc be misrepresented as collective.

Regardless of this possibility however, South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour reflects the dynamics of collective, intersubjective meaning/identity formation, as highlighted by Wendt. Nearly all of South Africa’s foreign policy documents between 1994 and 2011 have re-stated the country’s desire to lead, act, and reflect Africa’s position in its international engagement. From Mbeki’s pursuit of an African renaissance initiative, along with former President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, which led to the establishment of the New Partnership for African Development Agenda (NEPAD), in tandem with its ideological, but aggressive push for an “African solutions to Africa Problems” agenda, South Africa continues to demonstrate its resolve to identify with the interests of others in pushing for Africa’s progress.

Implicit in this is that, in the very development and affirmation of South Africa’s identity, the sub-theme of the pursuit of relative power, as emphasised by social constructivism, plays a role. This justifies why it is insufficient to rely on only one of structural realism or social constructivism in explaining both countries’ foreign policy behaviour. Indeed, a notable indicator of South Africa’s use of collective identity as a foreign policy behaviour tool is the enshrinement of the “consolidation of an African agenda”, as a foreign policy priority, its commitment to

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1026 Ibid., p.115.
African renaissance through the African Union as well as its commitment to economic development through regional integration and development in the Southern African Development Community, and its frontline role in the subregional Southern African Customs Union.\footnote{1028}

First, by introducing a strong focus on Africa and the South, and promoting the cause of the developing world as a central feature of its foreign policy, South Africa has given power and meanings to its identity by using its commitment to rules and norms as instruments of navigation. While the bulk of South Africa’s interaction within the comity of nations has been shaped by the new identity imposed on it post-1994, most of its foreign policy behaviour/actions within the international community appear guided by its observance of rules and norms, thus giving meaning to its actions.\footnote{1029}

Similarly, South Africa’s prioritisation of the promotion of the security and quality of life of all South Africans, as a cardinal objective of its foreign policy, its commitment to international responsibilities and obligations through its promotion of democracy, its efforts to undo human rights abuses perpetuated by the apartheid regime, its expression of solidarity for Africa by being a mediator in several peace talks on the continent, its Africa-focused foreign policy orientation, among others, bear witness to the fact that, like any other states, the country’s identity underlies its motivations, intentions, actions and interactions.\footnote{1030}

Consequently, South Africa’s behaviour is based on the meaning its leadership/foreign policy decision-makers ascribe to objects, actions and interactions among them.\footnote{1031} These interests are

\footnote{1031} Ibid., p.124.
then articulated as foreign policy behaviour, and as the basis of/for its actions and interactions within the international community, and constructed with other actors in a way that enables South Africa to maintain its identity. The succeeding section examines the utility of the application of the eclectic approach in assessing Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour, and conflict intervention roles in Africa.

8.4 The utility of the eclectic approach in assessing Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa

Based on our discussions above, and in line with the overall objective of this thesis, it has become imperative to ask: of what value is the application of the eclectic approach to the understanding and interpretation of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and intervention behaviour in Africa to the discourse? As a response, and as this chapter and the chapters on Nigeria’s and South Africa’s foreign policy in addition to the case study chapters have demonstrated, it is obvious that neither structural realism nor constructivism, singularly and/or comprehensively, explains both countries’ roles in these conflicts, and a multi-perspective, eclectic approach is necessary. It shall be recalled that, in defining an eclectic approach, we adopted Graham Allison’s state decision-making model of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis which employed two or more theoretical perspectives to illuminate different dimensions of the complex process of decision-making.

Drawing references from Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein’s thesis on analytical eclecticism, and Albert Domson-Lindsay’s debate on Parsimony and Eclecticism, we contended that the adoption of analytic eclecticism to the study of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Africa has the potential to elicit a number of reactions. First, it will enable students of the foreign policy of African states to appreciate the complex nature of foreign policy decision-making from

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1032 Ibid., p.124.
a more nuanced and wider perspective, rather than focusing on the theoretical turf-wars which have become too prevalent in the discipline of International Relations.

Second, analytic eclecticism addresses issues that have a wider scope than the narrow confines of specific research approaches and can, in principle, “incorporate more of the complexity and messiness of particular real-world situations”.1034 Third, by constructing substantial arguments to trace various dimensions of a complex event, eclecticism drops the excessive reliance on “parsimony” which has come to be an almost unassailable precondition for “scientific” analysis in appreciation of the different types of causal mechanisms involved in real-world social situations.1035

Relatedly, the eclectic approach also helped to bring to the fore, a wider variety of perspectives on a complex phenomenon such as foreign policy, particularly the relative merits of the different theoretical approaches employed. Taking cognisance of the merits embedded in analytic eclecticism therefore, the study aligned with Albert Domson-Lindsay’s submission “that the analytic eclecticism approach is useful in understudying Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and intervention roles in Africa because it ensures that a scholarly endeavour is sufficiently close to the experience of real world actors, and leads to deeper insights into a state’s foreign policy behaviour and the problems associated with it”.1036 To achieve this, we focused on two IR approaches—structural realism and social constructivism—which have featured prominently in the literature on Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policies,1037 and been used to

1034 Ibid., p.412.
1036 Ibid., p.370.

As the rest of the study evinced, testing Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Africa against the strength of the essential arguments embedded in structural realism and social constructivism has helped to highlight a number of issues, which would have remained unnoticed, if the study had applied a singular IR approach in interpreting their foreign policy behaviour. As demonstrated in chapter three where the focus was on the theoretical issues embedded in structural realism and social constructivism, singularly applying structural realism as the study’s IR approach, would only have given us an empirical point of view of the world, thus foreclosing the opportunity to view Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles from a normative context.

The same narrative would have played out if the study had employed social constructivism as a singular IR approach, given the focus of constructivism on deep-seated identity, and how it shapes the interests and foreign policy behaviour of states, and the normative claims in its foreign policy objectives and conflict intervention behaviour. Similarly, if the study had relied on the application of structural realism as its sole IR approach, there is the proclivity to lead readers into believing that Nigeria and South Africa’s roles in Sierra Leone and the DRC were fuelled largely by relative power pursuits. This is despite the study suggesting that their foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in the conflicts were partly motivated by the need to maintain a balance of power within their subregions by means of self-help, as structural realists will argue. It is nevertheless impossible to neglect the possibility that their interventions could have been largely motivated by their identities as African actors, the sense of solidarity they shared with other African states during decolonisation and anti-apartheid struggles, and the existing values and bonds that they share with their contiguous states.

It is thus clear that adopting either of the approaches in the interpretation of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour would have limited our understanding of the underlying
currents behind aspects of the behaviour. This development, more than anything else, provides a compelling justification for the adoption of the eclectic mode of theorising in this study. To be sure, and as demonstrated in chapters four and five, combining both approaches to interpret Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy has significantly helped in enriching our understanding of how national interests and national identity shape a state’s foreign policy behaviour. By our application of structural realism to Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Africa and conflict intervention roles in Sierra Leone and the DRC, we have seen how its focus on the primacy of the national interests can be a motivating factor for a state to intervene in conflicts.

On the other hand, we also saw how a state can utilise the “need to protect the national interest,” as an excuse to strengthen its relative power position in its region, as Nigeria’s Sani Abacha demonstrated in Sierra Leone and South Africa acted in the DRC under the guise of being its “brother’s keeper”. At the same time, our application of social constructivism to both countries’ conflict intervention roles in Africa have broadened our perspective on how shared “identity” that is, a set of shared meanings which is socially-constructed within a society, an guide a state in its interaction with others across national borders. In Sierra Leone for example, we saw how Nigeria’s subscription to collective regional identity shaped its involvement in the crisis through ECOWAS, given that both Sierra Leone and Nigeria are both members of ECOWAS. South Africa’s involvement in the DRC conflict episode also follows the same logic. Apart from the ‘‘type identity’’ which South Africa and the DRC share through SADC, South Africa’s intervention in the conflict was guided largely by its unique experience of conflict management during apartheid. An exclusive application of either structural realism or social constructivism would have proven insufficient in exposing these realities.

The utility of the eclectic approach in the study was equally evident in chapter five of the study, where the focus was on Nigeria’s foreign policy, and its conflict intervention behaviour in Africa. For example, and through a combination of both approaches, we saw how social constructivism is useful in explaining Nigeria’s foreign policy and intervention behaviour
particularly when it led decolonisation and anti-apartheid struggles and provided support to liberation movements in Africa, through the Organisation of African Unity’s Liberation Committee and the frontline states. By constructivist interpretation, Nigerian leaders sought to build bridges across the divide in a manner devoid of any hegemonic intentions at independence in 1960.

This foreign policy behaviour leads us to the constructivist explanation of the role of collective identity in bridge building and fostering mutual cooperation among state actors when a common goal is at stake. This is clearly antithetical to the structural realist claims about statism, self-help and survival. Social constructivism thus becomes useful in explaining Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour at independence. Obviously, these revelations would have been hidden if a singular IR approach had been employed. In the fifth chapter where we assessed Nigeria’s intervention role in Sierra Leone and the extent to which its intervention aligns with Nigeria’s Africa-centred foreign policy, the application of an eclectic approach also availed us the opportunity to view Nigeria’s role in the conflict from a constructivist point of view.

While a substantial amount of evidence points to a structural realist motivation for Nigeria’s intervention in the conflict, given Abacha’s desire to negotiate some sort of international relevance for his junta, a constructivist perspective on the rationale for Nigeria’s intervention tells a different story. Constructivists will argue that Nigeria’s intervention in the conflict had little to do with Abacha’s personal ambitions, but more with the need to protect the “shared identity” between Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and ECOWAS. In chapters six and seven, we saw how the identity-determining-interests dynamic of South Africa’s foreign policy and its foreign policy behaviour reflect a strong identity-based commitment to the interests of the South. While constructivism, particularly the notion of identity, comprehensively addresses the normative features of South Africa’s foreign policy, and its self-imposed responsibility in the management of conflicts in Africa, it falls short in explaining the hegemonic tendencies exhibited in its unilateral interventions in Lesotho in 1998, and in the Central African Republic in 2013.
It also fails to address the significant role structural realism plays in how South Africa positions itself in regional and world politics against (a) contenders in Africa and (b) the imperialist world out there. Adopting one of the theories at the expense of the other would have denied us the opportunity to understand some of the leadership dynamics at play here. Hence, there is need for the combination of both perspectives to understand South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour fully.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to answer the central questions posed at the beginning of the study which is to comparatively evaluate Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and conflict intervention behaviour in Africa from the combined lenses of structural realism and social constructivism, and to demonstrate the relevance of the eclectic approach in the understanding and interpretation of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and intervention behaviour in Africa. To achieve the purpose, the chapter drew a parallel between the essential features of structural realism and Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and intervention roles in Africa. Similar attempts were made to examine the lessons which constructivism and identity teach us about Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and intervention role in Africa.

The chapter concluded by bringing out the utility embedded in the application of the eclectic approach to the study of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour in Sierra Leone and the DRC in particular, and in Africa as a collective. Our discussion in this chapter has led to a number of important findings. The first is that Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy can be explained along both structural realist and social constructivist lines. Second, that the analytical weight of both approaches in explaining their conflict intervention roles and foreign policy behaviour differs. And third, to bridge this gap, and offer a more nuanced perspective of the centripetal and centrifugal motivations behind their foreign policy and intervention roles, an
eclectic approach is required. Overall, we have illustrated the benefits of not restricting oneself to only one theoretical perspective in trying to get a grip on the complexity of real-life foreign-policy decision making.

That does not mean, however, that the two perspectives employed here are the only relevant ones, or that they, when taken together, fully explain Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour. As suggested above, there is clearly room for paying more focused attention to the role of leadership attributes as important intervening or conditioning variables. As the foreign-policy analysis literature suggests, the importance of leadership attributes is itself dependent on a number of factors. In the case of Nigeria, this is obvious in the personalized nature of its foreign policy behaviour under military rule, where the definition of its national interest was contingent on the interpretation of the “Big Man” in Abuja, his/her ideological and leadership orientation, and his/her ability to employ Nigeria’s “Imperial Presidency” to achieve personal goals.

For South Africa, it is a function of its apartheid past and the struggles against it. It might well be that the relatively young and poorly institutionalised nature of foreign-policy decision making in Nigeria and South Africa creates the scope for leadership attributes to play a larger role than would otherwise have been the case. Much work remains to be done in this respect.

Before drawing the curtain on our discussion on the utility of the eclectic approach in analysing Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and intervention behaviour in Africa, let us briefly examine two other debates which could be of interest to scholars of African politics and the international relations discipline. These are the reference to South Africa and Nigeria as middle powers in the literature, and how South Africa’s abandonment of its nuclear weapon programme can be explained along structural realist and social constructivist lines.

There are contending arguments for and against the categorization of Nigeria and South Africa as middle power states given the origin of this term in a structural-realist conception of power distribution in the world. Here we have avoided the concept, for a number of reasons. Generally,
there is a *problematique* of definition, scepticism,¹⁰³⁸ and lack of consensus on what the term ‘middle power’ means.¹⁰³⁹ This polarization is usually along two lines. Those who view the concept as a ‘dead end’ and irreducibly incoherent,¹⁰⁴⁰ and those who argue that it has the capacity for innovation and adaption in the face of faltering unipolarity, and useful in explaining common patterns in foreign policy strategies.¹⁰⁴¹

A particular problem, according to Jordaan, is the question of the wide range of states considered to be middle powers.¹⁰⁴² As Hurrell comments, this group are too diverse and common patterns of behaviour among these states are too difficult to identify for the concept to have much use.¹⁰⁴³ As such, “identifying empirical examples of middle powers is as hazardous as trying to develop a precise conceptualisation of middle powers”.¹⁰⁴⁴ By the same token, an empirical approach to categorising middle powers in the international system contains “numerous methodological difficulties which have led to its being progressively abandoned on the scientific level”.¹⁰⁴⁵

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The concept had more or less become “an ideology of foreign policy wielded by would be middle powers to characterise their foreign policy aims and content”. Scholars have in fact noted that almost all discussions about middle powers begin with the disclaimer that the field is conceptually confused and theoretically contested. Some have called for the dismissal of the concept altogether arguing that there has been a misconception of the roles played by “middle powers” in world affairs. Others argue that the absence of a special recognition of middle powers in the United Nations, and the lack of an agreed list, definition or description of what constitutes being a middle power, diminishes the relevance of the concept in international politics.

This problematique of definition notwithstanding, Adam Chapnik has provided us with what is arguably a useful definition of what a middle power implies. According to him, a middle power refers to “a state actor which has limited influence on deciding the distribution of power in a given regional system, but is capable of deploying a variety of sources of power to change the position of great powers, and defend its own position on matters related to national or regional security that directly affect it”. While countries like Canada and Australia have been traditionally referred as middle powers, recent scholarship, however, has been less circumspect in the application of the term.

To the list of states traditionally regarded as middle powers (e.g., Australia, Canada, the Netherlands and Sweden), have been added Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, Turkey,
Colombia, Iran, Nigeria, Taiwan, Chile, India and Vietnam.\textsuperscript{1052} This lack of definitional consensus notwithstanding, Bernard Wood has identified five roles a state is expected to perform to be considered as a middle power at regional and global levels.\textsuperscript{1053} These include functioning:

1. as a ‘regional or sub-regional leader’ (for example, South Africa and Nigeria in SADC or SADC);
2. as a ‘functional leader’, taking a lead on an issue (or issues) that the middle power has expertise in, or heightened relevant capacity (Nigeria as a major exporter of crude oil and South Africa as a lead producer of gold and platinum);
3. as ‘stabiliser’, mediating between or counterbalancing powers that threaten to destabilise a given situation (for example, Australia’s role in the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia in 1992);
4. as a ‘free rider’ or ‘status seeker’, acquiring kudos by allying with a big power, and;
5. being a ‘good multilateral citizen’, i.e. supporting actions such as United Nations peacekeeping operations.

According to Allan Patience, a major shortcoming of Wood’s conceptualisation is the “difficulty in identifying a bloc of states that conform to even a few of his roles”. While “some states manage some of these roles some of the time, there is no consistent pattern of behaviour in these roles by states that could be readily identified as sustained middle power activity in regional or global affairs”\textsuperscript{1054} Building on the inherent weakness in Wood’s conceptualisation, Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal, point out four other categories where a middle power should belong.\textsuperscript{1055} The first, ‘geographic’—i.e. a state located between two great powers or power blocs, an ‘in-between’ state like Turkey in relation to the European Union and the Islamic states.

\textsuperscript{1052} Ibid., p.395.
Second, a ‘normative’ middle power, which acts as an honest broker or trusted mediator in regional or global crises. The third is a ‘positional’ middle power—a state whose power is relative to both great and small states. The fourth is what they refer to as a ‘behavioural’ middle power—a state that is able to engage successfully in ‘niche diplomacy’ in order to avert or ameliorate crises.\textsuperscript{1056} They note that the ‘behavioural’ middle power may act as a catalyst or an entrepreneur in regional or global matters, and “take the lead in gathering followers around it, or act as a facilitator, convenor, organiser and host of formative meetings, who sets priorities for future activity and draw up rhetorical declarations and manifestos, or as a manager, “with a heavy emphasis on institution-building”. \textsuperscript{1057}

Deducible from the foregoing, is a persuasive attempt to accept middle powers as stabilizers, however, as Eduard Jordaan points out, this effort has been “undone by the wide range of middle power responses to hegemony, more specifically, by the responses of many emerging middle powers”.\textsuperscript{1058} The distinguishing feature between traditional and emerging middle powers has to be made. The former is often supportive of the existing hegemonic order,\textsuperscript{1059} or what Welsh calls “middle power conservativism—that is, the desire for stability and the preservation of the status quo.”\textsuperscript{1060} Emerging middle powers on the other hand seek a ‘reformist’, rather than fundamental or radical change, that is consistent with, and supportive of the current international order and its liberal character.\textsuperscript{1061}

A preliminary application of these role conceptions on Nigeria and South Africa’s status in Africa evinces a number of points. First, when situated within the context of Bernard Wood’s

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1056] Ibid., p.17.
\item[1057] Ibid., Pp.24–25.
\end{footnotes}
expectations of what a middle power is. Nigeria and South Africa tick the box as a sub-regional regional or power given their leadership role in Africa. Second, as a functional leader, both countries’ have a heightened relevant capacity in a commodity that can affect the global economic order (i.e. a conflict in Nigeria and South Africa can affect the global price of crude oil and gold and platinum respectively). Third, both countries have the capacity to act as stabilizers within their subregion—Nigeria through ECOWAS in West Africa and South Africa, through SADC in Southern Africa.

Considered from the status seeker point of view, both countries fail the test in this regard. As a matter of fact, they both have a pedigree of offering strong resistance to the West in view of their decolonization and anti-apartheid struggles, and their membership of the non-aligned movement during the Cold War era. When situated within the “being a good multilateral citizen” expectation according to Wood, Nigeria and South Africa’s qualification as one is not in doubt, given their history of supporting multilateral institutions, particularly the UN, AU, ECOWAS, SADC, among others.

The dilemma in considering Nigeria and South Africa as middle powers, following Wood’s indices ideally is that, there can be no exceptions in terms of meeting these conditions. Therefore, since both countries do not appear to fulfil the entire conditions, the basis of their consideration as middle powers falls flat on the surface. Similarly, situating Nigeria and South Africa’s status in Africa within the context of Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal’s categorisation of what constitutes a middle power is also worth considering. The first is the “geographic location condition,” which expects middle powers to be located between two great powers—neither Nigeria nor South Africa meets this condition, unlike the case of Turkey in relation to the European Union and Islamic States.

Second is the being a ‘normative’ middle power expectation, i.e. having the capacity to act as an honest broker or trusted mediator in regional or global crises. Clearly, both countries do have the capacity to deliver on this task, at least within their respective subregions. The third, according to Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal talks about being a ‘positional’ middle power. That is, a state whose power is relative to both great and small states. Arguably, Nigeria and South Africa do not qualify in this regard. While both countries may be considered powerful in relation to the states within their subregions, the same argument does not hold when they are contrasted against competing powers in Africa like Egypt or Algeria, or within the international community.

The fourth and final expectation is that a middle power will have a demonstrated or behavioural capacity to act as a catalyst or an entrepreneur in regional or global matters. By their formative role in the institutionalisation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), Nigeria and South Africa inarguably fit the description of a middle power in this regard. However, as it was with our earlier application of Wood’s middle power criterion\(^\text{1063}\), Nigeria and South Africa also do not meet the full range of criteria suggested by Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal’s: Remember, none of these conditions can be excluded, and none must be unmet for a state to be classified as a middle power.

The purpose of this thesis was not to try and explain all aspects of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policies. However, for the utility of the eclectic approach to be accepted, it must be shown that this approach is indeed applicable and flexible enough to explain major events in the unfolding of the foreign policies of the two countries. One such major event is of course South Africa’s decision in 1989 to abandon its nuclear arms programme, with which it started in 1977. Both the origin and the abandonment of this programme is perfectly understandable from a structural realist perspective. But constructivism adds another dimension to the explanation that enriches our understanding of the abandonment episode, at least.

Explaining South Africa’s abandonment of its nuclear weapon programme along structural realist and social constructivist terms requires a brief narration of the events leading to conception of the idea. There is a general consensus in the literature on the motivation behind Pretoria’s decision to develop a nuclear weapons program in 1977. As structural realism emphasises, state behaviour is a function of the structural position of an actor in a specific region or context. By 1977, apartheid South Africa’s relative power position in Southern Africa was dramatically weakened by the revolution in Portugal that ended Portuguese colonial control over Angola and Mozambique. In both these newly independent countries, Soviet (and in Angola, also Cuban) supported governments took control, exacerbating the extreme threat perception that has been developing in Pretoria since the 1960s.

The Soweto language riots, and a rising tide of domestic opposition to apartheid, fed into the calculation of the apartheid leadership of its declining regional power position. Similar to the strategic calculation that today plays such an important role in the foreign policy of North Korea, South Africa bet its survival on a deterrence that it believed could and would not be matched in the region. As de Villiers et al. note, Pretoria was apprehensive of a Soviet expansionist threat to southern Africa, which included a build-up of Cuban forces in Angola starting in 1975, and the imminent independence of neighbouring Zimbabwe under an actively antiapartheid regime. These events, as they observed, augmented the minority government's fear of encirclement.

At conception, the programme was structured along three phases. Phase 1 called for strategic ambiguity: internationally, the government would neither confirm nor deny whether it possessed a nuclear weapons capability. If the country were threatened militarily, Phase 2 required South Africa covertly to reveal its nuclear capability to leading Western governments, principally the United States. Under the third phase, Pretoria was to publicly disclose its

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1066 Ibid., p.100.
1067 Ibid., p.100.
1068 Ibid., p.101.
nuclear arsenal, either by official acknowledgement or an underground nuclear test, if the international community fails to act to protect South Africa’s borders if the country came under attack.\textsuperscript{1069}

By the time South Africa’s nuclear programme commenced, its relationship with the rest of the world had started to rapidly deteriorate. For example, by the late 1970s, its participation in the U.N. General Assembly and its specialized agencies had already been suspended; the Security Council had imposed a mandatory weapons embargo and voluntary oil embargo on the country.\textsuperscript{1070} By 1989, when it became obvious that the Soviet Union under Michael Gorbachev was seeking a cheap way out from the numerous regional conflicts that it was involved in the developing world, South Africa’s threat perception changed dramatically. It should also be remembered that by then, secret and not-so-secret talks between the apartheid leadership and the ANC were well developed, leading to the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990. Hence, a structural realist will argue that South Africa’s behaviour in 1977 and in 1989 was both driven by changing structural conditions, and calculations about the utility (or declining utility in the case of 1989) of nuclear weapons.

None of this implies that structural realists will necessary say that the 1977 decision was a wise decision. Rather, the structural realist will try and understand behaviour before it is evaluated. Liberman suggests three probable contributory factors to this eventual nuclear disarmament.\textsuperscript{1071} The first, the end of security threats, second, the change in South Africa to a more outward-looking leadership in 1989, and the third, the unacceptable expense of the nuclear weapons program. Liberman argues that given the leadership change from the nationalist-militarist president P.W. Botha to the more liberal, democratic F.W. de Klerk and seeks to evaluate Etel

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\item \textsuperscript{1069} Ibid., p.101.
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Solingen’s proposition that transition from statist leaders to economic liberalizers lessens support for expensive nuclear weapons program.1072

To the list of probable motivations for the disarmament, according to Purkitt et al., is the high levels of pressure that the United States exerted on the South African political leadership from 1987 to 1989, which was based on fears that a transition to a regime led by the African National Congress (ANC) might bring with it nuclear proliferation.1073 By then, the United States had issued a demarche to the de Klerk government based on fears of chemical and biological weapon proliferation.1074 The last is the pressure from the South African Defense Force (SADF), which argued that the nuclear weapons and missile programs were sapping defense budget funds that military leaders felt they needed to modernize South Africa’s conventional forces.

A preliminary summary of these explanations point out a number of realities. First, Pretoria’s decision to resort to nuclear weapons development can be argued as consistent with the doctrine of “self-help”, as structural realists persuades us to believe. Second, by resorting to self-help as a response to its relative international isolation, at that time, South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour arguably validates the structural realists’ argument that “states seek power and calculate interests in terms of power, not relative to the nature of the international system, but relative to other significant actors in the system/sub-system”.1075

Third, since the main goal of states is to survive in a hostile environment as realists claim, Pretoria sees its nuclear ambition as a way of maintaining its territorial integrity and the autonomy of its domestic political order. Lastly, Pretoria’s nuclear programme represents the best defence strategy it could use in maximising its prospects for survival, as structural realist

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would argue. While structural realism can take us a long way down the road of explaining South Africa’s behaviour, constructivism adds an important extra dimension without which our analysis will be all the poorer. Constructivists would argue that South Africa’s decision to voluntarily discontinue its nuclear program was a powerful expression of a new identity that was slowly gestating in decision-making circles in South Africa.

As the old self-understanding of Pretoria as being the last bulwark in Southern Africa against Soviet expansion lost its credibility, the apartheid leadership were desperately looking for symbolic actions that would tip the scale of international opinion again back into its favour. This symbolic action, despite its obvious strategic goals, meshed very well with the new identity that the ANC leadership under Nelson Mandela would eventually develop into a full blown pro-Africa and pro-peace orientation. To appreciate this, we have to go beyond, but not disregard structural realism.
Chapter 9: Conclusions

9.1 Restatement of research question, objectives and methodology

At the beginning of the study, the principal aim of the research was to examine the extent to which two distinct international relations approaches explain Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa, using their interventions in Sierra Leone (1991-1998) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), respectively. The research design for the study was structured to generate empirical insights deduced from an exploration of the explanatory potential of structural realism and social constructivism, using Nigeria and South Africa as objects of analysis. To achieve this, analytic eclecticism—a deployment and combination of two theoretical approaches: structural realism and social constructivism to the study of both countries’ foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa was adopted.

The study used the qualitative approach, based on two overall assumptions. The first, an ontological assumption that Nigeria and South Africa are unified regional actors with discernible single foreign policies. The second – an epistemological assumption that both countries’ foreign policy behaviour, their intervention roles in Sierra Leone and the DRC, and the meaning attributed to these behaviour and its significance are accessible to us as observers. These two assumptions were operationalised, and the research design put into effect, through a theory-guided content analysis of published materials on Nigeria and South Africa’s conflict intervention and foreign policy behaviour in Sierra Leone and the DRC, and several other conflict episodes.

By employing the qualitative research methodology approach, and engaging relevant literature on Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa on a content analysis basis, the study generated some useful interpretative insights that the application of structural realism and social constructivism has to offer. The qualitative approach
equally afforded the researcher the analytical platform to understand and interpret the variations in Nigeria and South Africa foreign policies, and how their historical experiences shaped their interventions in the Sierra Leone and the DRC conflict episodes.

9.2 Key findings

Some findings were made in line with the overall research question of the study as highlighted above. In chapter three, where the focus was on the essential issues embedded in structural realism and social constructivism, an overwhelming nexus was found between national interests by state actors and material structures such as power, and how a state’s foreign policy is constructed and how its actual behaviour is shaped. Perhaps, the earliest clue of the relevance of the eclectic approach to the study of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa was signalled in the second section of chapter three. The chapter established that, contrary to the claim made by realists that the struggle for power, and the protection of the national interest(s) through the pursuit of relative gains determine(s) the pattern of behaviour and interaction of states and the creation of anarchy, constructivism argues that the interests are products of those identities, and it is the social constitution of interests which defines the way an actor’s interests and identities are influenced in the course of interactions with the rest of the world.

Chapter four affirmed that Nigeria’s conflict intervention roles in Africa is a direct consequence of its age-long commitment to African-centred foreign policy orientation, as spelt out in its foreign policy principles and objectives. The usefulness of interpreting Nigeria’s foreign policy along structural realist lines was equally brought to the fore in chapter four which demonstrated how the leadership idiosyncrasies and the ideological orientation of Nigeria’s leaders influence its foreign policy behaviour. Findings from the chapter also reveal that, since Nigeria’s return to civil rule in 1999, its foreign policy behaviour, while remaining assertive, has favoured a more identity-themed approach (as argued in social constructivism) to conflict intervention. In effect,
the chapter made a more compelling argument for the relevance of analytic eclecticism in the analysis of Nigeria’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa. The single most important finding of chapter five was highlighting Nigeria’s relative power pursuit in its subregion, but also more broadly in Africa. This is well highlighted by a structural realist reading which highlights that, under the auspices of ECOWAS, Nigeria’s Sani Abacha engaged in intervention as he was reeling under the harsh effects of international sanctions and diplomatic isolation.

Chapter six assessed South Africa’s foreign post-apartheid foreign policymaking process and found that South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour is strongly themed along the lines of a self-imposed normative identity—a key focus of social constructivism. At the same time, though, the use of structural realist concepts highlight the fact that it was (and still is) the pursuit of relative gains against potential regional, African, and global rivals, that entice South Africa into interventions that overstretch its capacity. South Africa’s engagement in the DRC, as we interrogated in chapter seven, strikingly underlines this. The success of South Africa’s normatively driven desire to promote peace, which relates to its self-identification as an African nation born from peace and “Ubuntu”, ultimately depends on factors over which it has little control.

This outcome is not surprising from a structural realist point of view, though, as it ultimately reflects that South Africa may be less powerful than a naive observation of South African resources (and South African decision makers themselves) may assume. The most important finding of the study came in chapter eight where the strengths and limitations of both structural realism and social constructivism, when singularly applied to Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Sierra Leone and the DRC, were tested. Despite the admittance that Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy can be explained along both structural realist and social constructivist lines, the chapter strongly finds that an eclectic IR approach remains a sine qua non in achieving a more nuanced understanding of the motivations behind their foreign policy and conflict intervention roles in Africa.
Findings from the study also evinced a number of similarities and differences between Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa. Similarly wise, our experience here has shown that both countries have tendencies for relative power pursuit, as evident in their intervention approaches in our conflict case studies. Second, there is no denying the fact that they are both committed to an Africa focused foreign policy orientation and agenda—our analyses in chapters four and six on their foreign policy and intervention roles in Africa lends credence to this assertion.

Third, through the analytical lens of social constructivism, the study has clearly demonstrated the shared identity Nigeria and South Africa have with their contiguous states. Lastly, and as demonstrated in chapters five and seven on Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention role in Sierra Leone and the DRC, the preponderance of evidence suggests that the leadership of both countries often use their foreign policy orientation to achieve personal agenda/ambition. The examples of Sani Abacha in Sierra Leone, Ibrahim Babangida in Liberia, Kgalema Petrus Motlanthe in Lesotho, Jacob Zuma in the Central African Republic, and Thabo Mbeki in Zimbabwe points to this direction.

Regardless of this similarities however, it has to be acknowledged that the historical experiences, i.e. Nigeria’s history with military rule, and South Africa’s with apartheid does have an impactful role in the conception, articulation, and implementation of their foreign policy objectives, including its resultant behaviour, hence the relevance of the eclectic approach as we have argued in this study.
9.3 Looking forward

As our arguments from chapters one to eight of this study suggest, the complex nature of foreign policy discourses and what constitutes the notion of intervention makes it relatively impossible to deploy a singular IR approach to interpret the foreign policy and conflict intervention behaviour of African states. Therefore, what this study has done, is to demonstrate the inadequacies of exclusive use of either of the two most relevant IR approaches in international relations—structural realism and social constructivism—in effectively explaining Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles. Drawing references from our arguments on the utility of analytic eclecticism in chapter eight, this study has arguably helped to highlight the indispensability of the eclectic mode of theorising in discourses that seek to explain the foreign policy of behaviours of Nigeria and South Africa as state actors with unique historical peculiarities as well as socio-economic and political allegiances.

As mentioned in the Introduction, this thesis deliberately avoided liberalism, and in particular liberal-institutionalism as an explanatory framework. This was done not in disrespect for the potential contributions of liberalism, as highlighted by Domson-Lindsay. However, I am of opinion that, as far as South Africa and Nigeria’s conflict intervention roles are concerned, liberalism does not add anything substantial to our understanding that is not already accommodated by structural realism and constructivism. For instance, it might be argued that the choice of the two regional powers to work through regional organisations to provide the public good of conflict intervention reflects the significance of liberalism. However, as this thesis made clear, the commitment by South Africa and Nigeria to the provision of a valued public good such as conflict intervention is premised on their specific identity conceptions as African actors.

In the case of South Africa, the experience of a peaceful transition has added an additional identity component that is relevant in this regard. We do not require liberalism to point that out.

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Similarly, the choice to act through regional institutions reflects both an identity commitment to Africa, but also a recognition of the relative regional power positions of these two actors. As structural realism helps us to understand (more than liberalism can), being embedded in a specific structural context provide both incentives, but also constraints. Nigeria and South Africa’s behaviour is thus a function of the structural distribution of power and resources, more than it reflects a commitment to institutions per se. It also bears considering that neither of the two powers deliberately act to sustain the global liberal order. In fact, and especially in the case of South Africa, they have explicitly committed themselves to changing this order for the sake of improving the relative position of the Global South. Also, as the analysis in chapters five and six has shown, the provision of public goods—a significant component of the liberalist school of thought, can equally be explained by structural realism and constructivism.

For instance, we saw how a structural realist interpretation of Nigeria and South Africa’s intervention in the Sierra Leone and the DRC conflict episodes, highlighted the regional public goods provision capacity of the pursuit of relative power. Similarly, our exploration of the constructivist notion of identity has also shown that because ‘identity’ precede interests, public goods are bound to follow in the course of its demonstration. Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and intervention behaviour, as analysed in our case studies, do not pass the revue of another important assumption of the liberalist school—a commitment to international liberal, given both countries’ non-committal to a liberal economic order.

Since structural realism and social constructivism accommodates the core explanatory weight (provision of public goods) which liberalism brings to bear on Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy and intervention behaviour, it makes less analytic sense to consider the former in the same light, as the latter. Having said that, it is imperative to add that the application of an eclectic approach to the study of Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy behaviour and conflict intervention roles in Africa, is not without its limitations. Both approaches eclectically used here appear inadequate in explaining the role of leadership idiosyncrasies in shaping the foreign policy behaviour of African states.
As our discussion in the chapters on Nigeria’s conflict intervention role in Sierra Leone and South Africa’s in the DRC has shown, neither of both approaches have any explanation for the personal/commercial interests motivations behind Abacha’s full support for Maada Bio’s ascendance to power. The same way both approaches appear inadequate in explaining Kgalema Petrus Motlanthe’s decision to invade Lesotho in 1998, or Jacob Zuma’s decision to invade the CAR in 2013, particularly when there was no obvious threat to South Africa’s national interest(s) on both occasions. We suggested in chapter six that there is an inextricable relationship between the orientation of South Africa’s leaders, and the country’s foreign policy behaviour, articulation and implementation.

One way to reformulate this is to say that a key determinant factor of how South Africa sees the rest of the world is how its leadership recalls and responds to the level of support it got from regional supporters during its anti-apartheid struggle. Similarly, chapters four and five highlight the many ways in which leadership idiosyncrasies acted as conditioning or intervening variables shaping Nigerian foreign policy. Equally worth noting is the failure of structural realism and social constructivism as eclectically applied here, to comprehensively explain the some of the idealistic/idealism orientation embedded in Nigeria and South Africa’s foreign policy is founded. For example, structural realism and social constructivism fail to explain Nigeria’s commitment to a foreign policy principle of non-alignment and a just world order, and Nigeria and South Africa’s Afro-centric foreign policy behaviour.

This raises a number of questions that have to be pursued in subsequent research. The first question is: To what extent is both structural realism and social constructivism capable of dealing adequately with the intervening variable of leadership idiosyncrasies? Here, we do not have the space to pursue this question in any detail, but it would seem to be a question that is especially pertinent in the case of African states, where the institutions of foreign and security policy making are of relatively recent origin. In addition, the vacillation between military and civilian rule in the case of Nigeria obviously creates the conditions under which such intervening variables may gain in importance. In the case of South Africa, the differences in the backgrounds
of Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma are stark, and it would be surprising if these
did not lead to significant variety in their interpretations of South Africa’s identity, the debt that
South Africa owes the rest of the continent, and of the nature of the relative gains that South
Africa should pursue.

The second, and related question has to do with the limits of the eclectic approach as
conceptualised and applied here. The main insight of this thesis is that the foreign policy of
African states in general, and the political/foreign behaviours of specific actors are too
complicated to be fully explained by a single IR approach. But this raises the question of how
many approaches should then be employed, if it is true that one approach is insufficient? Should
we simply add more and more perspectives to get fuller and fuller view with each step? Taking a
first stab at an answer, one can say that such a multiplying strategy is not true to the spirit of
scholarly eclecticism, which is to pursue multi-perspective enlightenment within the bounds of
parsimony and reasonableness.

There is no reason to assume that each and every possible theoretical approach will be able to
contribute substantively. It was argued in the introduction that liberalism, for instance, could be
ruled out on prima facie grounds. This may also be true of other approaches. Post-colonialism, to
take another example, may contribute to our understanding of broader patterns of power and
influence in global affairs. But it has not proven its potential in the field of foreign policy
analysis. Again, we would have some reasons to rule it out. However, as the reference to
leadership idiosyncrasies above suggests, there does seem to be room to add perspectives to
structural realism and constructivism in an attempt to make sense of foreign policy on the
African continent. What the epistemological outer limit of such a multi-perspective eclectic
approach is, we would leave to philosophers of social science to try and answer.
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