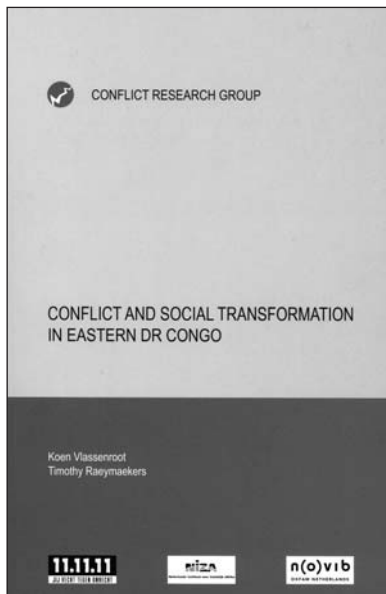


BOOK REVIEWS

**CONFLICT AND SOCIAL
TRANSFORMATION IN
EASTERN DR CONGO**
KOEN VLASSENROOT AND TIMOTHY
RAEYMAEKERS (EDS),
Conflict Research Group and Academia Press, Ghent,
2004.



Most people seriously interested in current events in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) will be familiar with the work of Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers. Of the last few years they have worked assiduously to improve our understanding of developments in the east of the DRC, both in the Kivus and in Ituri. Their academic papers on the Mai-Mai, and on economic networks in the region have shed much light on these two related phenomena. Whether the policymakers charged with addressing the DRC and its troubled peace process are as familiar with these findings is open to doubt.

It is with this in mind that the editors, and principal authors, of this book have set out to uncover the different dynamics at play in the

eastern DRC and the various levels of analysis necessary to make sense of them. Merely concentrating on strengthening civil society groups at one end of the spectrum and rebuilding the Congolese state at the other are unlikely to have the consequences intended unless the aims and intentions of the actors involved are better understood. The publication of this book is intended to deepen our knowledge of the political economy of the eastern DRC.

What has resulted is an amazing piece of scholarship, made accessible by the easy style adopted by the various authors.

The book opens with a general discussion of how conflict has altered power relations in the region, transforming both polity and economy and, in the process, the way ordinary people living there have had to adapt. It also looks at external interventions, official and private, and how these have impacted on local livelihood strategies.

There is a broad historical analysis of the origins of Zaire's state collapse and attempted renaissance as the Democratic Republic of Congo, which provides an insight into how events have been interpreted at local level. This is followed by six chapters, each concentrating on a specific theme or region in the eastern DRC. For example, Timothy Raeymaekers provides an explanation of the evolution of patterns of economic control in Beni-Lubero; Vlassenroot looks at land and conflict in Masisi. The political economy of Goma, artisanal mining in Kamituga, violence and youth in North Kivu, and the interconnection between local and regional dynamics in Ituri's conflict are each subjects dealt with in separate contributions. Jeroen Cuvelier then points out the inadequacies inherent in the UN assumption of equivalence in law and power when dealing with the Congo, proving an illuminating analysis of the essential plurality of legal assumptions to be encountered in addressing the Congolese crisis.

The book concludes with a number of

recommendations for policymakers and other actors, primarily aimed at improving the living conditions of the people of eastern DRC. The authors are at pains to point out that unless the country confronts and addresses the dilemma of elite exploitation of national economic resources, the Congolese transition process is doomed to failure.

If ever a book were essential reading on the Congo's plight, this is it.

Richard Cornwall

THE REPORT OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON THREATS, CHALLENGES AND CHANGE:

A detour from responsibility or a bold recommendation?



The High-Level Panel on “Threats, Challenges and Change” handed over its report entitled “*A more secure world: our shared responsibility*” to the Secretary-General on 1st December 2004. The Panel was given the brief to:

- Examine today’s global threats and provide an analysis of future challenges to international peace and security;

- Identify clearly the contribution that collective action can make in addressing these challenges;
- Recommend the changes necessary to ensure effective collective action, including but not limited to a review of the principal organs of the United Nations.¹
- Doing justice to all these issues was indeed a challenging task. This review seeks to examine the report of the Panel to examine the extent to which its recommendations respond to questions that have long been raised in relation to the transformation of the UN system.

In part one, the Panel made accurate observations regarding the extent to which the world has changed since the United Nations was formed in 1945 to date. This includes the significance of the numerical fact that there were only 51 member states of the organisation then, sixty years on the UN boasts a membership of 191. It is also important to note that some states have acquired increased significance and influence within the UN, a situation that was not evident at the UN’s inception. For example, “... Japan, Germany and Italy were successfully integrated into the family of nations and are currently the second, third and sixth largest financial contributors to the United Nations”.² Another recent development in global politics is the ascendance of developing countries such as India, Brazil and, recently, South Africa to higher levels of diplomatic influence – yet another development that was almost unimaginable at the formation of the UN. While it makes sense for most international relations scholars and commentators to highlight September 11 as the catalyst and decisive moment that triggered Kofi Annan to appoint the Panel, it is equally true that other developments observed by the Panel are among the many reasons that motivated the UN Secretary-General.

In underlining the important role played by the UN since its formation, the Panel also made an observation that few would disagree with, i.e. “... without the United Nations the post-1945 world would very probably have been a bloodier place.”³ It is for this reason that the Panel draws the attention of UN members

to the importance of the limits of self-protection and urges the international community to work towards an effective, efficient and equitable international collective security system.

In its human security-oriented conception of security, the Panel identifies - in part two of its report - six threats to international security that the world, through the UN system and other international instruments and mechanisms, must endeavour to eliminate. These are:

- Economic and social threats, including poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation
- Inter-State conflict
- Internal conflict, including civil war, genocide and other large-scale atrocities
- Nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons
- Terrorism
- Transnational organised crime⁴

This is a holistic approach to security echoes the call President Thabo made at the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly for world leaders not to over-emphasise one particular challenge at the expense of other equally important ones. It is the adoption of such a comprehensive approach to security that enabled the Panel to recommend a comprehensive and integrated response that addresses poverty and pandemics such as HIV/AIDS. As for the response of the international community to HIV/AIDS, the Panel posed a challenging question:

That Africa has borne the brunt of the HIV/AIDS pandemic raises the troubling question of whether international response would have been so slow if the disease had reduced life expectancy by 30 years in non-African countries.⁵

The recommendation of the Panel that the Security Council should convene a second seating on HIV/AIDS and generate research on the issue is a welcome attempt to twist the arm of the international community to help the African continent deal with the pandemic. With regard to poverty, the Panel appeals to the international community to assist developing countries that seem unlikely to meet their Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by, *inter alia*, drawing a timetable for donor coun-

tries to meet the 0.7% GDP target for ODA.

On nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the statistics reflected in the reports that at least 40 states currently “possess the industrial and scientific infrastructure which would enable them ... to build nuclear weapons ...” are alarming. What the report has not highlighted though is the impact the US war on terror has had on the legal efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to regulate the production and use of nuclear related agents. It could be argued that North Korea’s on-and-off reluctance to bring their nuclear capacity under the IAEA’s check is to a large extent motivated by the threat presented by the US regime-change strategy. This notwithstanding, the range of proposals made by the Panel relating to making the IAEA more effective are welcome, including the encouragement of the handful of states remaining outside the ambit of the IAEA to join the IAEA nuclear non-proliferation regime.⁶

While the call for the UN to clearly define terrorism makes sense, especially considering the increased use of the concept since September 11, mobilising consensus on this issue does not seem possible within the current global political context. The reluctance of the UN to engage in a definitional discourse should be understood within the context of the US war on terror. Against this background, one does not foresee a constructive and fruitful conclusion of the debate on the definition of terrorism. This said, the description of an environment propitious for terrorist acts as referred to by the Panel makes for a holistic assessment. The Panel observes thus:

Terrorism flourishes in environments of despair, humiliation, poverty, political oppression, extremism and human rights abuse; it also flourishes in contexts of regional conflict and foreign occupation; and it profits from weak State capacity to maintain law and order.⁷

The reference made by the Panel report to the *UN Charter*, *Geneva Conventions*, the *Rome Statutes*, among others, as constitutive of a sufficient normative framework to regulate state use of force bears relevance, but is rather misleading when used to curtail a UN debate on

state terrorism.⁸ This is more so considering the recommendation of the Panel for a normative framework for non-state terrorism. The meeting point between state and non-state terrorism is the injury or death of civilians or non-combatants in the pursuit of objectives either by state or non-state actor(s), be they political, religious, economic or otherwise.

Part three of the Panel report makes a strong case for the salience of collective security as well as the necessity of collective use of force. The recommendation that there must be collective use of force when sovereign Governments are unable or unwilling to protect their citizens, especially in cases of gross human rights violation and genocide, is welcome. This idea is congruent with the new thinking found in regional organisations such as the African Union.⁹ In this regard, the Panel also made an important observation that:

The effectiveness of the global collective security system ... depends ultimately not only on the legality of decisions but also on the common perceptions of their legitimacy – their being made on solid evidentiary ground, and for the right reasons.¹⁰

This observation is very important, especially in relation to decision-making within the UN Security Council, the reform of which is the subject of part four of the Panel report. Arguably, it is the inclusion of the reform of the Security Council that has generated the heightened interest of international opinion makers and Governments alike. In fact, refer-

ence to the Panel, even before it concluded its work, has often been made in relation to Security Council reform. Whilst most governments have been reticent about this, most analysts, especially from the developing world, have been vocal about the need for greater representation that reflects the geographical make-up of the world – a call that has since the late 1960s been associated with nations emerging from colonialism.

The key issue is veto powers, currently wielded by the five permanent members of the Security Council. It was in this context that Professor Ramesh Thakur observed that: “Its permanent membership remains restricted to five: essentially a self-appointed oligarchy who wrote their own exalted status into the Charter”.¹¹ Regarding this exclusive arrangement, most in the developing world hoped the Panel would make revolutionary recommendations. On the other side of the fence, the current permanent members of the Security Council have been holding their breath to see if the Panel would dare tamper with their exclusive hold to the veto. Dividing the world into four regions (Africa, Asia and Pacific, Europe and Americas), the panel recommended two models for the enlargement of the Security Council – termed Model A and Model B.

As is evident from the above tables, the single important distinguishing feature is the proposed addition of a category of permanent members in Model A and the absence of such a category in Model B. Another notable inclusion is the attempt by the Panel to equalise the

Model A:

Model A provides for six new permanent seats, with no veto being created, and three new two-year term non-permanent seats, divided among the major regional areas as follows:

Regional area	Number of States	Permanent Seats (continuing)	Proposed New Permanent Seats	Proposed Two-Year Seats (non-Renewable)	Total
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	1	2	6
Americas	35	1	1	4	6
Totals Model A	191	5	6	13	24

Model B:

Model B provides for no permanent seats but creates a new category of eight four-year renewable-term seats and one new two-year non-permanent (and non-renewable) seat, divided among the major regional areas as follows¹²

Regional area	Number of States	Permanent Seats (continuing)	Proposed New Permanent Seats	Proposed Two-Year Seats (non-Renewable)	Total
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	2	1	6
Americas	35	1	2	3	6
Totals Model B	191	5	8	11	24

total number of countries representing all the proposed world regions (six members per region). Given that Model B creates no room for more permanent members, the model becomes a non-starter and not worth the consideration of world regions that have for a long time been clamouring for equality of representation within the Security Council. Model A seems a better option for the rest of the world as it proposes the inclusion of six more permanent members, albeit without veto power. In this regard, Africa as well as Asia and Pacific stand to benefit more, since the Panel proposed that each of them should be represented by a further two permanent members. The fact that Africa does not have a single permanent member needs to be highlighted.

On closer analysis, Model A, which seems to be the better option, as suggested above, seems to be a delicate balance between two high-stake interest blocks. The first block comprises the current five permanent Security Council members who still believe that on the world stage, while all countries are equal, they are the first among equals and are therefore still naturally entitled to the veto. The second block brings together the larger proportion of the world's population – that ironically is disenfranchised – hailing from the developing nations. This block feels that despite the fact that they are less affluent than the first block, they are also sovereign states in their own rights with stakes in world security equal to (or even more than) those of the first block and, there-

fore, should also be represented on the Council with equal veto powers.

Surprisingly, the release of the report did not provoke many official responses from governments worldwide. Neither did the report trigger much media attention. There are two possible explanations for this. The report makes it difficult for countries that consider themselves naturally deserving of permanent Security Council membership to comment, as that might stir up a wave of discontent within their respective regions. The other reasons could be that the current permanent members deliberately adopted a wait-and-see position in order to gauge the vigour of those opposed to their retaining veto powers.

Turning to countries likely to gain permanent membership, India and Japan seem set to represent Asia and Pacific while Brazil is likely to join the U.S. for the Americas. Nigeria and South Africa made their wishes to represent Africa clear even before the Panel report was released. Supported by fellow Arab states, Egypt might also battle for a place on behalf of Africa, although it is unlikely to win. A contest between Germany and Italy is likely to ensue when Europe is called upon to send one more permanent representative.

While most countries from the developing world have good cause to question the right of the current five permanent members of the Security Council to exclusively cling to the veto, these countries are likely to support the adoption of Model A as a better-than-nothing

option for them since it at least offers them opportunity for permanent membership. They are likely to go with the logic that it is better to fight from within than from outside.

Perhaps the most important recommendation, although hitherto untrumpeted, is the call for the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission. In the words of the Panel: "there is no place in the United Nations system explicitly designed to avoid state collapse and the slide to war or to assist countries in their transition from war to peace."¹³ This gap has led to problems of coordination in countries emerging from conflicts, allowing for the pursuit of divergent donor interests sometimes at the expense of important post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building work. If formed, the Peacebuilding Commission will "... marshal and sustain the efforts of the international community in post conflict peacebuilding over whatever period may be necessary."¹⁴ Africa stands to benefit most from the formation of a Peacebuilding Commission, since the continent has more countries emerging from conflict than most parts of the world.

On the whole, the Panel report comprehensively captures the security challenges confronting the world today. It has systematically demonstrated the point of interface between the concerns of the developing and those of the developed world and makes a strong case for the importance of cooperation between the rich North and the poor South. While the Panel could (justly or unjustly) be criticised for shrinking away from making recommendations that would end or distribute veto powers in a manner that reflects the equality of UN members, it would appear that recommendations to that effect would have had more destabilising effects than what the Panel finally recommended. In fact, the recommendations of the Panel regarding Security Council reforms are more of a pragmatic compromise than an ideal scenario. The challenge will be for the developing world to push for the adoption of the report in its current form as a tool for future battles for the transformation of the UN system fought from within. In this regard, option A, as recommended by the Panel, should be viewed as a better-than-noting option for the developing

world – at least for now. Any other radical proposal is likely to be frustrated by UN superpowers that – incidentally – already wield disproportionate powers.

Notes

- 1 Panel report, p. 119.
- 2 Page. 10.
- 3 See p.12.
- 4 Page, 23.
- 5 Ibid. p.29
- 6 Page 39-47.
- 7 Page 47.
- 8 Page 51-52.
- 9 Page 66 of the Panel report. Also see Article 4 (h) of the AU Constitutive Act.
- 10 Op cit.
- 11 Professor Thakur is the Senior Vice Chancellor for Governance at the United Nations, University in Tokyo. The citation comes from the speech he delivered at the Institute for Security Studies on 18 November 2004.
- 12 The information and explanatory notes for both Mode A and B have been extracted verbatim from the Panel report, p.81.
- 13 Page 83.
- 14 Page 84

*Prince Mashele and Poppie Mphuting are
Senior Researcher and Research Assitant at the
ISS, respectively.*

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND SOUTH AFRICA DANI VENTER & ERNST NEULAND (EDS),

Richard Havenga & Associates, Johannesburg, 2004,
(Note: This review focuses on Chapter 8: The EU
Common Foreign and Security Policy.)

In the competitive arena of international relations all states are deemed equal and each state jealously guards its sovereignty. Yet, when it comes to the matter of influencing events in international politics some states are clearly more equal than others. South Africa's international role among African states is clearly on a higher plane than the rest of the continent. This is the result of a deliberate posture by the West (the United States and the European Union) which has decided to



allow and encourage South Africa (SA) to act as a middle power as well as a representative of Southern voices.¹ Stated differently, SA has been accorded a “diplomatic niche status within the evolving neo-liberal world order in which she (represents and) projects southern concerns.”² South Africa’s interaction with the West is manifested in the fields of trade including arms transfers; politics; development cooperation and, for purposes of this review, in the areas of conflict resolution, peacekeeping and common foreign, security and defence policy. The most recent evidence of this special relationship was the invitation South Africa received to attend the donors’ conference after the Tsunami disaster that began on 26 December 2004. The conference of ‘core countries,’ led by the US was held on 6 January 2005 in Jakarta, Indonesia and attendance was strictly by invitation only. An underlying current at the meeting was the struggle between the US and the United Nations (UN) for global leadership.

Hours before the conference opened, the US deferred the leadership role to the UN, allowing the world body to take the lead in coordinating the international relief effort. However, the initial tussle and the selection of ‘core countries invited,’ together with the parallel deployment of military power by Washington was almost enough to permanently influence the dimensions of the subsequent international response.

As one of the chosen few invited to participate, South Africa, to its credit, immediately called for relief to be provided to affected African countries: Kenya, Somalia and Tanzania. This fitted well with SA’s perceived mandate of representing southern interests.

South African relations with the EU also reveal a similar tendency to operate on a higher, preferential level. South Africa is not only the largest EU trading partner on the continent; it also receives significant amounts of International Donor Aid from the EU. More significantly, soon after independence, South Africa entered into a large arms acquisition deal with the EU and its member states that involved the purchase of fighter planes, ships and other war materiel. More recently, South African defence officials announced that they were acquiring the latest version of transport aircraft suitable for peacekeeping operations on the African continent. The EU-SA relationship in the arms industry is also unique in Africa because it includes the transfer of technology in the sensitive area of armaments.

What explains this unique relationship? Part of the explanation lies in the converging sentiments present at South Africa’s presidential inauguration in 1994. On the one hand, according to the EU, “by virtue of its heroic (internationalized) struggle against *apartheid*, somehow, SA is entitled to more favourable treatment from the EU.” The same source also admits that, in 1994, the South African government itself was not “prepared to accept for itself the traditional relationship between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States as laid down in the Lomé and Cotonou Conventions.”³ By implication, this was also true of its envisaged relationship with the United States. As a result, based on these sentiments, the country demanded and received preferential terms and conditions from the West. The initiatives managed by President Thabo Mbeki since 1999, focussing on his theme of African Renaissance, have become a fixture in the US-EU-SA Common Foreign and Security Policy realm. With the acquiescence of both the West, the UN and the African political leadership, South Africa has carved out an expanding conflict resolution

role in the Great Lakes (the DRC and Burundi); in West Africa (Liberia, Sierra Leone and recently in Côte d'Ivoire); in East Africa (Darfur in Sudan) as well as in Southern Africa (Lesotho, Swaziland and more recently in Zimbabwe). Operating on such a wide front, South Africa's new role in this evolving process deserves some attention.

The implementation of SA's global role has thrown up several difficulties over the last decade. For purposes of brevity, this discussion will focus on at least two areas: first, that of the EU itself 'projecting a single entity in its common foreign and defence policy' in its engagement with South Africa and second, the SA's response. This focus deliberately avoids complicate the analysis by including more vexing contexts such as the tripartite differences between the US the EU and some of the member states; the relationship between the US and the UN as played out within the EU or some its members; and finally, the fierce competition in Africa between Britain, France and the rest of the EU. A single example will suffice. Unilateral American policies towards Iraq, Iran and the Middle East have openly divided EU member states in what has been acknowledged as an ugly and embarrassing situation. The same is true of the EU position on the crisis in Zimbabwe where the French refused to toe the official line and so revealed fault lines in the coherence of the Union. It is therefore true to say that the specific relationship between the EU and SA, forged over the last ten years, is still embryonic and fraught with difficulties, some of which have not yet been fully explored. Against this background of lack of clarity and complex relationships, Venter and Nueland's *The European Union and South Africa* makes a timely entrance to the debate. In the foreword, Ambassador and Head of the EU Delegation to Pretoria, Michael Lake, correctly asserts that outside of official government circles there is little awareness of the evolving relationship between the EU and SA.

Venter and Nueland have put together a curiously structured book of 25 chapters that nevertheless provides insight into the special relationship that exists between the EU and

SA as manifested in the critical areas of trade, development cooperation and political interaction (also known as TDCA). They address specific issues such as globalization; economic integration; trading blocs; the media and issues related to foreign and security policy. In the book, chapters are not specifically attributed although the authors are identified as Dani Venter, Ernst Neuland, Eltie Links, Tersia Brevis, Wadim Schreiner, and Talitha Bertelsmann-Scott who were supported by researchers Larie Rohan-Irwin Venter, Anne Ostry and Cecilia du Plessis.⁴ This style of presentation, without direct acknowledgment is a deviation from the norm but credit must go to the editors for ensuring that the work still reads well and manages to retain the logical flow and thematic continuity of the diverse subjects covered. Of particular interest to this review, is Chapter 8 which covers the EU's Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy (CFSDP) as it relates to South Africa.

Relations in this area are particularly interesting: "Foreign, Security and Defence policies are confidential... shrouded in secrecy and never exposed to public scrutiny...public statements issued are bland, urbane...and only overt examples of differences in cooperation are revealed."⁵ However, despite their distaste for transparency in this area, the impact of the policies is unmistakable and deserves our attention. To this end, at least two questions need to be asked. The first is: What is the relationship between the EU and SA in the area of the Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy and has it worked? The second question is: How effectively has SA been able to use this relationship as leverage during its role a representative of southern interests in global politics?

Establishing a common foreign and security policy that eventually leads to a common defence policy has been an aspiration that has seized the European Union since the end of the Second World War in 1945. The objective was to come up:

...with an instrument that would enable the EU to integrate/synthesize and coordinate key national political, security and to an extent defence policies and act

as an entity in the international arena versus external threats.⁶

However, little progress was achieved despite the numerous interventions: 1948⁷; 1950⁸; 1953; 1956; 1960; 1961; 1970; 1973; 1989; 1993 or 1997. Chapter 8 comprehensively analyses the historical evolution of this process.⁹ An important development that occurred during this seeming period of stagnation was the achievement of political and monetary union in 1989. This was soon complemented by the collapse of communist power in the former Eastern bloc. The result was the further enhancement of the perception of common security. Finally, it was also during this 'inactive' period that structures responsible for the command, control and management of security and defence matters under civilian auspices were founded. These include the EU Parliament, an Executive Council and Council of Ministers. The hoped-for Joint European Army is still a mirage despite the nascent joint brigades' initiative drawn from the German and French armies.

The turn away from stagnation came in 1993, barely a year before South Africa's watershed election, when the EU created the Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy instrument.¹⁰ However, some are still sceptical about the instrument and some EU member states have resisted submitting their national interests in these sensitive areas to a central decision-making process in Brussels. The reality is that national interests still dominate and national security lies at the core of sovereignty and nationhood. Because of unwillingness by national governments to abrogate what they consider to be their primary responsibilities, after nearly 50 years of difficult negotiations, the EU has only succeeded in achieving the barest minimum common denominator agreement on these issues. Cooperation is confined to areas where member states' national interests are not threatened. In places where member countries have strong interests, the instrument has not worked or has been actively opposed.

A second difficulty lies in the need to establish credible institutions that are responsible for maintaining civilian political control.

The EU's decision-making structures related to the political direction, control and military command rest with the elected European Parliament; its representative Executive Council; the Council of Ministers; and finally (at least on paper) the still-to-be-launched European Joint Command. However, even where they have been established, these enjoy only limited powers because national institutions still retain considerable leverage and control especially in the area of defence policy.

A third sticking point is the fierce competition between Britain and France in Africa that has tended to paralyse the EU position. This phenomenon has been so common that the two countries were forced to come to some public accommodation. This was in the form of signing an '*Entente Cordiale Africa*' in 1990, agreeing to desist from competing fiercely in Africa.

However, a single example will show that this has not solved the problem between the two traditional rivalries in Africa. There differences appear in many forms. In the arena of peacekeeping in Africa for instance, the continent has had to contend with three views where the EU is concerned: a distinct EU position, a British view and a French view. The EU position must compete with views, postures and initiatives from Britain and France such as the Britain's Wider Peacekeeping which has aims similar to France's Reinforcement of African Military Peacekeeping Capacity (RECAMP).

The final flaw in the EU-CFSDP interaction is its serious internal differences when relating to the US or the United Nations (UN). In such instances, the EU has failed to act as a single entity on the international stage. In combination, the flaws discussed above reflect the serious internal flaws surrounding attempts to establish and operationalize the Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy by the EU. But despite these deficiencies in policy coherence and conduct, the EU has continued to function (admittedly well below its potential) and only manages to hold sway by adopting the lowest common denominator position. The same is also true of its relationship with SA which is clearly

based on the lowest common denominator that does not challenge keen national interests. If this is the level of EU's engagement with SA, then how has SA responded to the CFSDP initiative by the EU since 1993?

South Africa's Foreign, Security and Defence Policy since 1994 can best be described as a work in progress. A brief examination of its evolution over the last decade at the national, regional and continental levels does (despite the secrecy surrounding the policies) provide us with some identifiable trends indicating how SA has interacted with the EU.

Since coming to office in 1994, the African National Congress-led government embarked on a far reaching Defence Review process that led to the decision to purchase most of its major weapon systems from EU member states. This development was an important statement of the extent of SA's very cordial relations with the EU. There is now official talk of revisiting the Defence Review exercise in the light of South Africa's expanded role in Africa. Yet again, even in this second phase, South African defence officials are already in the process of acquiring large air transporters from the EU and its partner states. These purchases reflect a consolidation of the positive trend in relations. It can be said that, on the bilateral level, SA-EU relations have continued to improve and mature over the last 10 years.

There is a different message, however, when one assesses EU-SA and SADC relations. South Africa is a member of SADC, a regional entity that is part of the AU but with its own distinct policy, (the Mutual Defence Pact) and structures that include the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. The EU, as other donor countries have found, is increasingly frustrated in its attempts to engage with SADC. Significantly, at this level, South Africa often closes ranks with the other regional members against what is portrayed as 'external influence'.

Finally, South Africa is also a member of the African Union, an organization that has proposed an African Common Defence and Security Policy to guide the African Standby Force. The continental decision-making structures and elected representatives of the AU

(including the Pan African Parliament) are still evolving along lines pioneered by the EU. However, even where these continental policies are not in place, South Africa defers to the African Union when it deals with the EU at a continental level.

This is an important constraint that has to be acknowledged if South Africa is to continue to retain its credibility within the AU forums. This remains the case despite the fact that member states of the AU sometimes compete for positions such as the recent rush by Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa to secure a seat on the envisaged expanded UN Security Council. As South Africa continues to interact with the EU in the Common Foreign, Security and Defence arena, each of the levels identified offer different permutations that have not been exhausted in this brief review. What is clear, however, is that bilateral engagement is easier than attempts to extrapolate the bilateral template onto other levels. SA can easily act as the 'anointed son' during discussions on trade, economic integration and aid, but when it comes to matters of common foreign and security policy then the African Common Defence and Security Policy and SADC's Mutual Defence Pact take precedence. This complexity requires further examination.

The European Union and South Africa makes a provocative and up-to-date contribution by raising awareness of the various relationships between the EU and SA in the fields of trade, media, regional integration and common foreign and security policies. Even though the analysis is only perfunctory, the book is very good at tracing and highlighting the EU's dynamics and succeeds at challenging other to undertake more in-depth research. This review's focus on the CFSDP has confirmed that the work is not exhaustive (especially in its treatment of the EU-SA/CFSDP relations) but by simply making us aware of the existence of these relationships the book has made an important contribution. Much more importantly, the book's various authors highlight the flaws contained in the emerging EU policies and the lack of capacity in Brussels' institutions. However, similar (if not worse) difficulties exist in institutions on the African

continent from which South Africa must take its cue. In the absence of a strictly coherent approach, both sides have tried to adopt a win-win approach and proceeded bilaterally by using the lowest common denominator.

Martin R Rupiya

Notes

1 P H Bischoff, External and Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy Ambiguity: South African Foreign Policy and the Projection of Pluralist Middle Power, *South African Association of Political Studies*, Vol. 30 (2), November 2003, p 183, see also

abstract.
 2 Ibid, p 184.
 3 D Venter & E Neuland, *The European Union and South Africa*, Richard Havenga & Associates, Johannesburg, 2004, p vii.
 4 Ibid, pp ix – xi.
 5 Ibid, p 103 – 104.
 6 Op cit, p 103.
 7 Ibid, p 96, At the time, British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill spoke of a kind of a United States of Europe.
 8 Ibid, pp 97-100.
 9 Ibid, pp 97-101.
 10 From the 1993 Treaty, the CFSP provisions of Title V and Article 2 provided for the “EU to assert its identity....including eventual Defence Policy leading to a Common Defence” in other words, the latter is still a work in progress.