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Building Anticipatory Governance in SADC: Post-COVID-19 Conflict and Defence Outlook

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Abstract

Over the past four decades, SADC has been able to substantially advance the strategic goal of regional cooperation, coordination and eventual integration on many levels and is a prominent fixture on the Southern African landscape. Yet, despite sophisticated policies and strategies and a dominant regional power, it seems unable to galvanise the region to adopt a collective approach to the multitude of threats it faces. This report examines the state of the region's defence and security sectors, and considers the conditions under which SADC can adopt the logic of anticipatory governance and the identification of complex priorities, to give meaning to the preferable future of a stable and prosperous region. The report advises on foresight steps that will enable SADC to address the crisis in Cabo Delgado in northern Mozambique. It further recommends a deep security sector reform process on national and regional levels to prepare the ground for steering the region's peace and security agenda towards the achievement of a preferable future.

The relevance of anticipatory governance for SADC's conflict and defence issues

How should SADC's peace and security decision-makers prepare for what lies ahead? How can SADC best traverse increasing domestic, continental and global turbulence? The aim of this paper is to inform, explore and advise on the implementation of anticipatory governance (AG) relating to SADC conflict and defence issues and propose some systemic innovations.

These introductory questions are not easily answered. Futures studies and foresight experts alert us to three key elements of futures.¹ First, the future is not predetermined – in fact, it is described as inherently indeterminate – so there are considered to be infinitely many potential alternative futures. Second, the future is not predictable. We could never collect enough data to construct a complete model of how it would develop. Third, future outcomes can be influenced by our choices in the present.

What it all means is that we need to take responsibility for what lies ahead. In the language of futures studies, the actual future that eventuates – in which we will ultimately live and that we will experience as 'the present' at that time – will be governed by our actions (or inaction) in this present, along with the choices we have made among many alternative potential futures.

This leads us to clarify the way 'future' is used. Joseph Voros offers a useful way to distinguish four classes of potential alternative futures.² The first three are all largely

1 Joseph Voros, "Foresight Primer: An Introduction to Futures and Foresight", first published in *Prospect*, the Foresight Bulletin, 6, December 2001, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia, <https://thevoroscope.com/publications/foresight-primer/>.

2 Voros, "Foresight Primer"

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concerned with informational or cognitive knowledge, while the fourth, by contrast, is largely emotional rather than cognitive, deriving from value judgements:

- Possible futures: all the kinds of futures we can possibly imagine – those that ‘might happen’ – no matter how unlikely. These futures are reliant on the existence of some future knowledge (that is, knowledge we do not yet possess) in order to come about.
- Plausible futures: those that ‘could happen’ according to current knowledge (as opposed to future knowledge) of how things work. This is a smaller subset of futures than the possible.
- Probable futures: those considered ‘likely to happen’, stemming in part from the continuance of current trends. It is a simple linear extension of the present. However, trends are not necessarily continuous over long periods of time, and discontinuities in the trends may occur.
- Preferable futures: is concerned with what we ‘want to’ happen. Because values differ so markedly between people, this class of futures is quite varied. Preferable (or preferred) futures can lie in any of the previous three classes.

What avenues are available to governments and decision-makers as they contemplate the future and seek to influence it? To what extent can governance – an active, democratising moment where contending forces with legitimacy struggle over what service will be delivered, to whom, at what cost, and when – be future-oriented, beyond the immediate?³ The notion of AG is used in various influential strands of social science and sustainability science scholarship. A prominent definition of AG holds that it is a system of institutions, rules and norms that provides a way to use foresight, networks and feedback for the purpose of reducing risk and increasing capacity to respond to events at earlier rather than later stages of development.⁴

3 David Everatt, “Governance in the Postcolony: Time for a Rethink?”, in David Everatt, ed., *Governance and the Postcolony: Views From Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2019), 3–4.

4 Leon Fuerth, “Operationalising Anticipatory Governance”, *Prism* 2, no. 4 (September 2011): 31–46.

A prominent definition of AG holds that it is a system of institutions, rules and norms that provides a way to use foresight, networks and feedback for the purpose of reducing risk and increasing capacity to respond to events at earlier rather than later stages of development

However, there are various competing and overlapping understandings and approaches to AG. Below, a summary of the dominant approaches.⁵

First, AG studies have emerged from concern about the possible disruptive consequences of scientific and technological innovations. AG is defined as a broad-based capacity extended through society that can act on a variety of inputs to manage emerging, knowledge-based technologies while such management is still possible.⁶ In this view, AG is a nonpredictive approach to enhance present-day preparedness, including through building capacities in foresight and multi-stakeholder engagement, all to steer away from possible disruptive impacts of novel technologies in the future. This approach is best described as “probable futures, strategic planning, and risk reduction”.⁷

Second, AG is explicitly addressed in national security policy analyses. AG is envisioned here as governance that can manage crises *ex ante* (before the event) to prevent their destabilising effects. This perspective focuses on the adaptive capacity of national planning systems. The future is conceived of as containing reducible risks, which can be acted upon and mitigated through improved planning processes in the present. This approach is described as ‘plausible futures, enhanced preparedness, and navigating uncertainty’.⁸

A third strand of writing seeks to provide an alternative planning approach to address the adaptation challenge. The novelty lies in seeking to steer away from short-term decision-making to longer-term policy visioning in ways that can anticipate change and help realise more sustainable futures. Such perspectives also highlight the role played in anticipatory processes by local communities and a diverse array of stakeholders. This approach is described as ‘pluralistic futures, societal mobilization and co-creating alternatives’.⁹

Fourth, there is a more critical line of research whereby AG is understood as the attempt to govern under conditions of extreme scientific uncertainty and normative conflict over the

5 A comprehensive review of the literature was undertaken by Muiderman et al., who mapped four broad clusters or approaches to AG; See Karlijn Muiderman et al., “Four Approaches to Anticipatory Climate Governance: Different Conceptions of the Future and Implications for the Present”, *WIREs Climate Change* 11, no. 6 (2020): 1-20, <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.673>.

6 This definition is by one of the leading scholars in the field, David Guston, “Understanding ‘Anticipatory Governance’”, *Social Studies of Science* 44, no. 2 (2014): 218-242, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312713508669>.

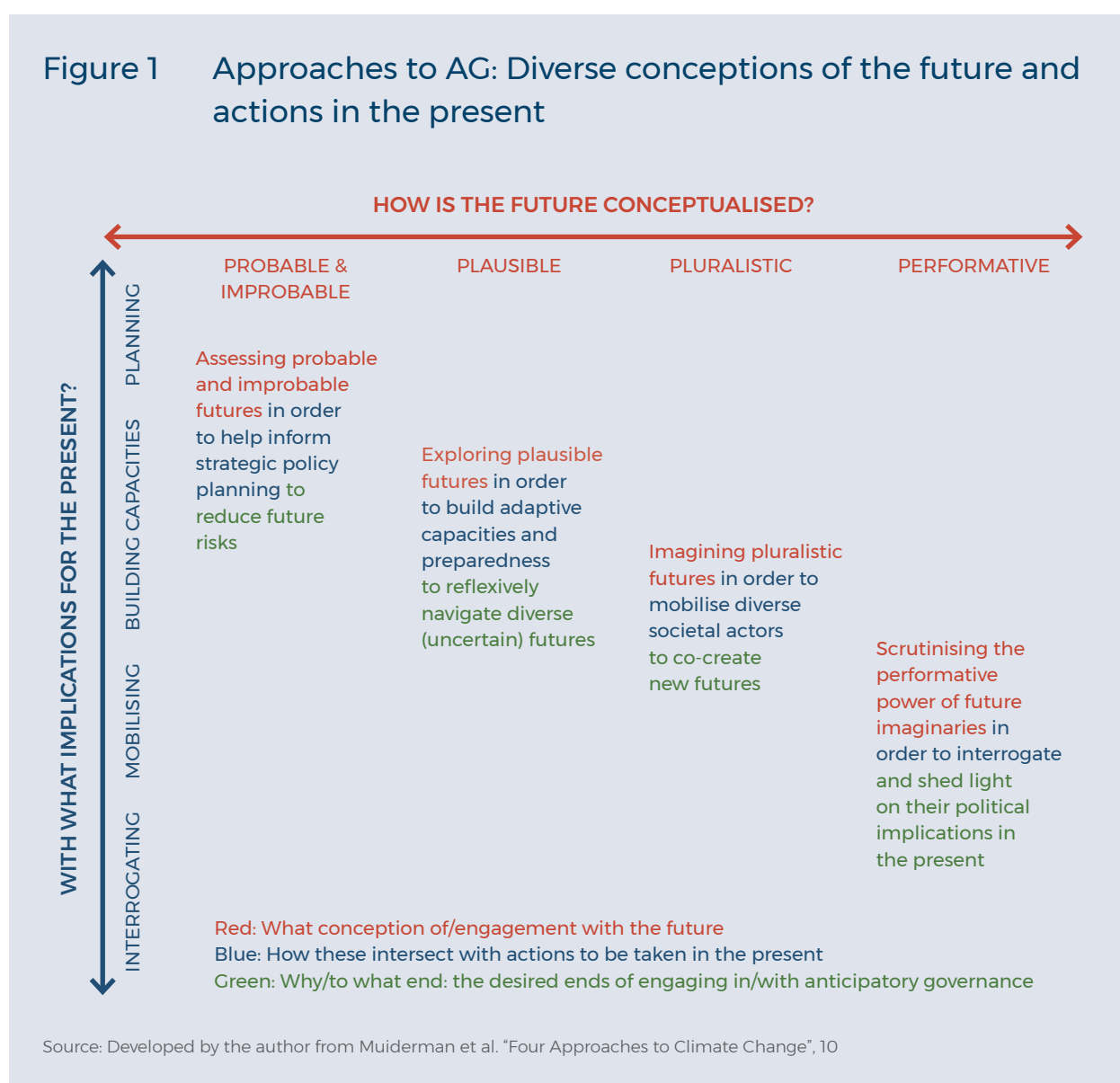
7 Muiderman et al., “Four Approaches to Anticipatory Climate”, 7.

8 Muiderman et al., “Four Approaches to Anticipatory Climate”, 7.

9 Muiderman et al., “Four Approaches to Anticipatory Climate”, 8.

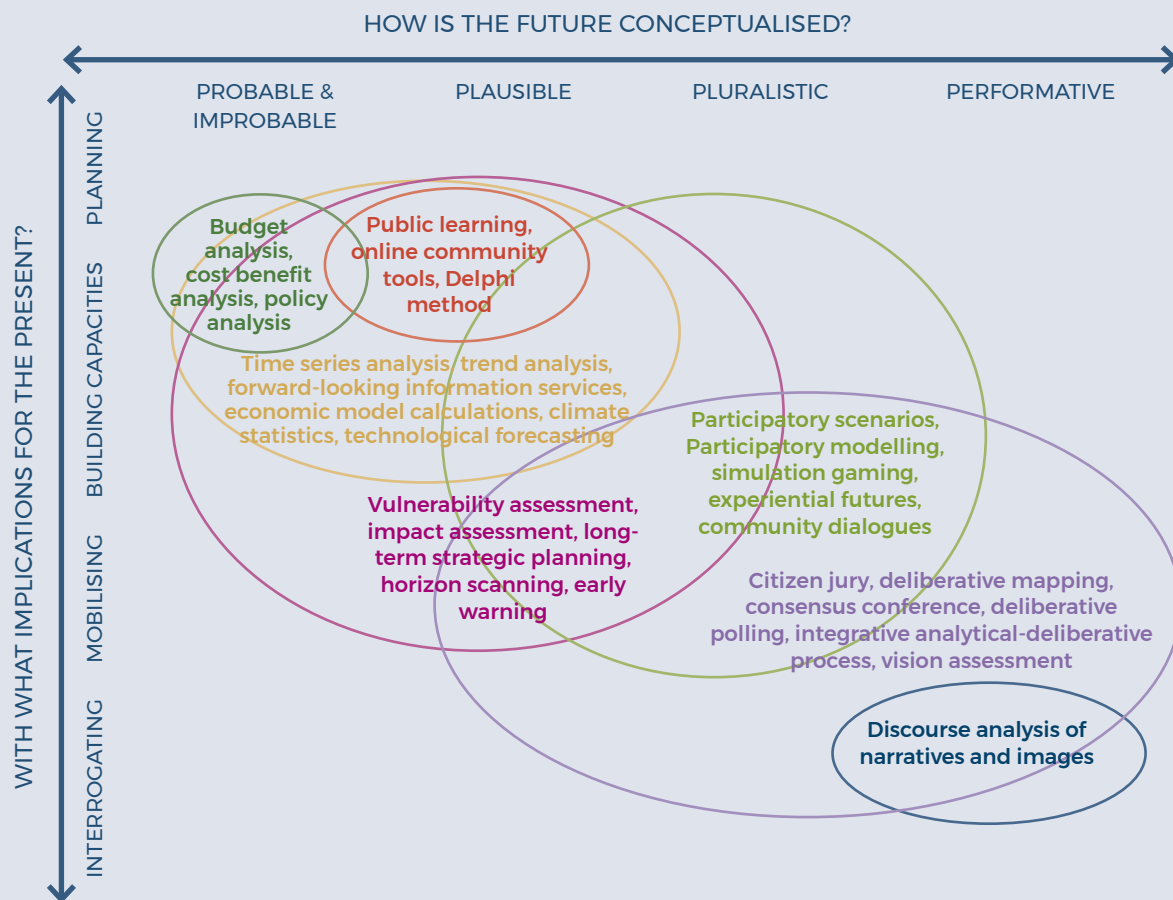
very existence and nature of future environmental and technological risk and harm. A key concern is the power of expert knowledge and scientific expertise in calling into being, and engaging with, diverse futures. Such an approach questions whether expert-driven visioning is merely a technical process that can objectively and neutrally engage with the future. In this view, claim-making about the future must instead be analysed as a site of political negotiation and conflict. This approach is described as ‘performative futures, critical interrogation, and political implications’.¹⁰

These approaches are visualised in Figure 1. The horizontal axis illustrates the continuum of conceptions of the future. The vertical axis shows the continuum of views on implications for actions in the present. Figure 2 shows the maps methods and tools that are used in and across four approaches to anticipatory governance.



¹⁰ Muiderman et al., "Four Approaches to Anticipatory Climate", 9.

Figure 2 Diverse tools and methods of anticipation



Source: Developed by the author from Muiderman et al. "Four Approaches to Climate Change", 10

This paper adopts the broadly shared view that AG is a nonpredictive approach to enhance present-day preparedness, including through building capacities in foresight and multi-stakeholder engagement. In order to support the SADC conflict and defence agenda, it also finds value in working within the scope of the first two approaches: ‘probable futures, strategic planning, and risk reduction’, and ‘plausible futures, enhanced preparedness, and navigating uncertainty’. It views them as mutually supportive.

The reason for this choice lies with the nature of the organisation under investigation. As will become apparent in the paper, the work of the peace and security division of SADC, an intergovernmental organisation of 16 member states, is mostly driven by standard operating procedures yet displays elements of strategic policy planning to reduce future risks. However, it has a poor track record of anticipating and addressing disruption in the peace and security domain. The paper develops the argument that SADC will benefit from adopting AG to explore plausible futures in order to build adaptive capacities and preparedness to navigate uncertain futures.

The third approach to AG that calls for the mobilisation of societal actors to co-create new futures belongs to a domain beyond peace and security. The question of how the SADC Secretariat and its member states arrived at an encompassing vision of the future (displayed in its recently released Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan and Vision 2050) is valid and requires scrutiny. There is also much value in interrogating the political dimensions of these future imaginaries, as the fourth approach suggests. For the purposes of this paper, however, the focus will be on the most appropriate manner in which SADC peace and security decision-makers can envisage a peaceful future and the available tools (as displayed in Figure 2) to build capacity and enhance preparedness for diverse futures.

Part of such an attitude is working with the concept of complex priorities: combinations of complex challenges that are urgent, thematically related, interactive and resistant to treatment in isolation.¹¹ Complex priorities form systems that must be managed concurrently. Short-range goals must be examined against long-term objectives. Complex priorities cannot be dealt with by means of linear approaches based on individual elements of government. No single agency possesses the authority or the expertise needed to manage them. Complex priorities require an integrated approach to the formulation and execution of policy.

To what extent do SADC's peace and security decision-makers and implementers manage their affairs actively and with a forward-looking attitude? Can they adopt AG and identify complex priorities and plausible futures in the management of the Community's dynamic and fast-changing security environment? How can the Community do so, and what will be the consequences? These questions will be explored below.

In the following sections, I offer a brief overview of SADC and examine the fast-changing global-threat landscape as a backdrop to the question the paper seeks to address, namely the extent to which its peace and security decision-makers can adopt AG in preparation for a dynamic and fast-changing future.

SADC

The 16-member SADC was established as a development coordinating conference (SADCC) in 1980 and transformed into a development community in 1992.¹² The transformation was premised on the assumption that with the democratisation of South Africa, the coordination of anti-apartheid measures had to be replaced with a regional integration agenda and the promotion of stability, growth and development, and democracy.

¹¹ Scholars such as Jean Boulton argue that complexity theory offers a perspective on what it means to say that the world is complex. Acting as if the world is measurable, controllable and predictable does not make it so. And yet, neither is the world chaotic and random. The world is marked by patterns of relationships. Complexity thinking addresses the balance between, on the one hand, assuming predictability and stability, and on the other, handling uncertainty, novelty and change. See Jean Boulton, Peter Allen and Cliff Bowman, *Embracing Complexity: Strategic Perspectives for an age of Turbulence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹² SADC member states include Angola, Botswana, DRC, eSwatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and the Indian Ocean Island states Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles.

SADCC and SADC therefore emerged in the context of the struggle of the African people against apartheid and colonial exploitation and draws inspiration from its liberation history as it builds a shared future.

The vision of SADC is one of a *common future* within a regional community where the people of Southern Africa enjoy economic well-being, improved standards of living, freedom and social justice, and peace and security.¹³

The mission of SADC is to promote *sustainable and equitable economic growth* and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper co-operation and integration, good governance, and durable peace and security. This, SADC assumes, will ensure that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy.

Achievements and challenges

SADC can claim several *impressive achievements*. Politically, it worked towards the emancipation of Namibia and South Africa and, post-1994, revised its institutional and operational architectures. It expanded its membership from the original nine founders to the current 16 member states. It coordinates its activities closely with International Cooperation Partners. Its affairs are run by a small secretariat from its headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana. Through its priority projects – economic integration, development, peace and security, and democratic consolidation – its member states have committed to processes of policy coordination and political cooperation, setting the building blocks for eventual integration. Elections are a regular occurrence throughout SADC, and it boasts several stable democracies: Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles and South Africa. However, at the same time, democracy is under threat in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar and Zimbabwe. It also features troubled transitions in Angola, eSwatini, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia.

The biggest challenge to SADC relates to the structure of the African economy. Governments need to secure the well-being of their people as they simultaneously engage global markets and politics (including the emerging, high-tech, pre- and post-COVID-19 landscape). The typical African economy is characterised by a small and well-resourced formal sector that operates in isolation from a large, growing and poverty-stricken informal economy and communal subsistence economy.

Human development lags. The distribution of resources and income is highly skewed. More than 60% of the population of 345 million lacks access to safe water, a third lives in abject poverty, and about 40% of the labour force is unemployed or underemployed.¹⁴

13 For a detailed description of the Community's vision and mission and "common agenda", see the SADC website at <https://www.sadc.int/about-sadc/overview/>.

14 Southern Africa Trust, SADC Regional Integration Toolkit for Non-State Actors (Johannesburg: Southern Africa Trust, 2020), <https://knowledgehub.southernafricatrust.org/research/sadc-regional-integration-toolkit-for-non-state-actors/>.

Extreme weather – a consequence of climate change – has a direct impact on the region. Floods, cyclones and droughts are regular features of the Southern African landscape.

At the time of writing, the COVID-19 pandemic is in full swing, infecting millions around the world and in Africa.

Under these conditions, the provision of common goods – good governance, stability and social justice – is challenged. Armed conflict, organised and violent crime, resource exploitation, corruption, gender-based violence and foreign political interference thrive throughout many parts of SADC. Often, elections are cynical exercises by elites holding on or aspiring to political power.

The performance of the defence sector will be subject to scrutiny in the rest of this report.

The global and regional threat landscape

Presenting a tour of the global and regional threat landscape, this section demonstrates the nature of the environment defence and security policymakers face. AG would allow for decision-making based on foresight and societal capacity, rather than reactive bureaucratic behaviour that often is too little, too late.

Global risks – an overview

Five major global trends have an impact on Southern African security – economic vulnerabilities, geopolitical tensions, socio-political strain, climate vulnerabilities including infectious diseases, and technological instabilities. Based on the World Economic Forum's 2020 Global Risks Report (the WEF Report), the section below briefly describes the key features of each trend.¹⁵

Economic vulnerabilities

The WEF Report shows that the rate of global economic growth has peaked. Projections of a slowdown in China – from 6.6% in 2018 to 6.2% in 2020 and 5.8% by 2022 – are a source of concern. The total global debt burden is significantly higher than it was before the global financial crisis, at around 225% of gross domestic product. These trends are important to SADC as a trading partner with both the East and West.

Geopolitical tensions

The evolving China-US relationship is part of the dynamic and increasingly unstable global geopolitical landscape. In addition, key players India, Brazil, Russia, the Gulf States, Turkey and others are at odds with some Western norms, and there are threats to multilateralism.

15 World Economic Forum, The Global Risks Report 2020 (Davos: World Economic Forum, 2020) http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risk_Report_2020.pdf.

SADC's natural resource base and relative stability attract many of these international players, and the region is directly affected by tense global dynamics.

Socio-political strains

Mounting geopolitical instabilities are matched by continuing domestic political strains. The WEF Report ranks 'domestic political polarization' second only to climate change as a global risk.¹⁶ Many political leaders and communities feel they have lost control – whether to internal divisions, external rivals or multilateral organisations – and, in response, they look to strengthen the state.

Beyond being directly targeted with violence and discrimination, women around the world are also disproportionately affected by higher levels of poverty and being the primary providers of childcare, food and fuel.

Violent conflict remains one of the most potent causes of emotional and psychological distress, affecting huge numbers of people, particularly in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. Income and wealth disparities have been linked to increasing mental health problems. Wider changes in the structure of work and in its place in society are a further source of potential stress.

Climate catastrophe

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world has at most 12 years to make changes needed to prevent average global temperatures from rising beyond the Paris Agreement's 1.5 degree target.¹⁷ The most frequently cited risk interconnection is 'failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation' and 'extreme weather events'. The accelerating pace of biodiversity loss is a particular concern. Domestic and coordinated international action is needed to internalise and mitigate the impact of human activity on natural systems.

The weakness of basic preparedness in individual countries is an important obstacle to pandemic responses. Progress has been made, particularly since the Ebola epidemic of 2014 to 2016, but most countries in the global South have not yet reached minimum international standards of capacity to detect, assess, report and respond to acute public health threats as set out in binding regulations that took effect in 2007.¹⁸ The SADC response to the latest pandemic – COVID-19 – is examined below.

16 World Economic Forum, The Global Risks Report 25.

17 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Special Report: Global Warming of 1.50C* (Geneva: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2018) <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>.

18 The International Health Regulations provide an overarching legal framework that defines countries' rights and obligations in handling public health events and emergencies that have the potential to cross borders. https://www.who.int/health-topics/international-health-regulations#tab=tab_1.

Technological instabilities

Technology continues to play a profound role in shaping the global risks landscape for individuals, governments and businesses. Massive data fraud and theft, and cyber-attacks are ranked high. Risks associated with fake news and identity theft are on the increase. The potential vulnerability of critical technological infrastructure has increasingly become a national security concern.

Each cluster of threat as discussed above has relevance for SADC in the sense of undermining peace and stability if poorly understood, under-estimated or ignored. Scenarios can be used to show possible future pathways that will inform strategic choices. In brief, scenarios are instruments for ordering people's perceptions about alternative futures in which decisions made today might play out. A scenario embodies a plausible view or perception of the future in a given year linked to conditions in the present via an internally consistent sequence of events.¹⁹ As a scenario planner noted, 'Scenario planning gently releases us from conditioned worldviews and assumptions and exposes us to new perspectives and ways. Scenarios enrich our decision making for the future and guide our strategic choices for future success.'²⁰

This methodology should apply to the themes of geopolitical tensions, socio-political strain, climate change and technological disruption.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Southern Africa and the continent

Globally, as of 28 February 2021, there have been 113,315,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 2,518,000 deaths, reported to the World Health Organization (WHO).²¹ Africa's share was 3,888,000 confirmed cases and 103,400 deaths.²²

The Southern African region recorded 1,832,000 confirmed cases and 56,300 deaths.²³ It must be noted that the SADC score remains to be confirmed; for example, member state Tanzania, with a population of 60 million, recorded 21 deaths.

South Africa's share of these numbers remains overwhelming. By late February 2021, confirmed cases stood at 1,510,000 and total deaths at 50,000. Not one of the other SADC member states recorded more than 300 deaths.²⁴

Viruses change and mutate. By January 2021, two variants had been reported to the WHO: one first identified in the UK and one first identified in South Africa. These variants have been associated with an increase in the number of cases in both countries. Scientists have found

19 See Pierre Schwartz, *The Art of the Long View* (New York, Doubleday Currency, 1991).

20 Michael Blyth, "Learning from the future through scenario planning", Four Scenes, <http://www.fourscenes.com.au/LearningFromScenarios0305.pdf>.

21 World Health Organization, *WHO Coronavirus Disease Dashboard*, <https://covid19.who.int/>.

22 African Union, *Africa CDC Dashboard*, <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/>.

23 African Union, *Africa CDC Dashboard*.

24 SADC, *SADC Regional Response to Covid-19 Pandemic*, <https://www.sadc.int/issues/covid-19/>.

that these variants do tend to spread faster; they are more transmissible or more infectious. However, so far, they do not seem to cause more severe illness or a higher death rate.²⁵

A study on the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Africa the office of the World Bank's chief economist for Africa released in April 2020, shows that the combination of weak external demand, an accompanying sharp fall in commodity prices, and the disruption in tourism caused by COVID-19 will negatively affect economic activity in sub-Saharan Africa.²⁶

More recent research suggests Africa will suffer its first recession in 25 years.²⁷ The collapse in 2020 was dominated by the two largest economies: Nigeria and South Africa (with contractions of 5.4% and 8%, respectively).²⁸ Furthermore, Africa has suffered its first setback in poverty reduction in two decades, which threatens to reverse all the gains made to achieve the millennium development goals. For example, an additional 9.1% of the population in Africa have fallen into extreme poverty as a result of COVID-19.²⁹

Judged by this analysis, the COVID-19 pandemic is a 'black swan' event – a low probability/high impact event.³⁰ Whether anticipated or not, its socio-economic impact globally is extreme, and Africa is at the receiving end, with South Africa, its most prominent economy, on the ropes.

Would the application of foresight and AG tools have assisted SADC and its member states in anticipating, preparing and managing the COVID pandemic? At a planning meeting of the peace and security division of SADC in 2018, a scenario was workshopped along the lines of a regional Ebola breakout. The exercise revealed militarised and bureaucratic thinking in response to an emerging crisis. Little did the participants know that the worst-case scenario – a public health catastrophe – was waiting in the wings.

South Africa took early action and responded with drastic measures to slow the spread of the virus. Most SADC member states followed suit with lockdown measures. However, from a strategic perspective, SADC decision-makers were seemingly unable to anticipate the enormously negative socio-economic and political consequences of the COVID pandemic.³¹

These developments have direct consequences for the peace and security agenda of the Southern African region – to which this report now turns.

25 World Health Organization, *Science in 5 on Covid-19: Variants and Vaccines*, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5>.

26 World Bank, *Assessing the Economic Impact of Covid-19 and Policy Responses in sub-Saharan Africa*, Africa's Pulse 21 (Washington: World Bank, 2020).

27 Benno Ndulu, "The Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on Sub-Saharan African Economies", Centre for International Governance Innovation, August 6 2020, <https://www.cigionline.org/articles/covid-19-pandemic-and-its-impact-sub-saharan-african-economies>.

28 Ndulu, "The Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact".

29 Ndulu, "The Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact".

30 For a contrasting view, see Glenn McGillivray, "Coronavirus is significant, but is it a true black swan event?", *The Conversation*, April 30, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-is-significant-but-is-it-a-true-black-swan-event-136675>.

31 For critical analysis, see Anthoni van Nieuwkerk, "Why our Political Leadership has Fallen Short in a Time of Crisis", in Pieter du Toit, ed., *South Africa Beyond Covid-19: Trends, Change and Recovery* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2020), 177-186.

The state of peace and security in Southern Africa

Southern African peace and security dynamics need to be understood from a broader historic setting. The expectation of a 'peace dividend' after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was naïve. Geopolitical competition and tension remained, including corrupt and often criminal behaviour of state and non-state actors. Facilitated by rampant globalisation and the growing weaknesses of states in the developing world, there was a rising tendency to seek benefits from business deals with criminal networks, arms traffickers and unscrupulous corporate entities, reaching well beyond the war zones to the world of commodity markets and financial centres.

Consequently, in Africa, generally speaking, the task of creating the conditions required to generate lasting peace remain a challenge.

As measured by the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, SADC is one of the most stable sub-regions of Africa.³² While this reality shows the majority of the states in this particular area are strong and have a more developed infrastructural power than other parts of the continent, they are also experiencing the same state-centric crisis as other sub-regions.

However, the fragility of the state and the deficiencies in its operations in SADC are different. These differences result from the particularities of the state building environment in the sub-region. These particularities, in turn, are a product of the peculiar historical and sociological experience of this part of Africa.

In terms of challenges of peace and security, the sources of state and human insecurity in SADC mostly revolve around issues of armed conflict, political crisis, democratic deficits and governance deficits (Figure 3).³³ What also makes the great contrast between southern Africa and the rest of the continent is that SADC enjoys higher levels of human development than the rest of sub-Saharan Africa.

The Community's responses to the main challenges to peace and security since 2010 shed some light on its limitations.

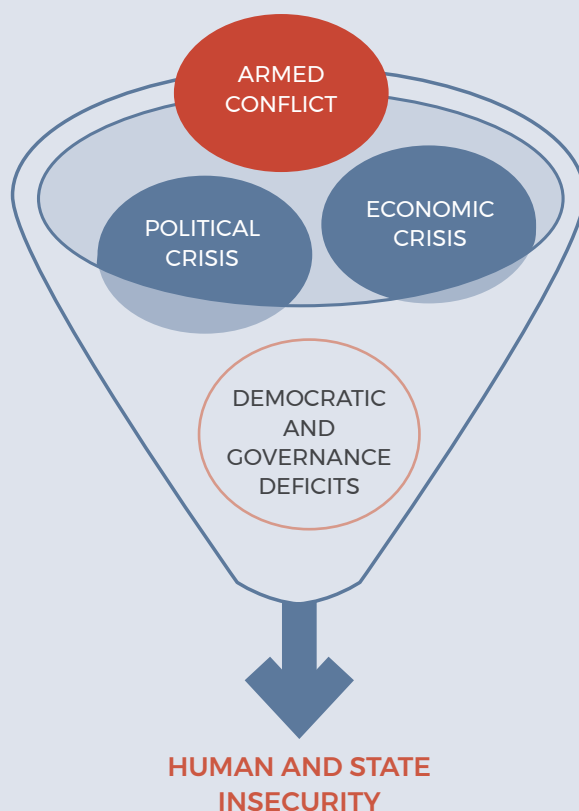
At first glance, SADC has over the past five years successfully managed armed conflict in the DRC and prevented political crises in Lesotho, Madagascar and Zimbabwe from erupting into violence. This was done largely via mediation efforts.³⁴

32 The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) measures overall governance against four themes; "security and rule of law" is one. In this regard, SADC compares favourably with the Economic Community of West African States (an IIAG score of 55 for SADC versus 56 for ECOWAS). See Ibrahim Index of African Governance, <http://iiag.online/about.html>.

33 The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, *The State of Security Sector Reform and Governance in Southern Africa*, research report (Geneva: DCAF, 2017), 6.

34 Dimpho Motsamai, "Evaluating the Peacemaking Effectiveness of SADC" (PhD diss., University of the Witwatersrand, 2018).

Figure 3 Sources of human and state insecurity in SADC



Source: The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, *The State of Security Sector Reform and Governance in Southern Africa*, research report (Geneva: DCAF, 2017), 6

Yet a closer look brings such easy conclusions into doubt, since the interventions were successful mostly due to the efforts of individual member states rather than those of SADC as an institution.

Such inabilities are due to the fact that the regional institution has mostly been operating as a platform for high level mediation. Subsequently, the political culture of SADC remained framed by the ruling leaders and parties' attachment to legacy of the past - nothing related to the Community's progressive objectives, contained in the guiding principles of its Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO).

While one should learn from the past, it should not cripple the future. The main challenge and barrier to the effective functioning of SADC is the organisation's principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of its member states. This principle stems from a deep sense of loyalty among member states due to their joint liberation history.

This principle of non-interference, which informs member states' cooperation with external actors and donors, lies at the core of the dilemmas the institution will be facing

in the shifting global security and political economy environment. Indeed, the liberation movement ethos, internalised by ruling parties in several of the SADC member states, has been unable to allow for adjustment to the requirements of nimble, adaptive governance in times of rapid change.³⁵

Indeed, the liberation movement ethos, internalised by ruling parties in several of the SADC member states, has been unable to allow for adjustment to the requirements of nimble, adaptive governance in times of rapid change

The Southern African region of 345 million people and 16 states is hardly homogenous. Highly uneven levels of development and economic diversification mark its development profile. It is a region torn apart by the historic forces of slave trade, and colonial and apartheid subjugation and exploitation, and shaped by the consequences of liberation struggle and post-independence political dynamics, and the Cold War. In the post-apartheid, post-Cold War era, the region struggles to realise a common vision and future. The recently adopted SADC Vision 2050 has yet to prove itself as more than the outcome of just another bureaucratic process by demonstrating its value in improving the lives of the citizens.³⁶

A functional regional community can best address development and security in Southern Africa. Democracy is key to building 'region-ness'. But various internal and external forces as described in this report are degrading democracy, a fragile plant in this region. Without stability, development will wither. It is therefore critical for the region's leadership and decision-makers to build a model of governance that incorporates a functional relationship among democracy, stability and development.

As the report earlier noted, we can think of AG as a broad-based capacity extended through society to act on a variety of inputs to manage emerging knowledge-based technologies while such management is still possible.³⁷ AG enhances present-day preparedness, including through building capacities in foresight and multi-stakeholder engagement, all to steer away from possible disruptive impacts of novel technologies in the future.

35 Henning Melber, "Southern African Liberation Movements as Governments and the Limits to Liberation", *Review of African Political Economy* 36, no. 121 (September 2009): 451-459.

36 Southern African News Features, "SADC Approves Vision 2050, RISDP 2020-30", press release, August 19, 2020, <https://www.sardc.net/en/southern-african-news-features/sadc-approves-vision-2050-risdp-2020-30/>.

37 Guston, "Understanding 'anticipatory governance'."

An anticipatory government requires the following four components: a system of foresight (i.e. not only trend extrapolation but also scenario building); a system that integrates foresight and the political process; a feedback system to measure performance and manage institutional knowledge; and an open, broad-minded institutional culture.³⁸

Building on these insights, the role of foresight and futures literacy is to provide viable, hopeful and bold alternative futures through the human capabilities of imagination and anticipation. AG can provide alternative futures, including reframing the notion of power and democracy in Southern Africa and the role of elections when visions of the future are truly co-created.³⁹

The challenge for SADC is to break out of its formalistic, bureaucratic and ruling party strictures, as well as its over-reliance on Western donors, to set the integration agenda, and allow for such co-creation to emerge

The challenge for SADC is to break out of its formalistic, bureaucratic and ruling party strictures, as well as its over-reliance on Western donors, to set the integration agenda, and allow for such co-creation to emerge. Numerous attempts by members of civil society to envision and bring SADC closer to ‘the SADC we want’ have not yielded results, and this demonstrates the enormity of the challenge.⁴⁰ Although the emergence of a co-created regional future might be some way off, the paper argues for modest beginnings, starting with the introduction of the AG approach to better plan and reduce future risk and build adaptive capacities to navigate uncertain futures.

In the next section, the state of the defence and security sector in SADC is examined in an attempt to determine how AG can be introduced to improve peace and security strategic planning, adaptive capacities and preparedness.

38 Roberto Poli, *Working With The Future: Ideas and Tools to Govern Uncertainty* (Milano: Bocconi University Press, 2019), Chapter 7.

39 Deon Cloete, personal communication, November 16, 2020.

40 “The SADC we want” initiative emerged at a 2016 gathering of a large number of civil society delegates under the banner of the SADC Civil Society Forum, who called for the realisation of people-centred development in Southern Africa. See Trade Law Centre, “Citizens Rising – Reclaiming SADC for People’s Democracy”, Communique of the 12th Civil Society Regional Forum, August 17, 2016, <https://www.tralac.org/news/article/10311-the-sadc-we-want-reclaiming-southern-africa-through-citizens-power.html>. In an ironic twist, one year later, SADC held a “strategic ministerial retreat” entitled “The SADC we want”. See “Draft Remarks by the SADC Executive Secretary at the SADC Strategic Ministerial Retreat, 12 March 2017”, https://www.sadc.int/files/1914/8933/2341/SADC_Strategic_Ministerial_Retreat_-_SADC_ES.pdf.

The state of the region's defence

Institutional arrangements

SADC pursues its vision and mission by way of its new Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030, adopted by the SADC Summit in August 2020.⁴¹

The ultimate objective of the new RISDP is to deepen the integration agenda of SADC, with a view to accelerating poverty eradication. Its four priority areas are:⁴²

- industrial development and market integration;
- infrastructure in support of regional integration, including energy, transport, tourism, information and communication technology, meteorology and water;
- peace and security cooperation; and
- special programmes including human development, health, gender and labour.

Following the establishment of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation in 1996, the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation was signed in 2001. It provides an institutional framework through which member states coordinate policies and activities in the areas of politics, defence and security. The general objective of the Organ is to promote peace and security in the region.

In order to operationalise the Protocol, SIPO was developed and launched in 2004. The Revised SIPO (SIPO II) was launched in 2012 and remained SADC's peace and security policy framework and strategic approach until 2020. A recent assessment of SIPO found that:⁴³

progress has been made with regard to election management, the establishment of a mediation infrastructure, SADC's peace-keeping and early warning capacities, and the regional coordination of police and crime fighting. Implementation of the plan and functioning of the infrastructure have, however, been impeded by a lack of coordination between SADC institutions and, most importantly, by member states' unwillingness to give adequate material and political support to the supranational structures that were created on the initiative of the Secretariat and donors.

41 The SADC Vision 2050 and Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020-2030 were approved by the 40th Ordinary Summit of SADC on August 17, 2020. See Southern African News Features, "SADC Approves Vision 2050, RISDP 2020-30", press release, August 19, 2020, <https://www.sardc.net/en/southern-african-news-features/sadc-approves-vision-2050-risdp-2020-30/>. The RISDP 2020-2030 document is available at https://www.sadc.int/files/4716/1434/6113/RISDP_2020-2030_F.pdf.

42 The consulting firm tasked with developing the policy framework published the draft version on its website. See https://imanidevelopment.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/4th-Draft_RISDP-2020-30-Blue-Prints2.pdf.

43 Michael Aeby, "SADC - The Southern Arrested Development Community? Enduring Challenges to Peace and Security in Southern Africa", Policy Dialogue No.14 (Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute, 2019), <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1351257/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

The peace and security theme has now been incorporated into the RISDP 2020–2030 policy framework. The draft document suggests four priority areas:⁴⁴

- an enhanced conflict prevention, management and resolution system with an effective early warning system;
- strengthened political cooperation, enhanced democracy, good governance, rule of law, human rights and human security;
- an enhanced collective defence and security system capable of safeguarding the territorial integrity of the region; and
- a responsive and proactive coordination mechanism to address the impact of climate change and natural disasters.

Profile of the defence sector

Given that SADC keeps on producing comprehensive, elite-driven security policy and strategy documents with little citizen participation, how will it implement them? What tools are available to SADC to advance its peace and security agenda?

Table 1 shows the overall size of the region's defence and security sectors.

From these figures, it is apparent that the size and preparedness of the defence and security sectors of the SADC member states are uneven. On the one hand, two member states maintain sizeable defence forces and budgets: Angola and South Africa. The DRC has a large defence force on paper but is unable to maintain or restore peace, law and order. On the other hand, several member states have miniscule defence and security sectors and budgets: Lesotho and eSwatini, and Comoros and Seychelles. Many member states with small defence and security sectors rely on bilateral arrangements – mostly with India and some with North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries – for protection. SADC's island states focus on maritime security issues and maintain coast guards. Except for South Africa, no member state has a defence industry. Equipment is increasingly obsolete, outdated or poorly maintained. Few have the ability to participate meaningfully in UN or African Union (AU) peacekeeping operations, and it is doubtful that the collective would be able to mount a SADC Standby Force (also called the SADC Brigade) operation to deal with a breach of peace and security or a substantial natural disaster.⁴⁵ International cooperation is therefore unavoidable.

44 I participated in a review of the draft. See Imani Development Consultants, "RISDP 2020–2030 Blueprints, 4th Draft", https://imanidevelopment.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/4th-Draft_RISDP-2020-30-Blue-Prints2.pdf.

45 The African Standby Force (ASF) continues to be a "work in progress". This includes finalising regional standby brigades, policies for peace support operations and a new concept of operations; establishing ASF regional logistic depots; and "harmonising" the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises within the ASF framework. See African Union, *Report of the Peace and Security Council on Its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa, for the Period from February 2019 to February 2020* (Addis Ababa: African Union, 2020), https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38309-doc-8_report_on_psc_on_its_activities_and_the_state_of_peace_security_in_africa_.pdf.

TABLE 1 PROFILE OF SADC DEFENCE FORCES – BUDGET, ACTIVE PERSONNEL (TOTAL AND PER SERVICE)

SADC member state	Budget in \$		Active personnel				
	2018	2019	Total	Army	Navy	Air	Other
Angola	2.16bn	1.70bn	107,000	100,000	1,000	6,000	10,000 rapid-reaction police
Botswana	518mn	537mn	9,000	8,500	–	500	–
Comoros	n.k.	n.k.	1,000	500	–	–	500 police
DRC	297mn	329mn	e134,250	e103,000	6,700	2,550	8,000 republican guard
Eswatini	e84mn	n.k.	3,100	3,000	–	100	–
Lesotho	48mn	43mn	2,000	e2,000	–	110	–
Madagascar	73mn	77mn	13,500	12,500	500	500	8,100 gendarmerie
Malawi	51mn	68mn	10,700	10,700	220	200	4,200 police mobile service
Mauritius	222mn	220mn	2,550 special mobile force, e800 coast guard, police air wing				
Mozambique	129mn	127mn	11,200	10,000	200	1,000	–
Namibia	450mn	422mn	9,900	9,000	e900	–	6,000 police force
Seychelles	n.k.	n.k.	420	200	200	20	–
South Africa	3.62bn	3.54bn	74,850	37,600	7,000	9,650	7,600 military health service, 15,000 reserve
Tanzania	758mn	827mn	27,000	23,000	e1,000	3,000	1,400 police field force including marine unit
Zambia	334mn	387mn	15,100	13,500	–	1,600	700 police mobile unit, 700 police paramilitary unit
Zimbabwe	420mn	547mn	29,000	25,000	–	4,000	19,500 police force, 2,300 police support unit

n.k. = not known

e = estimated

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2020* (London: IISS, 2020), Chp 9

The overall conclusion is that SADC’s ability to respond to large-scale crises – such as a natural calamity (floods, cyclone, pandemic) or widespread violence (civil war, cross-border violent extremism) – remains limited.

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Responding to the questions of how to envision regional peace and security, how to make human security real for the people of the region, especially the poor and vulnerable, how

to protect democratic gains and advance growth and development, requires not only deep reflection of past practice but also a keen understanding of emerging threats and opportunities. In doing so, national security decision-makers ought to build (or engage with) broad-based capacities in state and non-state sectors to assess probable futures, explore plausible futures, and imagine pluralistic futures. This report's concluding section therefore identifies active steps available to SADC and its member states in an effort to move towards a preferable future, shaped by adopting the paradigm of AG.

National security decision-makers ought to build (or engage with) broad-based capacities in state and non-state sectors to assess probable futures, explore plausible futures, and imagine pluralistic futures

But first, aspects of working in the AG mode are demonstrated in the next section, which offers a brief case study of an emerging peace and security crisis in the region and demonstrates the scenario technique to explore alternative ways of anticipating future developments. Scenario planning, as discussed above, offers strategic choices to prepare for, mitigate or avoid unwanted outcomes.

Case study: The Cabo Delgado insurgency⁴⁶

Terrorist activities increased in central and southern Africa in 2019 and 2020. In eastern DRC, the ISIS-linked Allied Democratic Forces attacked Congolese civilians, the DRC armed forces, and United Nations peacekeepers.

ISIS-linked insurgents Ahlu Sunnah Wa-Jama'a carried out numerous attacks in northern Mozambique. More than 2,000 people have been killed and more than 500,000 internally displaced since the start of the conflict in 2017.⁴⁷

On August 12, 2020, militants seized Mocímboa da Praia in the gas-rich Cabo Delgado province from a demoralised Mozambican army running low on ammunition. This assault on a city of 30,000 – the militants' third and most successful in 2020 – marked a notable evolution in an insurgency that began three years before and was initially characterised by crude and sporadic attacks on villages in the northern province.

46 This section draws on James Barnett, "The 'Central African' Jihad: Islamism and Nation-Building in Mozambique and Uganda", *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 27 (October 2020): 29–49.

47 Cabo Ligado Weekly is a conflict observatory monitoring political violence in Mozambique. See Cabo Ligado Weekly: 4–10 January 2021, <https://acleddata.com/2021/01/17/cabo-ligado-weekly-4-10-january-2021/>.

Islamic State media channels were quick to produce triumphalist statements about the operation, which it attributed to soldiers in its newest affiliate, the Central Africa Province (Wilayat Wasat Ifriqiya or ISCAP).

ISCAP represents two independent insurgencies: one waged by a DRC-based Ugandan rebel group, the Allied Democratic Forces; and the other by a group of insurgents in Cabo Delgado alternatively known as Ansar Sunnah, al-Shabaab (no formal relation to the Somali group), or Ahlu Sunnah Wa Jama aka ASWJ (meaning 'adherents to the Sunnah and the community', a term sometimes used to refer to all Sunni Muslims).

As the insurgency unfolds in Cabo Delgado, where foreign companies such as Total and Anadarko have started gas-extraction operations, civil society has been mapping out scenarios in the hope of influencing SADC's strategic policy choices.⁴⁸ These scenarios started taking shape at an Institute for Global Dialogue webinar where Southern African analysts, including the author of this report, explored the crisis in northern Mozambique. Although not fully developed, the three scenarios offer plausible futures and suggest steps to counter perceived negative trends and dynamics.

A further iteration of these scenarios, preferably led by the SADC Directorate responsible for peace and security and drawing on societal expertise, might be used by SADC peace and security decision-makers to explore their options and shape the course of action in dealing with violent extremism in the region.

Scenario 1: Emboldened ASWJ

This is the scenario that is most attuned to the present reality. The militants increase recruitment, acquire more resources, recover and learn quickly from their previous offensives and continue to capitalise on the government's distorted narrative and alienation from the local population to win the hearts and minds of youthful recruits.

The overly securitised response by the government is mostly counterproductive as civilians decrying state-sanctioned violence and human rights violations embrace the insurgents' agenda. The humanitarian situation deteriorates further, and the growing number of internally displaced peoples (IDPs) fleeing violence puts pressure on the Mozambican system with an elevated risk of regional spill-over.

Scenario 2: Jihadist contagion effect with ISIS backing

In this worst-case scenario, ISCAP would be considered as the 'owner' of violence, building on an alliance of convenience between ISIS, illicit business and local armed jihadist groups

48 Faith Mabera & Sanusha Naidu, "Entering into the fray? The extremist threat in Cabo Delgado: strategic policy choices for South Africa and SADC" (Global Insight 137, Institute for Global Dialogue, Pretoria, 2020), https://www.igd.org.za/component/jdownloads/send/20-global-insight/736-entering-into-the-fray-the-extremist-threat-in-cabo-delgado-strategic-policy-choices-for-south-africa-and-sadc?option=com_jdownloads.

to create an Islamist proto-state in Cabo Delgado to prevent newcomer elites and private interests from profiteering out of the Cabo Delgado liquefied natural gas industry.

The secessionist elements in Mozambique re-awaken historical political rifts and ethnic cleavages, leading to further destabilisation and increased events of localised violence.

Scenario 3: ASWJ contained

In the best-case scenario, ASWJ overextends itself militarily, undermining its local support, and the government manages to contain the threat within Cabo Delgado. The government embraces a whole-of-government approach aimed at addressing the root causes of the insurgency at community level, improves service delivery and access to employment opportunities for the youth while engaging religious and community leaders in de-radicalisation programmes.

All three scenarios must be weighed against the potential pitfalls of ‘the Iraqification’ of the insurgency in Cabo Delgado linked to foreign interests that might utilise private military companies to create security corridors for the benefit of liquefied natural gas projects, entrenching an iron-fist approach to counterinsurgency while side-lining the broader political goals at the heart of approaches countering and preventing violent extremism (so-called C/PVE).

How would anticipatory governance make a difference?

The growing insurgency in Cabo Delgado is multi-dimensional, complex and marked by uncertainty. Years of neglect have resulted in an ungoverned space that offered the ideal context for exploitation by criminal interests. With the ready availability of an extremist ideology, and the arrival of foreign companies to extract new-found gas reserves off the coast, the scene was set for violent confrontation. The military response by the state has not resolved matters.

SADC is aware of the insurgency. It organised two meetings to deal with the matter. Most recently, in November 2020, it hosted an extraordinary Organ troika summit, which was preceded by a preparatory meeting with senior officials. Seven heads of state attended the summit itself to address terrorism in the region, particularly in Cabo Delgado.⁴⁹ Curiously, the Mozambican president did not attend. No clear decisions were made, or action contemplated. Instead the summit ‘directed the finalisation of a comprehensive regional response’ to be considered by yet another summit.⁵⁰ On 8 April 2021, SADC convened the Double Troika Summit in Maputo to discuss ‘measures to address terrorism’ in Mozambique. The summit, attended by six presidents, decided to deploy a fact-finding mission to Mozambique in preparation for yet another SADC Summit meeting, presumably

49 SADC, “Communique of the Extraordinary Organ Troika Summit Plus Force Intervention Brigade Troop Contributing Countries, the DRC and Mozambique”, press release, November 27, 2020, <https://www.sadc.int/news-events/news/communique-extraordinary-organ-troika-summit-plus-force-intervention-brigade-troop-contributing-countries-democratic-republic-co/>.

50 SADC communique.

to make a decision on an intervention, scheduled for late April 2021.⁵¹ Clearly, the style and pace of decision-making is out of step with the nature of the crisis – a rapidly evolving, violent cross-border insurgency with enormous humanitarian implications. It appears its member states remain unprepared, unable or unwilling to apply the collective mind to the problem.

This assessment is underscored in a review of SADC's responses to crises in several member states, which notes that:⁵²

The normative guidelines in SADC's policies on regional peace and security entail inherent tensions between the principles of national sovereignty on the one hand, and SADC's mandate to promote peace, human rights and democracy in member states on the other. Stability and sovereignty tend to take precedence over democracy.

The AG approach would elaborate the scenarios (and perhaps others) as strategy and design tools to enable actors to make decisions that could lead towards the outcomes described in Scenario 3. From this perspective, the Mozambican government and SADC would take proactive steps to contain the insurgency. Key steps include:

- The government deepens democracy and increases good governance –issues at the heart of growing national discontent and disruption.
- It embraces a whole-of-government approach aimed at addressing the root causes of the insurgency at community level and improves service delivery and access to employment opportunities for the youth while engaging religious and community leaders in de-radicalisation programmes.
- It boosts its intelligence gathering and information sharing with regional security counterparts while improving border security and surveillance, and works with international law enforcement to disrupt and sever connection points of illicit trafficking networks and insurgents' supply lines.
- SADC purposefully strengthens its research and analysis capacity by creating a C/PVE rather than counter terrorism unit. This unit draws on foresight tools to understand regional trends relating to all forms of extreme violence and terrorism. In building a knowledge base relevant to the prevention and countering of violent extremism in Southern Africa, the C/PVE unit partners with the rich network of researchers and organised civil society in South Africa and further afield. SADC uses the products of the C/PVE unit as inputs for its decisions on peace and security.

51 See <https://www.sadc.int/news-events/news/sadc-convene-extraordinary-double-troika-summit-deliberate-measures-address-terrorism-mozambique/>.

52 Aeby, "SADC", 84-5.

Strategic peace and security choices are informed by the requirements of AG namely an emphasis on assessing probable and improbable futures in order to help inform strategic policy planning to reduce future risks. A further emphasis is on exploring plausible futures in order to build adaptive capacities and preparedness to reflexively navigate diverse (uncertain) futures. This will set the stage for SADC to begin imagining pluralistic futures in order to mobilise diverse societal actors to co-create new futures. Of similar importance is foresight, multiple sources of knowledge, early rather than reactive action, the active use of feedback mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and adjust decision-making and implementation dynamics, and overcoming the silo-mentality in the organisation via building a culture of inclusive and integrated decision-making. This will allow SADC to identify and act on *complex priorities*: combinations of complex challenges that are urgent, thematically related, interactive, and resistant to treatment in isolation. Complex priorities form systems that must be managed concurrently.

Key trends and preferable futures

Our conclusion is informed by the notion of 'preferable futures'. Futurists speak of *three* main classes of futures: exploring the possible, analysing the probable, and shaping the preferable.⁵³ Preferable futures are informed by normative judgements: those we think 'should' or 'ought to' happen.

SADC's preferable futures encompass the vision of a stable, peaceful, prosperous and integrated community of Southern Africans, united in the quest for sustainable development.

In reality, most analysts use the 'probable future' approach, and the question arises how the region can escape the trap of 'business as usual' to realise the 'preferable'? Here is a visual description of the dilemma:

A canoeist undertakes a journey on a river. At the start, the journey appears tranquil. Indeed, the canoeist experiences a broad river, fed by several tributaries, and the passing scenery marked by lush vegetation and many signs of development – agriculture interspersed with modern cities. However, at some point, the canoeist notices disturbing trends. She passes a patch of dry land, suggestive of a recent drought. As she rounds a corner, a swelling of the water reminds her of a sudden flood. She notices an agitated crowd in the distance. Soon, the pace of the flow accelerates and she enters rapids. Rocks under the surface bump, scrape and throw her off balance. No longer able to steer the canoe, she lurches forward. Her senses pick up a low rumble that increases with intensity as she speeds over the rapids. Her gaze is drawn to a hazy mist, arising in front of her. The canoeist comprehends

53 Joseph Voros, "Big History and Anticipation: Using Big History as a Framework for Global Foresight", in Roberto Poli, ed., *Handbook of Anticipation: Theoretical and Applied Aspects of the Use of Future in Decision Making* (New York: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 13–17.

the unfolding scenario but is too late to redirect. Her canoe is pulled towards and then over the cliff. She disappears into the maelstrom of boiling water at the foot of the waterfall.

At its 40th summit in August 2020, SADC released a glossy brochure entitled 'SADC: 40 Years Building Peace and Security, and Promoting Development and Resilience in the Face of Global Challenges'.

The brochure, the tone of the text, and the accompanying colourful images resemble the journey of the canoeist. There is no doubt that the organisation and its member states can claim a range of achievements. The region emerged from the strictures of the Cold War, one-partyism, centrally planned economies and apartheid destabilisation, and embraced democracy and respect for human rights. In many cases, development followed. However, the organisation appears unable to have anticipated the 'winds of change'. As political elites cling to power, democracy, economic growth and security are on the retreat in many parts of Southern Africa. Indeed, SADC finds itself in the rapids.

The rocks in the water that threaten to destroy the canoe are described in this report. They resemble what AG alerts us to: accelerating deep change. AG also provides an alternative that embraces complexity and navigates new ways of thinking and governing that match the nature of reality.⁵⁴

Globally, trends and threats include the COVID-19 pandemic, but also an international economic downturn, the evolving China-US rivalry, a climate catastrophe and technological instabilities. Regionally, they include high levels of poverty and inequality, and state and human insecurity relating to crime, violence, terrorism, and democratic and governance deficits.

SADC and its fragile member states are unable to offer democracy, good governance and development, and do not have the right conflict management tools for the job

Against the institutional landscape described above, SADC's decision-making and policy formulation is out of step with a rapidly evolving political and socio-economic landscape. The mini case study (the Mozambican government and SADC's failure to respond to the deepening crisis of violent extremism) suggests that SADC and its fragile member states are unable to offer democracy, good governance and development, and do not have the

54 Deon Cloete, personal communication, November 16, 2020.

right conflict management tools for the job. This is notwithstanding the SADC Brigade, which is hampered by an underdeveloped civilian component and over-reliance on the region's weak defence forces, and endeavours by the Secretariat to produce a new strategic development plan (RISDP 2020–2030).

Given that plans for RISDP 2020–2030 were announced late in 2020, while COVID-19 still engulfed humanity, it stands to reason that adaptation is desperately needed.

If not, deepening poverty and inequality, recurring natural disasters and pandemics, increasing political violence and criminal and corrupt practices as a consequence of state fragility and lack of good governance will continue to erode the ability of SADC to offer peace and security, and democracy and development. SADC's inability to respond effectively and efficiently will threaten its very existence and for millions of people of the region, it has become irrelevant.

To overcome these weaknesses and shortcomings, and for SADC to embrace preferable futures, the next section makes recommendations.

Recommendations towards anticipatory governance

Earlier, this report asked to what extent SADC could adopt AG and identify complex priorities in the management of its dynamic and fast-changing security environment?

SADC's blueprint for the future – RISDP 2020–2030 and Vision 2050 – and its ill-designed Brigade might not be up to the task of exercising AG.

SADC's decision-making architecture prevents foresight to be exercised, complex priorities to be identified in time, and AG to be exercised. This is due to executive decision-making imbued with a liberation ethos, an elaborate bureaucratic substructure of seconded officials, weak oversight mechanisms (the SADC Parliamentary Forum has yet to evolve into an authoritative regional parliament) and a small resource base. These factors override its ability to respond to crisis and undertake interventions based on AG.

The Cabo Delgado case shows how the fast-evolving threat landscape overwhelms the SADC Secretariat and its member states, who find themselves unable to respond timeously.

The question therefore arises how SADC can move towards AG. Assuming it is able to cultivate democracy as a value, a 'culture of doing' and an institutional form of governance, it will find value in rethinking its structures and decision-making processes in order to appreciate and respond appropriately to the accelerated change and complexity described in this report.

The peace and security domain needs particular attention. The entire region needs to undertake a deep security sector review. Such an exercise must enjoy popular support

among the region's key stakeholders: governments, citizens and donors. To put it bluntly: the region's citizens and their elected governments must own the process. There is no need to engage an international consultancy or import a ready-made template from the European Union or America. The spadework has been done by the AU and is captured in its 2013 Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform.⁵⁵ In this policy, security sector reform refers to the process by which countries formulate or re-orient the policies, structures and capacities of institutions and groups engaged in the security sector, in order to make them more effective, efficient and responsive to democratic control, and to the security and justice needs of the people. The AU recommends such review processes every 10 years.

SADC's 16 member states ought to embark on such a process soon – individually and collectively – as a precondition for establishing AG and formulating and navigating complex priorities. A reformatted security sector is key to the logic of an integrated RISDP – peace and security, and democracy and development, are mutually constitutive. The one strategic set of goals cannot be achieved without the other.

The SADC Secretariat ought to establish a regional task force, supported by a coalition of willing donors, to design and oversee the execution of such a process. The design must build on SADC's commitments to democracy, development and good governance, be sensitive to local (national) conditions, and at the same time promote collective, mutually supportive decision-making in order to forge deeper regional relations of trust and cooperation.

Such a process must start at the national level and include a needs assessment that will lead to a national security strategy (whether new or refined), underwritten by a sound legal framework, and marked by:

- comprehensive capacity-building and professionalisation of the security sector,
- effective partnerships and coordination mechanisms,
- meaningful democratic control and oversight,
- gender mainstreaming,
- long-term sustainability of funding for SSR activities as well as budgeting for its optimal performance,
- efficient monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and
- effective communication strategies.

For SADC to embrace AG in the quest for a preferable future, this report recommends the organisation recast its planning and decision-making dynamics and its organisational

55 African Union, *AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform* (Addis Ababa: African Union, 2010) <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/au-policy-framework-on-security-sector-reform-ae-ssr.pdf>.

architecture to achieve meaningful security sector governance. It must shake off its state-centric behaviour and embrace input and leadership from civil society. It can use each of the four aspects of AG in undertaking the proposed security sector review process and subsequent implementation of decisions.⁵⁶ These four aspects are briefly described below.

- 1 A foresight system to identify the landscape of change and use this in organisationally useful ways: Establishing a P/CVE unit at the Secretariat, and linking with networks of experts in the region and beyond, is a good start. At the same time, SADC's early warning system needs an overhaul. Civil society and non-governmental organisation input needs to be embraced in analysis and advice, as is done elsewhere in Africa. The lively South African Institute of International Affairs Futures research community in South and Southern Africa can run a series of capacity-building programmes almost immediately.⁵⁷
- 2 A networked system for integrating foresight and the policy process: Despite many efforts, SADC and its member states struggle with integrated thinking and doing. Silos predominate. However, visionary leaders at secretariat and member state level (drawn from government as well as civil society) might introduce systematic thinking and inter-organisational cooperation to address wicked problems and complex interdependencies. This will furthermore allow for the region to rethink the costly and yet-to-be-deployed SADC Brigade.⁵⁸ An integrated approach to peacebuilding is desperately required.
- 3 A feedback system to gauge performance and manage institutional knowledge: This function is weak and often outsourced to consultants. Organisational evolution should be emphasised to allow for a culture of reflection, adaptation and change to take root. Visionary leadership is required to drive this part of change management. Converting the SADC Parliamentary Forum (with limited influence) to a fully fledged regional parliament will go a long way in advancing the culture of oversight, accountability and democracy.⁵⁹

Organisational evolution should be emphasised to allow for a culture of reflection, adaptation and change to take root. Visionary leadership is required

56 Leon Fuerth, "Foresight and Anticipatory Governance", *Foresight* 11, no. 4 (2009): 14-32;

57 See for example the SAIIA Futures Programme at <https://saiia.org.za/research/saiia-futures-anticipating-and-preparing-for-major-disruptors-facing-southern-africa/>. Under COVID-19 conditions, online options are available.

58 For a critical discussion, see Anthoni van Nieuwkerk, "A Toothless Lion? The Role of SADC in Conflict Management", in Francois Vrey & Thomas Mandrup, eds, *The African Standby Force: Quo Vadis?* (Stellenbosch: African Sun Media, 2017), 141-156.

59 David Monyae, "The SADC Parliamentary Forum's Role in Building Democracy", Policy Brief 13 (Johannesburg: Democracy Works, 2017), <https://democracyworks.org.za/policy-brief-13-the-sadc-parliamentary-forums-role-in-building-democracy/>.

- 4 An open-minded institutional culture to promote a cultural and institutional shift towards experimentation: Leading to learning that can be scaled for impact, this aspect is perhaps the greatest test for the SADC Secretariat and its member states and again must be driven by visionary leadership.

The establishment of effective and efficient security sectors in and among the region's member states over the next five years will make a significant contribution to SADC's ability to move closer to AG and identify complex priorities relating to its most pressing threats.

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Cover image

A health worker wearing a protective facemask checks the temperature of soldiers upon their arrival for the burial ceremony of late Zimbabwe's agriculture minister Perrance Shiri at the National Heroes Acre on July 31 2020, in Harare. Perrance Shiri, 65, a retired general who commanded an army unit accused of a notorious massacre in the 1980s, succumbed to COVID-19, the president said on July 30, 2020 (Jekesai Njikizana/AFP via Getty Images)

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