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REINVIGORATING SOUTH AFRICA-SWEDEN RELATIONS:

BILATERAL COOPERATION IN A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

GUEST EDITED BY SVEN BOTHA

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In This Issue

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Prof Ronit Frenkel

The University of Johannesburg acquired *The Thinker* in April 2019 from Dr Essop Pahad. Over the last decade, *The Thinker* has gained a reputation as a journal that explores Pan-African issues across fields and times. Ronit Frenkel, as the incoming editor, plans on maintaining the pan-African scope of the journal while increasing its coverage into fields such as books, art, literature and popular cultures. *The Thinker* is a 'hybrid' journal, publishing both journalistic pieces with more academic articles and contributors can now opt to have their submissions peer reviewed. We welcome Africa-centred articles from diverse perspectives, in order to enrich both knowledge of the continent and of issues impacting the continent.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS EDITION - All contributing analysts write in their personal capacity

Angela Muvumba Sellström is a Senior Researcher at the Nordic-Africa Institute with expertise on wartime sexual violence prevention; international interventions and mediation; gender, women, peace and security; and the UN Security Council and the role of non-permanent members.

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Håkan Juholt, Ambassador of Sweden to South Africa, is originally from the town of Oskarshamn on the Baltic Sea. After finishing grammar school, he was hired in 1980 as a photographer and journalist for the Social Democratic newspaper Ostra Smaland (Ostran). From 1984 to 1990, he served as a board member of the Swedish Social Democratic Youth League (SSU) and later, from 2005 to 2011, he became Regional Chairman of the Social Democrats of Kalmar county and was also Former Chairman of the board for Oskarshamn's harbour, John Lindgren's peace fund, former Prime minister Tage Erlander's memorial fund, and of the ownership board for the Ostra Smaland newspaper. Ambassador Juholt has been a member of the Swedish parliament Riksdagen from 1994 to 2016 and member of the parliamentary committee on defence issues until 2011, serving as its Chairman for one year. Between 1995 and 2008, he also served as a member of the joint parliament-government committee on defence policy (forsvarsberedningen), and its chairman between 2000 and 2007. Between 1995 and 2002, Ambassador Juholt was also appointed as adviser to the Minister of Defence and Delegate to the parliamentarian summits of NATO between 1995 and 2011. Between 1996 and 2012, Ambassador Juholt was delegate to summits of Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Ambassador Juholt served as Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Sweden between 2011 and 2012. He was appointed as Swedish Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland from 2017 until 2020, when he was appointed as Sweden's Ambassador to South Africa.

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Guest Editor's Introduction

Reinvigorating South Africa-Sweden Relations: Politics, Economics, And Society

By Sven Botha

The Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Sweden are often said to share a special relationship. This relationship, as Anna-Mart van Wyk's article in this special issue illustrates, is firmly rooted in Sweden's support for the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Since then, both South Africa and Sweden, and indeed the world as a whole, have experienced significant political, economic, and social changes. The bilateral relationship between South Africa and Sweden has grown since the former's transition to democracy on the 27th of April 1994. To this end, South Africa and Sweden enjoy a bi-national commission and a total of 22 bilateral agreements1 (DIRCO, 2022). In addition to these milestones, innovative initiatives have been established in areas of mutual concern. Chief examples in this regard include the South Africa-Sweden University Forum (SASUF)2 and the Cape Town-Stockholm Connect Initiative3, which seek to stimulate collaboration in higher education and business and technology respectively. There have also been developments in our cultural exchanges in recent years. One such example was the facilitation of the Sweden-South Africa Live Connection: Digitally Yours Campaign (hereafter the Digitally Yours

Campaign) which sought to keep both countries connected virtually during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Digitally Yours Campaign ran from the 4th of April 2020 until the 2nd of May 2020 and hosted a number of virtual exchanges4 whereby both Swedish and South African artists participated in roundtable discussions and cultural performances in the areas of fashion, poetry, and music (Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria, 2020).

Despite these encouraging and innovative developments occurring in the bilateral relationship between South Africa and Sweden, scholarly appetite on the subject of South Africa-Sweden Relations remains scant as the majority of the scholarship has restricted itself to the pre-1994 relationship (Magnusson, 1974; Sellström, 1999; Sellström, 2002a; Sellström, 2002b; Coetzee, 2020; Glover, 2021; Coetzee, 2021). In response to this reality, two key initiatives have been implemented, namely: the Student Essay Contest on South Africa-Sweden Relations and the publication of this double special issue on South Africa-Sweden Relations. The latter undertaking took place in 2022 and afforded senior or leaving undergraduate students (3rd and 4th year students) from any discipline the opportunity to submit an essay of no more than 3,000 words in one of five categories, namely: gender issues, cultural issues, environmental issues, academic/knowledge exchange, and science and technology. Within the context of their preferred category, participating students were asked to consider how South Africa and Sweden could advance their bilateral exchanges in innovative and collaborative ways. In the end, over 30 submissions were received. The essays were judged by a panel of 14 academics (seven from each country) and the winners within each category were hosted by the Swedish Ambassador, H.E Håkan Juholt, at his Residence in Pretoria in October 2022. This project was jointly hosted by the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg, the SASUF network, and the Embassy of Sweden in South Africa with a triangular objective: to foster closer ties between South African and Swedish students, to foster closer ties between South African and Swedish academics, and to create awareness for contemporary South Africa-Sweden Relations.

Building upon the momentum of the Essay Contest, this double special issue sought to elicit contributions from academics and practitioners from both countries that explain and assess the various aspects of South Africa-Sweden Relations. Matters of historical solidarity, trade, political cooperation within the United Nations Security Council, arts and culture, and higher education are all addressed across the double special issue. In addition to traditional assessments of bilateral relations, this double special issue further contributes to the discourse on South Africa-Sweden Relations by featuring contributions that compare key social and political issues evident in both states. This allows for the emergence of unique insights which could be used to brainstorm ways in which South Africa and Sweden could further expand upon their bilateral exchanges. Articles comparing compliance with good international citizenship as well as responses to mass migration and active citizenship (on the domestic level) are included in the special issue. This project acknowledges that Nordic states other than Sweden have contributed to South Africa's dispensation and have also actively sought firm bilateral relations with South Africa. To this end, an article exploring the prospects for the emergence of a strategic partnership between South Africa and the Nordic bloc wraps up the double special issue. Finally, given that the special issue's means of assessing bilateral relations includes both international and domestic issues, the guest editor pens a concluding article in the second half of this special issue introducing a new analytical framework

“Despite these encouraging and innovative developments occurring in the bilateral relationship between South Africa and Sweden, scholarly appetite on the subject of South Africa-Sweden Relations remains scant as the majority of the scholarship has restricted itself to the pre-1994 relationship”

for the assessing of bilateral relations between states within the international system. The key findings and common trends from across the double special issue will also be reflected upon in this concluding contribution.

The facilitation of both the Essay Contest and the double special issues has laid the ground work for the exploration of further cooperation between students, practitioners, and academics from both South Africa and Sweden. The tireless efforts of various colleagues from across both projects is herein duly acknowledged and deeply appreciated. For the Essay Contest a special vote of thanks goes to the Panel of Judges, the SASUF team at Upsala University, the Department of Politics and International Relations and the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg, and the Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria. For the special issue, much gratitude goes to the erudite contributors, the peer reviewers, and The Thinker's editorial and production teams. The collective efforts made by colleagues from across both projects have gone a considerable way to furthering intellectual interest in South Africa-Sweden Relations.

Notes

1. This total includes three joint agreements between South Africa and the wider Nordic region.

2. SASUF is a bilateral network of 40 universities across Sweden and South Africa aimed at promoting exchanges in education, research, and innovation. Refer to the article by Sven Botha and Helin Bäckman Kartal in the next edition of this special issue to learn more about how SASUF has become a leading driver of knowledge diplomacy between both countries.

3. The Cape Town-Stockholm Connect Initiative is a bilateral platform tasked with connecting the cities of Cape Town and Stockholm under the banner of technological innovation and cooperation. For more information, visit: www.siliconcape.com/cape-town-stockholm-connect-csc/

4. These exchanges are still available to view online for free via the Embassy of Sweden's Facebook page. For more information, please refer to the following link: www.facebook.com/SwedeninSA/videos

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South Africa and Sweden:

A Story of Solidarity, Trust, and Shared Common Values

By Håkan Juholt, Ambassador of Sweden to South Africa

Background

I have a beautiful painting of Oliver Tambo and Olof Palme in my office. Every day, I look into the eyes of these humanitarian role models. I see a pair of committed leaders sharing hopes, commitments, and respect for one another and other human beings. I see their eyes telling me the story of a unique relationship between South Africa and Sweden, one of trust and shared common values. How did two nations, separated by more than just geography, build such a strong bond in the beginning of the 1960s? Sweden was at that stage an industrialised, prosperous, and stable country with many years of economic growth and progress, while South Africa was a repressive apartheid state where the people suffered. A unique aspect of the relationship was that it was driven by the unique people of each of these nations, with a realisation that their common goals could not be reached in isolation but through an interconnectedness that moved mountains and split oceans apart, joining our two nations for endless opportunities, for years to come.

Up to the 1950s: Flourishing Positive Relations

Contact and relations between South Africa and Sweden date far back. For centuries, South Africa was considered one of the major emigration destinations for many Swedes. Since the mid-17th century, various Swedes have emigrated to South Africa, with a majority opting to settle in the Cape area. They were later followed by others, including sailors, explorers and, from the late 19th century, mainly gold and diamond miners.

Many immigrants came with considerable industrial and entrepreneurial skills and experience, which led to the inception of new commercial enterprises and flourishing trade activities. In 1948, Swedish export to South Africa amounted to 2,3% of total exports, the third highest outside of Europe. South Africa's export to Sweden was also considerable, mainly regarding agricultural produce.

The exchange between the two countries was substantial and differed in outcome. The fact that the majority of South Africans were living under severe impoverished conditions, and that from 1948 onwards they were living under an apartheid regime, was seldom raised. Diplomatic relations continued to flourish, and the major interests were geared towards promoting further links, not least when it came to commerce and culture.

Increased Awareness and Solidarity

With more frequent contact and exposure, the knowledge about the situation for the majority of the people in South Africa grew. The concerning situation became even more obvious after the introduction of apartheid rules.

A number of individuals and an increasing number of communities within the Swedish public reacted. By the end of the 1950s, the image of South Africa had changed dramatically. The growing interest about developments in South Africa put pressure on the leaders in the rest of the world, including Sweden, to react. Organisations and individuals wanted to contribute and presented ideas on how Sweden and Swedes could support change for the people of South Africa. The Swedish Trade Union raised the issue of a consumer boycott. This was, together with consumer organisations, implemented in early 1960. In 1987, as a young man in my hometown, Oskarshamn, a municipal council debate about the trade embargoes against South Africa ensued. Where many argued that this should be dealt with in the government level, I was one of those who pushed for local municipalities and civilians to take part in the boycotts. Most significantly, we were successful in the boycott of wine and fruit imports with notable impact. Later I was informed that it was Cyril Ramaphosa, today the President of South Africa, who had asked the world to take these measures. In my hometown, I recall that we were most successful in the boycotting of Shell gas and oil consumption where we picketed at all the stations and convinced customers to choose alternative fuel suppliers. I'm still convinced that moral responsibility cannot be handed over to someone else, it must be carried with each one of us at every moment.

The first financial contribution from Sweden towards the fight against apartheid was made in 1959 by the Trade Unions and consumer organisations, with support from leading liberals and social democrats forming The Fund for the Victims of Racial Oppression. Shortly thereafter, another body was formed which became, in my view, the most important group for increased support to the anti-apartheid movement: The Sweden South Africa Committee' (SSAK, later the Isolate South Africa Committee). Under this umbrella, hundreds of organisations from different sectors of the Swedish society became involved, all with the desire to support the elimination of apartheid. The movement was registered and active in 178 different locations in Sweden, a dispersion that few, if any, organisations have since achieved.

Visits to Sweden by leading anti-apartheid activists became more and more frequent. The ANC leader Oliver Tambo was a frequent guest and participated in various demonstrations. He became politically and personally close to Olof Palme, who later became Sweden's prime minister. This special friendship reinforced the long-standing relationship that the two countries share today. Late South African Ambassadors Billy Modise and Lindiwe Mabuza were both posted in Sweden during parts of their leadership tenures within the ANC and remained friends of Sweden. They are reminders of the special relationship between our very distant countries, and they were both decorated with the Royal Order of the

Polar Star for their services to Sweden and for raising awareness among Swedes about the injustices of the apartheid regime ravaging their country.

Direct Humanitarian Support to the Struggle Against Apartheid

In the early 1960s, South Africa was a priority for many Swedes. Swedish foreign policy was geared towards the condemnation of apartheid and support for the liberation struggle. Many Swedes at this time knew more about South Africa than about their neighbouring countries. At the UN, the Swedish Government was at the forefront of initiating and supporting resolutions condemning the apartheid system. The foreign policy stand was to support the liberation movement (the ANC) and activities with the aim of dismantling the apartheid system, isolating, and placing sanctions on the regime, as well as providing support for the frontline states surrounding the country. A fundamental and 'sacred' criterion was that the Swedish support had to be humanitarian. Swedish funds were not to be used for military purposes.

The first direct contribution to liberation movements in Southern Africa began in 1969. A Consultative Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (CCHA) was created as a forum to discuss and decide upon Swedish support to Southern Africa. In the years to come, it became the most important organisation for decision making regarding assistance. It was composed of high-level representatives from Sida, the Foreign Ministry, political parties, civil society organisations and a few engaged individuals. Its meetings were strictly confidential. During its years, CCHA took decisions amounting to 4 billion Swedish Kronor (today almost 400 million USD) out of which 2,5 billion was channelled to South Africa and 900 million directly to the ANC.

"A Consultative Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (CCHA) was created as a forum to discuss and decide upon Swedish support to Southern Africa. In the years to come, it became the most important organisation for decision making regarding assistance."

Massive Humanitarian Support Based on Trust.

The historic decision to commence with support for the liberation movement in sovereign states was possible only because it was strongly supported by almost all sectors of Swedish society. Everyone, from political leaders to the public, engaged in a multitude of organisations that shared the wish to contribute to liberating South Africa.

The first direct contribution to the ANC came in 1972/73 and consisted of 35 000 Swedish Kronor (SEK). The contributions increased substantially and reached 135 million SEK in 1993/94. What must be emphasised is that the strong support was based upon the warm friendship between the then-Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme and the then-ANC president Oliver Tambo, which developed during this time.

So how were the funds used? Initially, the allocation was made to cater for what was called 'daily necessities' for ANC refugees in neighbouring countries. After the Soweto uprising in 1976, the number of political refugees surged. I have heard recollections of diplomats serving in the Swedish Embassy in Lusaka from 1987–91 talking about the legendary Treasurer General of the ANC, Thomas Nkobi, arriving at the Embassy every quarter with plastic bags full of receipts of expenditures showing how the Swedish funds had been used.

The scope of the cooperation increased and was used for ANC office expenses, information campaigns including supporting Radio Freedom, agricultural projects, and schools (Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Morogoro, Tanzania). What was most confidential and not revealed until after the apartheid system was abolished was that roughly 30% of the allocation was set aside for the budget item 'the Homefront activities', which were the ANC's humanitarian activities within South Africa.

Every year, formal consultations between Sweden and the ANC took place: with Thomas Nkobi often leading the ANC, and a high-ranking official from either Sida or the Foreign Ministry representing Sweden. The situation inside South Africa, as well as the ANC's and Sweden's activities with relevance to the struggle for the removal of apartheid, were discussed. The use of the allocations was presented in written form (except for the 'Homefront', which was only orally disclosed). Sweden's financial support of the ANC ended in 1993, when the ANC, in line with the Swedish definition, became a political party (and hence no longer a liberation movement).

More Clandestine Support

The direct support to the ANC's civil activities was a small part of the Swedish support under the heading 'Humanitarian assistance to victims of and opponents to the apartheid regime.' Part of the funds were also distributed to international organisations, such as IDAF and different UN agencies.

A large part of the assistance was channelled through a complicated and creative scheme based on trust, devotion, and a touch of diplomatic and legal shrewdness. A great number of Swedish organisations were involved, and an even greater number of South Africans received the contributions. Tor Sellström – diplomat, researcher, and esteemed author of publications including *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa* – estimated that more than 180 South African organisations received Swedish aid from the late 1960s to 1993/1994. When the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed in 1983, a considerable part of the increased support was channelled to and through UDF. A system so strongly relying on trust was at risk of misuse. The charismatic leader, UDF-founder and clergyman Allan Boesak, was accused of intercepting Scandinavian funds meant for the poor and sentenced to prison, but subsequently received a presidential pardon a year later.

Political, Trade, and Cultural Anti-Apartheid Activities

With the historical united support involving a large part of the extensive Swedish civil society, other forms of support were initiated as well. Under Olof Palme's leadership, Sweden was a clear voice, not seldom condemning all forms of oppression. At the UN scene, Sweden was very active in presenting different forms of actions, not least UN-resolutions. In our diplomatic work, the issue of apartheid was high on the agenda in our deliberations with other countries.

The broad anti-apartheid movement increased their plea for isolation in the late 1970s and demands were high to impose sanctions. A first act of Swedish legislation regulating trade with South Africa was introduced in 1979. Later, after severe pressure from the Swedish public, the umbrella organisation Isolate South Africa Committee (ISAK) demanded tighter legislation. A total embargo on trade with South Africa (and Namibia) was passed by the Swedish Parliament in 1987. The trade between the two countries plummeted from 1,5 billion SEK in 1984 to 41 million SEK in 1988.

A good example of the Swedish solidarity with and backing of the anti-apartheid movement was 'the Gala for the ANC', in which twenty of the Swedish leading popular musicians of the time came together in November 1985 in a major exhibition for the ANC in Sweden. Later, in 1987, most of them joined together once again and performed in Zambia and Zimbabwe in what was called the 'Frontline Rock Tour'.

In February 1986, the 'People's Parliament against Apartheid' was organised in Stockholm, with important international attendance. One week later, Palme was assassinated. When his friend Oliver Tambo in 1989 suffered from 'cerebral haemorrhage', Sweden organised for him to be treated in Sweden. After his release from prison, Nelson Mandela made his first trip outside of Africa to Sweden to visit his old friend Tambo at the hospital in Sweden, while also showing his gratitude to Sweden's support and contribution to the struggle.

Post-1994: New Challenges, Supporting One Another to Build a Better Tomorrow

It was obvious that the relation and cooperation between the two nations had to be transformed due to the fundamental changes brought by South Africa's first democratic elections. The unique financial support for the anti-apartheid movement was transformed into a more traditional kind of development assistance. The aim was to contribute

to improving economic conditions for the poor, especially due to the structural disadvantages established during apartheid, to develop the young democracy, and to assist in state building. The assistance was from the outset designed to be finite and the official development cooperation with South Africa ceased in 2013. Sweden has, however, recently relocated a team managing the regional sexual and reproductive health and rights strategy (SRHR) as well as a hub working on democracy and human rights in the region. A new government strategy for support to SRHR in the region was decided last year, covering the period 2022–2026, and amounting to about 3.5 billion SEK, equivalent to 314m USD. Through Sida, and the 57 MSUD regional Eastern and Southern Africa 2gether4SRHR joint UN Programme partnership, a total investment of about 871 264 USD has been made in South Africa. Priorities have included strengthening the integration of HIV, SRHR, and GBV services in recent years. Through the programme, Sweden also contributed 440 000 ZAR towards the budget for the Presidential Gender Based Violence and Femicide Summit in 2022. The total support from Sida which has flowed directly to South Africa through a variety of partnerships and programs amounted to over 20m USD in 2020.

The sanctions were removed in 1993 and the trade started to increase. In 2021, trade between our two countries amounted to over 900m USD. The political contacts were maintained, and mutual state visits took place. However, the intensity diminished during President Zuma's time in power. A political vehicle aimed at deepening and expanding the links between our two countries was introduced by President Mbeki and Prime Minister Persson in 1999, constituting of a Bilateral Commission (BNC) at the Vice-Presidential level. The BNC is intended to meet every second year. Lately, however, the frequency of these meetings has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

This has not stopped our countries from working to support one another and collaborate on several other levels. South Africa, as a unique and attractive country, has continued to attract around 100 Swedish commercial ventures, including but most certainly not limited to Scania, SAAB, H&M, Polarium, and – recently inaugurated by President Ramaphosa – Sandvik. We have a trade commission, Business Sweden, stationed in the country to facilitate trade and investment between the two countries and the region, with many exciting collaborations and possibilities envisioned in the sectors of innovation and technology, city twinning, climate and environment, manufacturing, and more.

Education can never be taken from an individual once they have received it. This is a shared sentiment between Sweden and President Nelson Mandela. We recently, together with nine other Embassies across Africa, and the Liliesleaf Foundation, again with the support from the Swedish Institute, launched a project on Sweden's links to various liberation struggles across Africa, highlighting the value of international solidarity and activism in the fight for freedom. This was launched in the form of an interactive website, aimed at inspiring young people to learn about the challenges of the past as a context for addressing their current challenges as the leaders of tomorrow.

We also have the greatest collaboration between our two countries recently renewed in the form of the South Africa Sweden University Forum. SASUF is a transformative project uniting 40 universities from across Sweden and South Africa, bringing together leading researchers, teachers, students, university leaders, and other stakeholders to develop joint solutions to the challenges posed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030.

Our shared common values can be seen in the years of policy promotion activities and values-based promotion. The ongoing work toward a gender equal society has encouraged us to run campaigns together with local partners in events and discussions like 'Swedish South African Dads', an exhibition inspired by the value that fathers have found in taking extended parental leave (480 days for both parents) available to them in Sweden, to care for their children and take a more active role in unpaid care work. During this period, South Africa also passed the legislation to increase paternity leave from 3 days to 10 days, marking a significant milestone.

Culturally, Sweden has continued to honour the legacy of the Freedom Fighters of the previous generation, while also providing platforms to engage with the leaders and influencers of the future. Among several cultural exchanges and grants for young practitioners, including the NGO Hear My Voice, South

Africa was also recently welcomed as the guest of honour to Scandinavia's largest cultural gathering: the Gothenburg Book Fair, also honouring Ambassador Lindiwe Mabuza and Tor Sellström.

We have so much in common and we need to all have the mutual interest to protect and develop our shared values. Most importantly, we cannot work in silos. We need to meet, share experiences, knowledge, challenges and continue to show one another mutual respect to continue to achieve the goals we are working towards on so many levels. So, what are our shared common values which need to be strengthened 35 years after the untimely death of Olof Palme? Some significant priorities I have identified include: the need for social dialogue in the workplace for the just transition agenda, women, peace and security, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and a multilevel focus on the effects of climate change on our environment. How do we achieve these and other important priorities? We must focus on inclusion and the building of good relationships between civil society, trade unions, private sector, sport, culture, academia and government through continuous dialogue and bond-building. Because, I still see it every day in the eyes of those two heroes on my wall: our unique resource, where their dreams truly can be our reality, are the relations between the people of our nations built on a foundation, long ago, of solidarity, trust, and common values.

Many of the facts in this article are based upon the two volumes by Tor Sellström, Sweden and National Liberation of Southern Africa. Tor, regrettably, passed away in August 2022. RIP.

Sweden Against Apartheid:

A Historical Overview

By Anna-Mart van Wyk

Abstract

Sweden's relations with the South African liberation movements date back to the 1960s, when the Swedish anti-apartheid movement arose. In addition to moral support and about $400 million dollars in financial support, Sweden became the first Western country to give official political support to the anti-apartheid movement. Such was the relationship between the African National Congress (ANC) and Sweden, that the latter became the first country outside of Africa to be visited by Nelson Mandela in 1990, after his release from decades of imprisonment. The aim of this contribution is therefore to provide a brief synopsis of the rich history of Sweden's solidarity with the South African liberation struggle and the role played by the Swedish youth, the Swedish anti-apartheid movement, civil society, trade unions, and Olof Palme, former Swedish prime minister, who was one of the most committed allies of the liberation movements.

Introduction

The South African white minority government's racial segregation policy, commonly known as *apartheid*[1], featured for the first time in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1952, ultimately leading to decades of harsh condemnation and the formation of the Special Committee Against Apartheid, which was tasked with coordinating efforts and mobilising international opinion against apartheid (Bangura, 2018: 5). Yet, despite apartheid being raised for many years before the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), concerted punitive action took a long time to be realised, due to Great Power politics and veto rights playing out in the larger Cold War theatre. This prompted Sweden to start acting unilaterally and in collaboration with other Scandinavian states on their abhorrence of apartheid. The Swedish people took exception to the apartheid system, denouncing its racist oppression and minority rule from their 'self-image as a people in solidarity with the disadvantaged countries and groups in the world' (Bangura, 2018: 1).

This article is by no means an exhaustive account of Sweden's solidarity with the South African liberation struggle, nor can all individual role-players or entities be mentioned, due to space constraints. A detailed account of all Sweden's efforts can be found in Tor Sellström's definitive books, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa,* Volumes 1 and 2, published by the Nordic Africa Institute in 1999 and 2002, respectively, and *Liberation in Southern Africa – Regional and Swedish Voices*, by the same author (2002). Other notable contributions include various compilations of speeches, letters, and other documents, by Enuga Reddy, an Indian-born diplomat who led the anti-apartheid efforts at the United Nations' Special Committee Against Apartheid and its Centre Against Apartheid.

Early Protests and Aid Initiatives

The earliest campaigns were initiated by the Swedish National Union of Students (SFS), after apartheid was introduced at the level of higher education in South Africa. Through donating blood, funds were collected in support of their victimised Black South African student peers. Building on this early campaign, the SFS succeeded in influencing the Swedish Social Democratic government through active lobbying, resulting in Foreign Minister Östen Undén bringing the matter of apartheid to the attention of the UNGA in 1959, with specific reference to the 'worsening situation' of non-white students in South Africa (Sellström, 1999: 98).

Outside of the student movement, the first organised Swedish expression of anti-apartheid solidarity was initiated by CSM missionary Gunnar Helander (Sellström, 1999: 112). Between 1939 to 1956, Helander regularly informed the Swedish public about the situation in South Africa. He was such a thorn in the side of the apartheid regime that he was not allowed to return to South Africa after a holiday in 1956. Subsequently, in March 1961, he formed the Swedish South Africa Committee (SSAK) with writer Per Wästberg and historian Olof Tandberg, amongst others. The SSAK was intensely engaged in collecting money from individuals and trade unions for legal defence in South Africa and aid to refugees; influencing Swedish political leaders; creating interest for the problems in South Africa in other Scandinavian countries; and actively boycotting South African goods, together with the Swedish youth organisation (Skovmand, 1970: 4; Sellström, 1999: 112–113; Nordic Africa Institute, Internet).

It was the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960[2] that really kick-started the Swedish anti-apartheid movement. According to Skovmand (1970: 1), the massacre came as a shock to the people of Scandinavia, and 'gave a lasting impression of the ruthless opposition of the non-white population of South Africa.' In the aftermath of the massacre, international fundraising efforts to oppose apartheid and support its victims increased dramatically, and led to the establishment of a Defence and Aid Fund in South Africa[3] (Houser, 1982: 18). The apartheid regime was condemned in harsh terms by Swedish officials both in-country and in the United Nations (Bangura, 2018: 1). Furthermore, from 1962, the Swedish government started supporting refugees from South Africa, and Swedish citizens made gradually increasing contributions to different funds. Driven by strong public opinion against the perils of apartheid, and a position of traditional concern for refugees, humanitarian and educational assistance for refugees started flowing from Sweden and other

Nordic countries[4] from 1963 (Reddy, 1987: 8; Bangura, 2018: 1; Skovmand, 1970: 5).

Meanwhile, following their early efforts, the Scandinavian youth movements decided in 1963 to heed the call of a UNGA resolution calling for a boycott of South African goods. As they had established councils during World War II to deal with common affairs, and broad cooperation existed between the different youth organisations, they were well suited to enact such a boycott (Skovmand, 1970: 2). They were marginally successful in persuading cooperative chains that imported wine, canned fruit, and oranges, as well as State wine monopolies, to not import South African goods. This resulted in imports of goods from South Africa being drastically reduced. However, the impact was not overly dramatic, given that such goods constituted only a small part of sales revenue. This led to some disillusionment, and other international problems also started occupying the minds of the youth, resulting in difficulty recruiting voluntary workers for anti-apartheid campaigns (Skovmand, 1970: 3).

At the government level, however, efforts continued, with contributions to different funds for the victims of apartheid sharply increasing (Skovmand, 1970: 3). Direct and official humanitarian assistance to the national liberation movements in Southern Africa was endorsed by the Swedish Parliament in May 1969 (Sellström, 1999: 17). Sweden thereby became the first industrialised country in the West to forge a direct relationship with movements that other Western countries shunned as 'communist' or 'terrorist' within the context of the Cold War (Sellström, 1999: 18; Sellström, 2002a: 9). It was also the first industrialised country to give massive financial support and official political support to the anti-apartheid movement (Wallström, 2015). This followed renewed interest in the problems of South Africa, which was increasingly regarded in the wider context of white domination in the whole of Southern Africa. The guerrilla wars in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Rhodesia were regarded as offering real possibilities of ending white minority domination and supremacy in the region. Once more, students and left-wing oriented young people started participating in anti-apartheid movements, from a position that tended to look at the situation in Southern Africa as part of 'the rich white conspiracy against the third world' (Skovmand, 1970: 3). Renewed interest within the youth movements included the establishment of a coordinating committee for Southern Africa to mobilise Swedish opinion and to coordinate the work of the different movements. Their efforts paid off when in 1969, student-led boycotts, together with public pressure, led to the Swedish firm ASEA withdrawing from a consortium that would have constructed the electricity transmission infrastructure from the Cabora Bassa hydro-electric dam project in the Zambezi River, to Mozambique and South Africa (Sellström, 1999: 474–502; Skovmand, 1970: 5).

Besides the SSAK and youth movements, two other key anti-apartheid organisations in Sweden were the Africa Groups of Sweden (AGS), and the Isolate South Africa Committee (ISAK) (Thörn, 2009a: 20). Some Africa Groups were originally organised under the SSAK. In April 1974, local Africa Groups in Gothenburg, Jonkoping, Lund, Stockholm, and Uppsala formed the AGS as a national organisation (Nordic Africa Institute, Internet). Its objective 'was to support liberation fronts in Southern Africa against colonialism, imperialism and racism on the liberation movements' own conditions'. Its main activity involved fund-rasing, campaigns and information activities, in order to lobby decision-makers vis-à-vis Southern African issues (Nordic Africa Institute, Internet). The AGS was successful in getting a number of established Swedish non-govermental organisations on board. This included all political parties' youth sections, except that of the Conservative Party. It was also successful in getting a platform for its anti-apartheid solidarity work accepted, based on the sole recognition of the ANC. In 1979, the AGS formed ISAK as a broad Swedish anti-apartheid umbrella organisation, positioning it to become the dominating Swedish anti-apartheid organisation in the 1980s and 1990s (Thörn, 2009a: 21).

Sweden and the United Nations

Following the arrest and trials of thousands of opponents of apartheid by the apartheid regime in 1963, the United Nations for the first time called on member states to assist with contributions to the victims of apartheid (Reddy, 1987: 6; Houser, 1982: 18). Eleven governments responded with announcements of contributions, with Sweden giving 40,000 GBP in 1964 (Houser, 1982: 18). In 1965, a United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa (UNTF) was established,

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as well as an educational and training programme. At the same time, the UNGA started appealing for assistance to national liberation movements that were recognised by the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) (Reddy, 1987: 6). The basis for these appeals was that the UN 'recognised the legitimacy of the struggles of the liberation movements' (Reddy, 1987: 6–7) and also because the African Liberation Fund, established by the OAU in 1963, had set a precedent for assistance by governments and inter-governmental bodies to liberation movements (Reddy, 1987: 7).

Sweden and the other Nordic countries furthermore started providing developmental aid on a substantial scale in the early 1960s, in response to the UN appeals and as an expression of their solidarity with poorer countries (Reddy, 1987: 7–8). Sweden also contributed $100,000 each to the Defence and Aid Fund and the World Council of Churches (Reddy, 2008: 15). It was noted as consistently concerned with the problem of aid to prisoners and their families (Reddy, 2008: 17). The aid was mostly directed to a limited number of 'partner countries' such as the Frontline States in Southern Africa and other independent African states neighbouring South Africa. In 1970, it contributed $80,000 to the United Nations Education and Training Programmes for Southern Africa; $68,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa; and further contributions to the United Nations Education and Training Programmes (Skovmand, 1970: 5). However, little of the support went to the South African liberation movements at that point (Reddy, 2008: 66).

Since the late 1960s, the United Nations appealed for global assistance to 'the victims of colonial and racial oppression in Southern Africa' and 'their national liberation movements' (Reddy, 1987: 2). Sweden responded positively, pledging support along three lines of action, together with the other Nordic countries (i.e. Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Norway). These included sanctions and boycotts; humanitarian, educational, and economic assistance to national liberation movements and the oppressed people whom they represented; and promoting understanding and support for freedom struggles, including action by the United Nations (Reddy, 1987: 2–5).

Prior to this, in 1968, the Swedish Government hosted a session of the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid. ANC President Oliver Tambo participated in the session as a guest of the ruling Social Democratic Party. The Liberal Party also showed strong sympathies (Skovmand, 1970: 6). Indeed, Sweden was always unequivocal in its statements against apartheid in the United Nations, no matter which party was in charge. For example, a few months after the Soweto Uprising of 16 June 1976[5], the Swedish representative, Olof Rydbeck, stated in the UNGA that it was clear that the political repression in South Africa was intensifying, confirming the 'impression of a more and more desperate minority intent on maintaining its privileged positions' (United Nations, 1976: 12). Reference was made to new security laws that were introduced by the apartheid regime, which enabled it to indefinitely detain anyone suspected of disturbing the law and order, and to step up plans to establish independent black homelands[6] (United Nations, 1976: 14). According to Rydbeck, the apartheid regime used its homelands policy as a tool to continue the social and economic exploitation of black workers, and to consolidate white dominion (Bangura, 2018: 1). Rydbeck was very clear on the fact that Sweden would not recognise the homelands in any form. He further emphasised that the apartheid system was inhuman and morally repulsive, and a system of violence, because it could only be upheld by the use of force (United Nations, 1976: 14; Bangura, 2018: 1). Sweden also regarded it as the most systematic violation of the UN Charter, constituting a major challenge to the international community and a threat to international peace and security. As such, Sweden regretted that more than ten years after the UNSC recommended

a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa on the initiative of Scandinavian countries, vetoes by three UNSC members have stopped a decision on the matter (United Nations, 1976: 14).

Along the same lines, in March 1977, Swedish Ambassador Anders Thunborg noted in a speech at the UNSC that the question of South Africa was taken by all political parties in Sweden to be a major issue. He, too, believed that apartheid was a threat to international peace and security, and voiced his support of an internationally coordinated effort to halt further foreign investment in South Africa (Bangura, 2018: 3). Two months later, the Swedish Minister of International Development Cooperation, Ola Ullsten, voiced his disappointment regarding the fact that the UNSC had not yet considered steps that would inhibit further investment in South Africa (Bangura, 2018: 3).

Swedish Trade Union Action Against Apartheid

Initially, there was an internal divide within the Swedish trade union movement over what strategy to follow regarding South Africa. As Thörn (2009a: 37) notes, 'the unions were…sceptical towards the ANC and its call for the isolation of South Africa.' Part of this skepticism was rooted in the fact that the main ally of the ANC was the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), which in turn was affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), which was 'communist-dominated' (Thörn, 2009a: 38). This did not sit well with the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) and the Central Organization of Salaried Employees in Sweden (TCO), which were under the umbrella of the strongly anti-communist International Confederation of Trade Unions (ICFTU). Another reason for the skepticism was that punitive measures against South Africa by the Swedish government would have a negative impact on the business interests of Swedish companies, with the knock-on effect of unemployment in Sweden (Thörn, 2009a: 38).

In an effort to resolve the impasse vis-à-vis strategy, a study delegation of the LO and the TCO reported, after a tour of South Africa in 1975, that they strongly detested apartheid and the social system in South Africa. Subsequently, they called on the Swedish public and all organisations to join in a common cause to support the struggle against the apartheid regime. Similar to the politicians, they demanded restrictions on Swedish capital transfers to South Africa, in order to prevent new investment for as long as 'Swedish enterprises are profiting by the Black, Asiatic and Coloured labor force through discriminating working conditions' (Bangura, 2018: 3–4). This coincided with the stabilisation of relations between the unions and the AGS; however, the second largest union under the LO, the Metal Union, continued to strongly oppose the call for isolation of South Africa for fear of job losses (Thörn, 2009a: 93).

The concern of the international trade union movement was heightened following the 1976 Soweto Uprising, and after the apartheid regime banned or detained twenty prominent leaders and organisers of trade unions in November 1976. The Swedish TCO joined several other national trade union organisations around the globe to protest against the detentions and bannings, especially after being called upon to do so by SACTU (United Nations, 1977: 4–5). Ultimately, the international protest culminated in a week of concerted trade union action against the apartheid regime, from 17–22 January 1977 (United Nations, 1977: 6, 9). Subsequently, the Nordic Trade Union Council (NFS) presented a list of fourteen points for further action against apartheid, viz: steps to ensure the adoption by the UNSC of resolutions to stop new investments in South Africa; the implementation of an arms embargo against South Africa; the isolation of South Africa economically, socially, and culturally; measures to counteract South African economic influence over other African states; economic support to the education of South African refugees in Lesotho and other neighbouring countries; a ban on new investment in South Africa; discontinuation of all State-controlled exportation and importation to and from South Africa; a ban on the use of Nordic territory by South African ships and aircraft; assistance to workers who may suffer as a result of a blockade against South Africa; opposition to any sporting activity between South Africa and the Nordic countries; organisation of trade union education to black and coloured workers in South Africa; increased legal, economic and humanitarian assistance to victims of apartheid; the spreading of knowledge about the oppression in South Africa, in the national school system and through other means; and opposition, in a suitable way, of tourism and emigration to South Africa and

South African territories (United Nations, 1977: 11, 19; Harriman, 1977: 8).

The LO and the TCO believed that close co-operation between governments and trade unions were essential in fighting the evils of apartheid (United Nations, 1977: 11). They therefore submitted the fourteen action points to the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid and called upon the latter to organise a conference consisting of both governments and trade unions (Harriman, 1977: 8). Subsequently, SACTU and the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) announced that it would sponsor a solidarity conference in collaboration with Swedish trade unionists in 1978, in a country neighbouring South Africa, 'to highlight the problems facing workers in South Africa and to discuss plans for action' (United Nations, 1977: 17). It must be noted, however, that unions affiliated to the LO never joined ISAK and the issue of the isolation of South Africa remained a hot debate due to the potential of job losses in Sweden (Thörn, 2009a: 21, 93).

By 1984, internal resistance in South Africa was rising, and the Frontline States were weakening, exemplified by the Nkomati Accord that Mozambique was obliged to sign with the apartheid regime, following devastation from South African aggression and destabilisation. Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme recognised the need to find ways to support the United Democratic Front and independent trade unions, and other resistance movements inside South Africa, as well as the need for greater political and material assistance to the Frontline States. In 1986, assistance to the Frontline States had increased rapidly, to more than 300 million dollars, and Sweden had also become the principal source of support to resistance movements in South Africa, in the face of brutal suppression by the apartheid regime (Reddy, 1990: 11). Most of this support went to the ANC, arguably courtesy of Palme, who was one of the strongest Swedish political voices against apartheid.

Sweden and the ANC

It could be argued that Sweden's relationship with the ANC was fueled by the friendship between Palme and the ANC president-in-exile, Oliver Tambo, since 1966. Palme had invited Tambo to his home in a gesture of recognition of the ANC as a liberation movement, and marched with Tambo in the May Day parade in 1966 (Reddy, 1990: 7). Subsequently, Tambo would often visit Sweden. Yet, in contrast with direct and official humanitarian support to other African liberation movements from 1969[7], the ANC only received its first, modest allocation in February 1973. In the two years after, support to the ANC represented only 2–3% of the total channeled to the PAIGC and FRELIMO. Despite the fact that the ANC had established close ties with the Social Democratic government by this point (Thörn, 2009: 436–427), *de facto* recognition of the ANC was only extended in the mid-1970s (Sellström, 2002b: 398). In early 1974, Sobizana Mngqikana arrived as the first Chief Representative of the ANC to Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries (Thörn, 2009: 426–427). This delay corresponds with the fact that the AGS only recognised the ANC as 'the leading liberation movement in South Africa' (Sellström, 2002b: 398) in November 1974. Mbaqikana was tasked with broadening the ANC's support in Sweden, but it was no easy task. The Social Democratic Party had decided not to look at the ANC through the lens of the Cold War, and gave the organisation its full support (Thörn, 2009: 428). It is important to note at this point that the ANC was the only South African nationalist organisation to be recognised *de facto* by Social Democratic and non-socialist governments in Sweden, under official, bilateral agreements. It wasn't without obstacles, however, mainly because the Social Democrats did not want to focus entirely on the ANC only, by their own admission. Instead, they opted for a pluralistic approach (Sellström, 2002b: 398).

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Between the mid-1970s and early 1990s, the Swedish government assisted anti-apartheid activists – mostly ANC – with about $400 million in humanitarian aid. Stipends and scholarships were provided to exiled South Africans, and humanitarian aid made its way to ANC exile camps in the Frontline States. Furthermore, ANC development projects such as farms, handicraft and educational centers, were also funded, as were the families of detainees in South Africa, and a host of human rights, cultural, legal aid, religious, labour and civic groups inside the country. The funds were disbursed by Sweden's development aid agency, SIDA, and smuggled into South Africa by a large network of anti-apartheid activists and sympathisers (Duke, 1996).

One thing that was made very clear by all Swedish governments was the policy not to assist in the use of violence. In March 1979, then-Swedish Foreign Minister Hans Blix emphasised that while there was understanding for a decision of despair by majorities that have persistently tried persuasion, reason and peaceful pressure to resort to force, Sweden supported non-violent solutions to political problems, as violence inevitably brings suffering (United Nations, 1979: 1). As such, Sweden never rendered direct military support, or supplied military equipment, to liberation movements. However, the value of this stance in the bigger scheme of things is debatable, given the huge sums of monetary support that were given to liberation movements that were engaged in armed struggles in Southern Africa.

Later ANC leaders consistently paid homage to Sweden for its 'commendable contribution to our anti-apartheid struggle', and noted that they equally valued 'our historical ties forged under the rubric of international solidarity' (South African Government, 2011). In 1988, Oliver Tambo, who could be regarded as a key roleplayer in building the close relationship with Sweden due to his frequent visits and engagements with Swedish politicians and civil society, described the relationship as follows:

> There has [...] emerged a natural system of relations between Southern Africa and Sweden, from people to people. It is a system of international relations which is not based on the policies of any party that might be in power in Sweden at any particular time, but on the fundamental reality that the peoples of our region and those of Palme's land of birth share a common outlook and impulse, which dictates that they should all strive for the same objectives (Sellstrom, 2002a: 9–10).

The Role of Olof Palme

According to Roberts (2020), Palme was one of the liberation movement's most committed allies. Born into a prominent and wealthy family in January 1927 (Reuters, 2020), he became appalled by the evil of racism while studying in the United States in 1948. This experience, together with travel to India and other Asian nations in 1953, as leader of the Swedish student movement, strengthened his feeling of solidarity with the poor and oppressed (Reddy, 1990: 5–6). He joined the Social Democratic Party in the early 1950s, after graduating with a law degree from Stockholm University in 1951 (Clarity Films, n.d.). He began his political work vis-à-vis South Africa while he was still a student, by joining the blood-donation drive and transferring the funds he received to the opposition against apartheid in South Africa (Clarity Films, n.d.; Reddy, 1990: 5–6). He rose quickly through the ranks of the left-wing Social Democratic Party and was elected to the Swedish Parliament in 1958 (Clarity Films, n.d.; Reuters, 2020). He became a member of the Cabinet in 1963, and henceforth participated in decisions that placed Sweden at the forefront of action against apartheid in the Western realm, and in the support of African liberation movements (Reddy, 1990: 7). He became the Prime Minister of Sweden in 1969 (Reuters, 2020). This coincided with a turbulent time in Southern Africa. A white minority regime under Ian Smith in Southern Rhodesia had declared unilateral independence from Britain, while simultaneously, armed struggles had been launched against colonial authorities in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. The liberation movements were facing greatly increased needs as a result of this, prompting a decision by Palme in 1969 to provide direct assistance to these movements (Reddy, 1990: 8).

As leader of the Social Democratic Party and as prime minister, Palme consistently and effectively, through words and action, demonstrated his solidarity with oppressed people around the globe (Reddy, 1990: 5). Throughout his life, he repeated his conviction that apartheid was

> by nature a system of violence which can only be maintained by force and by the oppression of the black majority...it is also a system of social and economic exploitation which separates workers from workers on the basis of the colour of their skin, at the same time as almost two million black people are unemployed. A society which responds to demands for human dignity and decency with brutal police action and indiscriminate killing must not only be condemned; it is also doomed to permanent division and conflict (Palme, 1977: 2).

Palme left no stone unturned at the United Nations and in every international forum open to his participation, to urge world powers to recognise oppression under apartheid, and the illegal occupation of Namibia, as a threat to peace (Palme, 1977: 1). Together with other entities in Sweden, and international anti-apartheid movements, he took whatever action necessary to compel the world to listen and to take action against apartheid (Reddy, 1990: 3). He pointed out how the apartheid regime was 'reinforcing the machinery of oppression, strengthening its defences and endevouring to gain assurances of wider international support' (Palme, 1977: 1), with the 1976 Soweto massacre serving as proof that the regime would not hesitate to use brutal violence (Palme, 1977: 2; Bangura, 2018: 2). He was particularly aghast at statements by Rhodesia's Ian Smith, and the apartheid regime's John Vorster who demanded external aid to enable it to 'fight for the interests of the free world':

> Haven't these people learnt anything? Let us make it very clear. Democratic socialists will never accept Smith's perversion of Western Democracy. We will never include Vorster's oppression and racism in a free world...Smith and Vorster are doing the very opposite to democracy. They are denying the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa the most fundamental human rights which are a pre-condition for democracy (Palme, 1977: 2).

Under Palme's leadership, generous assistance was provided by Sweden to the victims of repression and liberation movements, as well as new independent states in Africa. He never grew tired of promoting international action against apartheid, especially in the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto Uprising, and the critical period after 1984, when the increasing popular resistance and violent township protests in South Africa forced the apartheid regime to declare a State of Emergency (Reddy, 1990: 5; SAHO, 2019). He constantly challenged other major Western powers that continued to obstruct international action, and played an instrumental role in obtaining a firm commitment from Socialist International, to support the African liberation struggle (Reddy, 1990: 5). According to Reddy (1990: 6), he was always abreast of what was happening in Southern Africa; met frequently with leaders of the liberation leaders; and paid great attention to their views in a non-paternalistic manner. He emphasised that African people had to be helped in the context of their choices (Reddy, 1990: 5). He addressed many conferences on Southern Africa, where he consistently stressed that neutrality was not possible in the region; that no middle ground existed between the oppressors and the oppressed; and that reform of apartheid, or a compromise with apartheid, was not possible, thereby denouncing moves by major Western powers to give assurances to the apartheid regime, in exchange for co-operation in negotiated settlements in Rhodesia and Namibia (Reddy, 1990: 9). According to the leader of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Rt. Revd. Trevor Huddleston, CR, in Reddy (1990: 3), Palme repeatedly stated his conviction

> that apartheid is *irreformable*. That persuasion, dialogue and diplomatic pressure are themselves incapable of destroying what is basically evil in itself. That there can be no such thing as 'constructive engagement' with a tyranny. The only way is to destroy the tyranny itself and replace it with democratic rule.

In order to destroy the tyranny of apartheid, Palme proposed a specific policy for Social Democrats globally to pursue. This included: support for a binding UN arms embargo against South Africa; material and political support to already autonomous states and to the liberation movements; better coordination of efforts in the United Nations for an effective policy of isolation and sanctions against South Africa, including persistant refusal to recognise the Bantustans; determined efforts to bring about an end to South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia; reconsidering new investments and the export

of capital to South Africa and Namibia; support to black trade unions and student movements in South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe; and setting up parliamentary committees to ensure that internationally acknowledged working practices were in effect in companies with subsidiaries in South Africa (Bangura, 2018: 2–3; Palme, 1977: 4).

In 1979, Palme also became one of the sponsors of the World Campaign Against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa, launched by the exiled South African, Abdul Minty (Smith, 1980: Preface). The World Campaign was set to work in close cooperation with the United Nations, the OAU, anti-apartheid and solidarity movements, liberation movements in Southern Africa, and the Frontline States, in ensuring full implementation and strengthening of the UNSC mandatory arms embargo of 1977 (Minty, c1981; Reddy, 1990: 10).

Palme also minced no words on what he felt was complacency on the part of the West. In this regard, Huddleston admonished the world to listen to what Palme had to say:

> His words are a massive assault on the complacency of the Western powers in their attitude to the monstrous evil of apartheid. Not least on those countries in Europe who for so long sustained the Pretoria regime in its tyranny by trade, investment and collaboration (Reddy, 1990: 3).

Palme was shot in the back at close range on the night of 28 February 1986, as he walked along a busy street in Stockholm. A second bullet grazed his wife, Lisbeth. She survived; Palme didn't. Thousands of people were questioned and more than 130 falsely confessed to the crime. In 1996, an allegation was made that the murder was carried out on the order of apartheid-era security forces, due to the deep enmity they had for Sweden. Despite all of this, no-one was ever convicted (Reuters, 2020; Duke, 1996). But Palme's legacy remains. He fought apartheid until the very end. A week before his assassination, he addressed the Swedish People's Parliament together with Tambo (Roberts, 2020). Palme's lifelong message is encapsulated in the following quote: 'we must live up to our responsibility for bringing this repulsive system (of apartheid) to an end' (Reddy, 1990: 11).

Palme's death was mourned by thousands of oppressed South Africans, with the Delmas Treason Trialists (Roberts, 2020) and ANC stalwarts like Oliver Tambo and later Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe unanimously praising him and his government for their repeated and unequivocal expressions of abhorrence of apartheid. Tambo called him 'one of us, a fellow combatant who has made an inestimable contribution to the struggle for the liberation of South Africa' (Reddy, 1990: 5), while Motlanthe described him as 'a tireless campaigner for peace, equality, human rights and freedom' (South African Government, 2011). His crusading efforts were also appreciated by the OAU and the UN. This is particularly exemplified by the gold medal he was awarded by the UN in 1978 in recognition of his contribution to the international campaign against apartheid (Reddy, 1990: 11).

Ultimately, all the efforts by the various entities and individuals in Sweden culminated in the next phase of the campaign against apartheid: punitive sanctions.

Swedish Sanctions

Sweden introduced measures against apartheid South Africa before most other countries. From 1967, no export credits from public funds were granted, and there were few cultural or sporting contacts with South Africa, due to a prohibition on public funds being used to subsidise such contacts. Visa requirements were introduced for South African citizens in 1978. From 1982, these visas became a highly restrictive practice that de facto barred South Africans from visiting Sweden, unless they could show that they were opponents or victims of apartheid (Conlon, 1986: 9).

In the late 1970s and 1980s, the Swedish government and organisations such as ISAK persistently proposed the introduction of an effective and mandatory policy of sanctions on South Africa, as well as the application of total trade boycotts (Ruyter, 1990: 4; Reddy, 1990: 3). The Swedish government also became an active co-sponsor of UN resolutions (Conlon, 1986: 9). This put the country, along with Norway and Denmark, at loggerheads with Great Britain in the 1970s over how to manage their relations with the apartheid regime. The three Scandinavian states, in a high-profile Southern Africa policy, advocated loudly for

UNSC sanctions to be imposed on the white minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia, in order to increase pressure for reform. Britain, on the other hand, was concerned about Soviet influence in the region backing majority rule, and Britain's own economic and social interests in the region. Hence, they proposed a slower and more careful approach (Svenbalrud, 2012: 746–747). Such was the discontent that the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) wanted punitive measures imposed on Norway and Sweden, 'to sanction their position in South African matters' (Svenbalrud, 2012: 747). This, despite Sweden sharing many basic foreign policy positions with Britain, such as containing Soviet communism and supporting the post-war international liberal order (Svenbalrud, 2012: 748).

It was only in 1979, however, that Sweden prohibited new investments in South Africa (Sellström, 2002b: 398). In the face of the veto rights of permanent members of the UNSC, which severely limited the range of actions that could potentially be taken against South Africa, Foreign Minister Blix proposed unilateral action by the Swedish government (United Nations, 1979: 2). On 7 June 1979, a Swedish law was passed that banned investments and loans to South Africa and South-African-controlled Namibia (United Nations, 1979: 2; Conlon, 1986: 9; United Nations, 1989: 15). The law was revised and extended in 1985, to prohibit certain types of lease-back agreements for capital equipment (Conlon, 1986: 9). The 1979 action was the first example of Sweden acting unilaterally against South Africa, outside of UNSC resolutions (Gauhar, 1980: 638). Aside from the UNSC veto issue, however, there was also another reason for the late introduction of a ban on new investments in South Africa, as alluded to earlier: resistance from trade unions, in particular the Metal Union, and Swedish companies with business interests or subsidiaries in South Africa, who feared unemployment in Sweden in the face of South Africa's isolation.

> "Sweden went beyond the UNSC resolutions of 1985 by enacting an absolute ban on the import of an extensive range of agricultural products from South Africa (Conlon, 1986: 9). By 1987, this special law had been replaced by a general trade ban, which entailed that no person domiciled in Sweden could render marketing or consulting services on a commercial basis to any person or entity in South Africa"

Further action by the Swedish government would only follow in 1985, earning it sharp criticism from ISAK, who continuously lobbied for sanctions and the isolation of South Africa and publicised the involvement of Swedish companies in South Africa (Thörn, 2009a: 80). In October 1985, Sweden and the other Baltic states adopted formalised strategic guidelines for general policy coordination. Ultimately, all five governments went beyond the guidelines, in their respective national applications. The overall purpose was to gradually wind down new investments in South Africa by Nordic states; to work with the private sector towards informal agreements with the respective governments to restrict their activities in South Africa; to gradually wind down trade relations with South Africa; and the implementation of UNSC resolutions 558 (1985) and 569 (1985) (Conlon, 1986: 6). In addition to previous laws and measures, as alluded to earlier, Sweden also introduced the following: an end to trade in arms and military equipment in both directions; a ban on the buying or selling of Kruger Rands; no collaboration in the nuclear field; a ban on exports of computer equipment that could be used by the South African army for military purposes and/or adaptations thereof for use by the police; no trade promotion; opposition to loans by the International Monetary Fund (IMF); discouragement of technology transfer; restrictions on relations in the fields of sports, culture and science; and joint Nordic guidelines for visa regulations for South African citizens (Conlon, 1986: 6–9; Terry and Bell, 1988: 6; United Nations, 1989: 22, 29).

The only measure that could not be enacted at a national level was a ban on air traffic with South Africa. This was because the governments of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden were the joint owners of Scandinavian Airline Systems (SAS) (Conlon, 1986: 7; Ruyter, 1990: 11). Hence, the three countries together responded to the call for an air traffic ban with South Africa. In accordance with a ministerial agreement of

27 June 1986, SAS would abrogate its 1958 agreement on air traffic with South Africa and end its flights to Johannesburg from September 1985 (Conlon, 1986: 7; Ruyter, 1990: 11; United Nations, 1989: 30).

Sweden went beyond the UNSC resolutions of 1985 by enacting an absolute ban on the import of an extensive range of agricultural products from South Africa (Conlon, 1986: 9). By 1987, this special law had been replaced by a general trade ban, which entailed that no person domiciled in Sweden could render marketing or consulting services on a commercial basis to any person or entity in South Africa (United Nations, 1989: 23, 31). Furthermore, provincial and local authorities were asked by the Swedish Parliament in 1985 to boycott South African products and goods for a period of one year, for reasons of solidarity, and penalties for contravention of all measures were strengthened (Conlon, 1986: 9–10; United Nations, 1989: 8). Sweden's Board of Trade was commissioned to submit an impact study on the effects of an eventual interruption of South African supplies of specialised metals, and to draw up contingency plans. Shipping companies were asked to avoid traffic via South African harbours, and to rather use ports in Frontline States. The Swedish business community was requested to disengage itself from commercial dealings with South Africa, and to follow a UN decree that called for the protection of Namibia's natural resources. Furthermore, a 'gentlemen's agreement' was reached with major coal importers in Sweden, in March 1985, to phase out imports from South Africa (Conlon, 1986: 10; United Nations, 1989: 22; Working Group Kairos, 1989: 6). It took a while though for this to materialise, as considerable volumes of South African coal were still transshipped to Sweden from Dutch ports – a trick by coal traders to hide the South African origin of the coal (Working Group Kairos, 1989: 17).

Another far-reaching measure enacted by Sweden in 1985 was that Swedish companies had to consistently report on the activities of their subsidiaries in South Africa to the Board of Trade. This was done in order to comply with the provisions of the ban on new investments. Detailed data of capital transactions between the parent company and subsidiary was required, including on the conditions of employment in, and certain activities of the South African subsidiaries. The Board of Trade had to summarise these reports and issue an annual report to the Swedish Parliament (United Nations, 1989: 9–10).

Sweden and the other Nordic countries turned the screw even tighter from 1 January 1988, when they implemented comprehensive measures intended to counteract apartheid and reduce the dependence of the countries of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference and the Frontline States on South Africa (Terry & Bell, 1988). The law that allowed provincial and local authorities to boycott South African products and goods for a period of one year had now been replaced by the general trade ban (United Nations, 1989: 8). This ban was furthermore expanded to include Namibia, and other economic measures were also expanded (Terry & Bell, 1988). This meant that by 1989, Sweden had a total ban on all trade and new investments with South Africa and Namibia, and any persons or entities based in Sweden were prohibited from acquiring portfolio investments in South African or Namibian commercial enterprises (United Nations, 1989: 28). The transport of oil on all Nordic-registered ships was also almost totally banned (United Nations, 1989: 5).

Epilogue

By April 1991, despite brutal and meaningless violence continuing, South Africa had made some progress towards political transformation. The Nordic foreign ministers, however, agreed that economic sanctions could only be revoked after the abolishment of the apartheid system, and a comprehensive political assessment of the situation (United Nations, 1991: 2–3). That said, the Nordic foreign ministers nonetheless felt that the encouraging changes taking place in South Africa already justified some steps on their part to promote dialogue and the process of democratisation. In this regard, the special guidelines applicable to the granting of visas to South African citizens would be abolished. However, restrictions that were required to ensure the implementation of nationally applicable sanctions would remain (United Nations, 1991: 3).

Meanwhile, due to widespread concern about continuing violence in South Africa, and the prospect of free and fair elections in 1994, SIDA allocated considerable resources for various peace and election monitoring initiatives (Sellström, 2002b:

861). Furthermore, in November 1993, the Swedish government decided on a final contribution to the ANC, which was paid over in October 1994. The amount of 6,5 million Swedish Krona brought 21 years of close cooperation between Sweden and the ANC as a liberation movement to an end (Sellström, 2002b: 858, 861). Up to this point, Sweden had disbursed a total of 4 billion Swedish Krona as official humanitarian assistance to liberation movements in Southern Africa (Sellström, 2002a: 9). Of this, 896 million Swedish Krona had gone to the ANC (Sellström, 2002b: 861). This support was characterised by Carl Tham, the head of SIDA from 1985, as 'one of the most important foreign policy and cooperation efforts carried out by Sweden' (Sellström, 2002b: 869).

In closing, William Minter in Sellström (2002a: 9) aptly describes Sweden's momentous support to the liberation movements as follows:

> In the 1980s, the international right wing was fond of labeling SWAPO and ANC as 'Soviet-backed'. In empirical terms, the alternate, but less dramatic, labels 'Swedish-backed' or 'Nordic-backed' would have been equally or even more accurate, especially in the non-military aspects of international support.

Bilateral relations between Sweden and South Africa were normalised in December 1993. This was marked by ANC President Nelson Mandela, and the last apartheid president, F.W. de Klerk, visiting Stockholm after being jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Norway. It was the first time ever that a South African head of state visited Sweden. In March 1994, Sweden reciprocated, when Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretha af Ugglas visited South Africa (Sellström, 2002: 861). Not long after that, between 26 and 29 April 1994, peaceful elections brought a formal end to apartheid and white minority rule in South Africa. The long struggle for freedom and inclusive democracy in South Africa was finally over, and thousands of liberation fighters could probably resonate with the sentiments of ANC stalwart James Ngculu:

> The support we received raised morale because sometimes you sit in the camps and all that happens is that the sun rises and the sun sets. The books, the games, the clothing and everything we received from the solidarity movement sustained most of us. And the radios – you could listen to the news and music. A small thing but so important (Roberts, 2020).

Notes

1. An Afrikaans word meaning 'apartness.'

2. The Sharpeville massacre followed a non-violent anti-pass protest campaign orchestrated by the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). On the morning of 21 March 1960, a crowd of people chanting freedom songs and calling out campaign slogans, approached the Sharpeville police station, where a heavy contingent of policemen awaited them. The leaders asked the police to allow them to go through to the police station, where they wanted to surrender themselves for refusing to carry passes, in line with the campaign slogan of "No Bail! No Defence! No Fine!" By midday, the crowd had grown to 5,000 people, faced by 300 policemen. A small scuffle led to a policeman being pushed over and the crowd advancing to see what was happening. The police started firing with live ammunition, later claiming that they did so because the protesters had started throwing stones at them. The two minutes of firing on the crowd left 69 dead and 180 people seriously wounded (SAHO, Internet).

3. Helander was also one of the founding members of this organisation.

4. The author acknowledges that other Nordic countries in addition to Sweden supported South Africa's liberation struggle. For more information, please refer to the Liberation Africa Project undertaken by the Nordic-Africa Institute.

5. The Soweto Uprising was triggered by the apartheid regime's introduction of the so-called 'Bantu Education Act' in 1953. In 1976, Afrikaans was made compulsory alongside English as a medium of instruction, leading to a gradual mobilisation of students. Between 3,000 and 10,000 students mobilised in Soweto on 16 June 1976 for a peaceful march against the government directive. The students were met by heavily armed police, who used teargas and later live ammunition against them. A widespread

revolt erupted, quickly turning into an uprising that spread across South Africa and continued into 1977 (SAHO, Internet).

6. A total of ten self-sufficient, ethnically defined homelands (also called Bantustans) were planned by the apartheid regime (Mukonoweshuro, 1991: 171). Three and a half million people were forcibly removed to these homelands between 1960 and 1994. Sham independence was granted to these territories in the 1970s, but poverty was rife and many returned to the cities of South Africa to work as labourers (Apartheid Museum, n.d.).

7. PAIGC of Guinea-Bissau; ZANU of Zimbabwe; SWAPO of Namibia; FRELIMO of Mozambique; and the MPLA of Angola (Sellstrom, 2002a).

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Trust, Power, and Partnership:

A Study of the Evolution of Sweden's Bilateral Economic Partnership with Post-Apartheid South Africa[1]

By Tove Sternehäll

Abstract

In This article examines the legacy of the Swedish anti-apartheid movement on their post-apartheid bilateral economic relationship with South Africa. Focusing on developments within the South African economy from a Swedish perspective, the article studies Sweden's ambitions and efforts to develop their economic cooperation. The study is built on mixed methods where the main bulk of data is collected through semi-structured interviews with Swedish experts on the bilateral relationship. Through an analytical framework built on embeddedness theory and soft power, the article examines the impact of the trust and influence that stems from Sweden's support of the South African liberation movement.

The article finds that the deep trust and influence established during apartheid had a major impact on the early cooperation between Sweden and post-apartheid South Africa, which focused on strengthening the institutional base to expand future cooperation side-by-side with a transitional humanitarian aid program. It is further found that the relationship has cooled down over time, which is attributed to the change in context as apartheid was dismantled. Personal ties have faded as politicians have been replaced, and the discontinuation of the Swedish financial aid program in 2013 meant a substantial decrease in the funding of their institutional cooperation.

Trade became the focus of the economic partnership as the bilateral development cooperation gradually diminished in size. Sweden has worked actively for increased trade in both directions through programs targeted at creating personal relationships between firms and developing their institutional networks. The results suggest that the post-apartheid relationship was imprinted with an unspoken debt of gratitude from the South African side. It is found that the Swedish influence that ensued has decreased over time, and there are indications that a contributing factor is the improprieties found following a controversial military deal in 1999. The importance of the trust and influence stemming from the apartheid-era cooperation has diminished over time. Its main legacy is the broad institutional networks created to foster trust and increase the economic activity between the two countries.

Introduction

It was not an accident that Sweden was the first country outside the African continent to be visited by Nelson Mandela after his release from Robben Island in 1990 (Swedish Foreign Ministry, 2015). Rather, Mandela's visit was highly symbolic of the close relationship forged between the leaders of the South African liberation movement and both the Swedish government as well as its civil society. This was an outcome of decades of Swedish economic and political support of the South African liberation movement, across all levels of society.

While reports of the reality of apartheid[2] had reached Sweden in the previous decade, it was the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960 that really brought it into the Swedish consciousness and caused national mobilisation (Magnusson, 1974).[3] On the governmental level, a substantial aid program held almost unanimous support in the Swedish parliament. Sweden was in fact the first Western country to support the anti-apartheid movement financially, at the same time as other influential states such as the United Kingdom and the United States branded them as terrorist organisations (Sellström, 2002b: 753). On the regional and local levels, grassroots organisations throughout Sweden organised under the Isolate South Africa Committee (ISAK). This aimed to raise domestic awareness of the South African situation and to pressure the Swedish government to do more to support the anti-apartheid movement. They also raised funds for the liberation movement and carried out several consumer boycotts of South African goods, aiming to put economic pressure on the apartheid regime (Magnusson, 1974).

> "The article finds that the deep trust and influence established during apartheid had a major impact on the early cooperation between Sweden and post-apartheid South Africa, which focused on strengthening the institutional base to expand future cooperation side-by-side with a transitional humanitarian aid program."

The development of the apartheid-era relationship has been covered thoroughly by previous research in a broad array of academic fields, including economics, economic history, international relations, and political science (Magnusson, 1974; Hermele and Palmberg, 1990; Bjereld, 1995; Bangura, 2004; Thörn, 2006; Silén, 2007). In addition to this, Tor Sellström released three publications in 2002 under the project 'Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa' which constitutes a comprehensive documentation of Sweden's agency in the fight against apartheid (Sellström, 2002a; 2002b; 2002c). Meanwhile, the post-apartheid literature has almost exclusively focused on the controversial 1999 weapons deal between the African National Congress (ANC) and Svenska Aeroplan Aktie Bolag (SAAB), also known as the JAS-deal.[4]

This article contributes to the field by assessing how Sweden has cultivated the special relationship that was built with the South African liberation movement, to establish the nature of its heritage on their post-apartheid economic relationship. The study ends in 2018, to exclude any impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The focus of the article lies on the South African economy from a Swedish perspective. It begins with a brief history of the South African economy, followed by a section on the analytical framework which centres the impact of trust and influence on the post-apartheid cooperation. The subsequent section introduces the methods and methodology. The results are introduced by a section on Sweden's initial ambitions in a liberated South Africa before looking closer at Swedish aid and development cooperation in South Africa, as well as Sweden's trade and investment cooperation with South Africa. The latter is in turn structured around sections covering Swedish export promotion; the development and stability of the post-apartheid South African economy; Swedish exports and investments in South Africa; the apartheid-era's heritage on the bilateral

cooperation; and the lasting consequences of the JAS-deal.

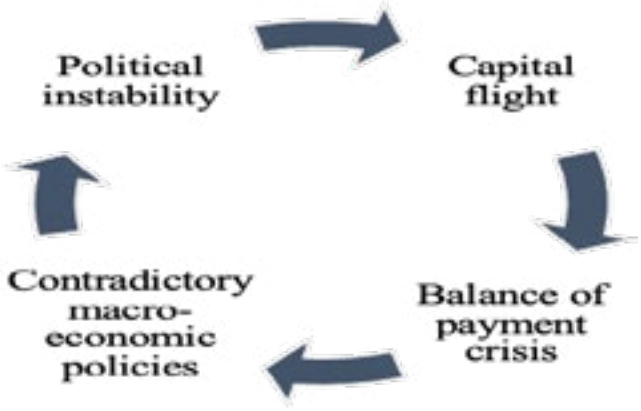
Background: The South African Economy

When gold was found in the Witwatersrand in the 1880s, it boosted the South African economy which had previously relied on an inefficient labour-heavy agricultural sector (Feinstein, 2005: 2–3). The mining industry became the colony's new engine of growth and attracted international investments through its domestic potential – the access to valuable raw materials, combined with its relatively refined economic sector and its substantial system for logistics and transports. In addition, it granted them access to regional markets on the African continent. The mining industry also attracted droves of migrant workers from neighbouring states with less stable economic situations. However, due to the diminishing quality of the available ore, the colonial government needed to find a replacement for gold – and they targeted the manufacturing sector (ibid: 131).

The South African manufacturing sector was – like their agricultural sector – expensive, inefficient, and lacking in capital and technology. It was a heritage from Dutch colonisation in 1652, when the colony was restricted to only produce for its domestic market to avoid competition with Dutch manufacturing (ibid: 113). These restrictions were removed as the United Kingdom captured the colony in 1795, but the new colonial government struggled to develop the manufacturing industry due to its many inherent weaknesses (ibid). These were a combination of the poverty wages paid to the black majority population, which decimated the local demand, while the exorbitant wages for the white population made their products uncompetitive on the global markets. This was worsened by the manufacturing sector's dependency on imports of primary goods (ibid: 131). The result was an unproductive and expensive manufacturing sector dependent on high tariff protection and the continued export of gold (ibid: 128, 135).

The structural problems of the South African economy got worse after the 1948 election. While the previous government faced pressure from the business sector to ease the racial restrictions due to its harm on the South African economy, the National Party managed to rally enough support for the implementation of apartheid (ibid: 181). The increased violence and austerity that followed the 1948 election led to an escalation within the domestic resistance movements (Lowenberg, 1997: 70). This had a significant impact on foreign direct investment into the country, which was especially problematic due to South Africa's chronic balance of payment deficit. It forced the government to make further cuts to their public spending, which in turn increased the political instability (ibid). Figure 1 below visualises this vicious cycle, which put increasing strain on the regime.

Figure 1: The Vicious Cycle of the Apartheid Economy



(Source: The Author)

To make things worse, expanded racial restrictions on education and jobs worsened the shortage of skilled labour while increasing the poverty rate among the African population (Feinstein, 2005: 129). Leading up to liberation in 1994, South Africa had one of the highest Gini coefficients in the world, with members of the African population earning approximately 9% of the average white South African (Lundahl and Petersson, 2009: 1). The situation got worse in 1985, as international economic sanctions strategically targeted these pre-existing weaknesses, which put further strain on their economy (Lowenberg, 1997: 69). This led to an external debt crisis in the late 1980s where the South African government was forced to put a moratorium on their short-term international loans (Aravinitis, 2005: 64).

There is consensus in the literature that apartheid ultimately fell because of the unsustainable state of its economy, in particular its inefficiency and high maintenance costs (Lowenberg, 1997; Thompson,

2001; Feinstein, 2005). Racial restrictions were withdrawn, and political resistance organisations were legalised in the lead up to the 1994 election. The result was a liberated ANC-led South Africa tasked with increasing the quality of life for its marginalised black population, while restructuring their highly inefficient and expensive economy. If successful, they would be able to stabilise their economic sector and take advantage of its inherent strengths, such as its well-established banking and transportation sectors.

Analytical Framework

When looking at the impact of the apartheid-era heritage on the post-apartheid relationship between Sweden and South Africa, this article focuses on two key factors: *trust* and *influence*. The analysis of the impact of *trust* is derived from Granovetter's (1985) Embeddedness Theory, acknowledging the central role of trust in all economic behaviour. It considers how a close social relationship will deter misconduct due to the moral incentive of not betraying one's close ally, in addition to the harm it could cause for future cooperation (ibid). Trust is also strengthened by the implementation of institutions aimed at reducing social uncertainties, managing expectations, and regulating misconduct (Granovetter, 1985; Polanyi, 2001; North, 2005). Embeddedness is in this article utilised by considering the trust that is embedded in the bilateral relationship, and its impact on the development of that relationship.

The analysis of Swedish *influence* relies on Rothman's (2011) reconceptualization of Joseph Nye's (1990) 'Soft Power'. It is utilised to highlight the nuances of how economic, institutional, and rhetorical power can be applied in the context of bilateral relations. This article focuses on the Soft Power that stems from Sweden's moral activism against the apartheid state, and its impact on South African policy implementation following the 1994 election. In addition, it includes an analysis of the utilisation of economic influence on the post-apartheid relationship, and the impact it has had on their bilateral economic relationship.

Table 1 below visualises the factors and indicators that are applied to interpret the evolution of their economic relationship, and to analyse the apartheid-era's heritage on their bilateral cooperation.

Table 1: Operationalisation of the Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Framework	Factors	Indicators
Embeddedness	Trust	Personal relationships Institutional networks Economic cooperation
Economic- and Soft Power	Political influence	Personal relationships Policy implementation
	Economic influence	Financial aid

(Source: The Author)

Methodology

This article's research design relies on a methodology built on mixed methods. It is based on eight semi-structured interviews with Swedish professionals with experience or knowledge of the bilateral economic cooperation between Sweden and South Africa before and after liberation. This is complemented by a conceptual content analysis of two types of Swedish policy documents regarding their economic cooperation, as well as descriptive statistics to quantify the economic flows between them.

Due to the unique nature of this historic relationship, the article focuses on the dependability and consistency of the data, rather than on reliability and validity. Triangulation is combined with a comprehensive context to enable the judgements of transferability to other cases. The semi-structured interviews make up the main bulk of data for the article. Interviewees are kept confidential to allow them to express themselves candidly. The eight sources include professionals representing several Swedish government institutions, including the foreign ministry, the Swedish International

Development Agency (Sida), the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria, export promotion agencies, as well as representatives from the civil society and private sector. The analysis of policy documents regards Country Strategies (hereafter CS) produced by Sida and Land Risk Analyses (hereafter LRA) composed by the Swedish Export Credit Agency (EKN). These reports provide a broad picture of the post-apartheid economic cooperation, mainly covering the early years following South Africa's liberation. Lastly, the article includes descriptive statistics intended to quantify and contextualise the bilateral economic flows between Sweden and South Africa, highlighting the broad strokes of their trade and non-trade cooperation. These are collected from Open Aid, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Statistics Sweden (SCB).

Results

Sweden's Initial Ambitions in a Liberated South Africa

The South African transition into a non-racial democracy constituted the greatest catalyst for change in Sweden and South Africa's economic relationship since the 1960s. The state of the South African economy at the time of liberation meant that it could benefit from a transitional period of financial aid, to fund crucial reforms and investments in its labour force. Due to the optimistic outlook for South Africa's economy, the intention was that the relationship would gradually shift to a normal bilateral cooperation (CS, 1999: 10). Therefore, Sweden prioritised the creation of forums for dialogue and future partnership side-by-side with its aid-funded development cooperation. The long-term strategy for the Swedish-South African partnership would be built on common commercial interests, exchanges of experience, and transfers of technology between the two countries (CS, 1999: 12; CS, 2004: 1; CS, 2009: 1). The stated intentions of the Swedish government have been consistent, although the nature of the relationship has evolved over time.

“The long-term strategy for the Swedish-South African partnership would be built on common commercial interests, exchanges of experience, and transfers of technology between the two countries (CS, 1999: 12; CS, 2004: 1; CS, 2009: 1). The stated intentions of the Swedish government have been consistent, although the nature of the relationship has evolved over time.”

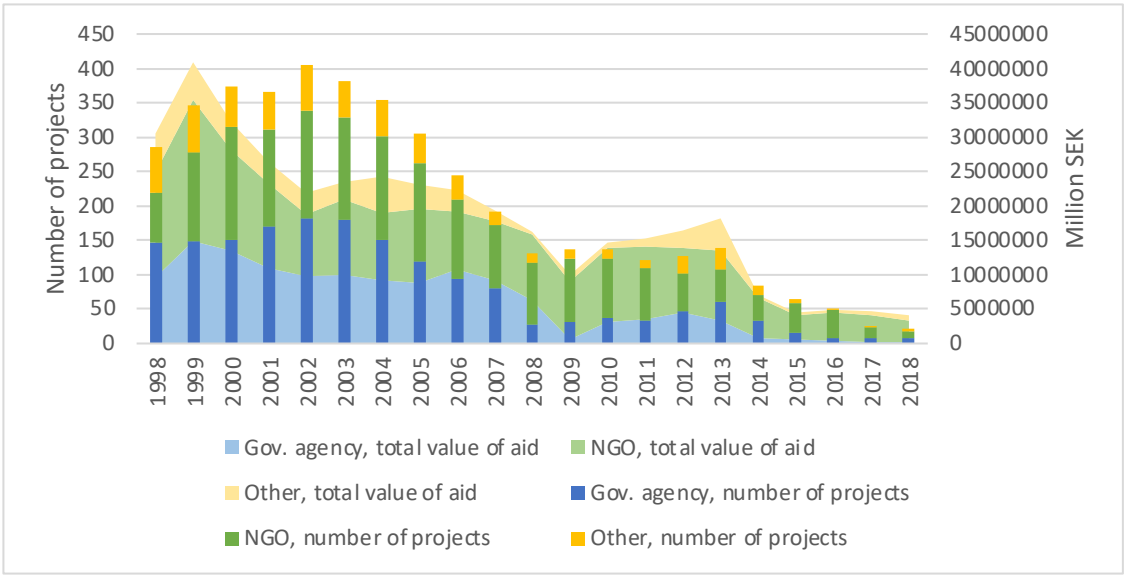
Swedish Aid and Development Cooperation

The CS (1999: 10) establishes that Sweden's invitation to cooperate on sensitive reforms of the post-apartheid South African state was a result of the trust built through their previous partnership with the ANC. This relied in part on the pre-existing personal relationships between ANC leaders and the heads of many Swedish institutions, which provided a beneficial point of departure for the bilateral development cooperation (ibid). The importance of these relationships is corroborated by Interviewee 1 who discussed the Swedish ambition to take advantage of these close bonds, while adding that Sweden benefitted from its lack of colonial baggage in Africa. This further strengthened the trust and constituted a good base on which to build a relationship between equals. The transitional nature of Sweden's Official Development Assistance (ODA) program meant that it was set up as a springboard for the South African economy to get back on its feet, before being phased out by 2013.While this caused a substantial decrease in volume, Swedish ODA continued to reach South African organisations throughout 2018. Interviewee 2 explained it as the result of regional Non-Governmental Organisations' (NGOs) tendencies to establish their headquarters in South Africa because of the country's freedom of speech, free press, and access to information.

Figure 2 below visualises Swedish ODA directed to South Africa in terms of total value and number of new projects per year between 1998–2018. These are divided into three categories, indicating the type of implementing agency used for each project. The

figure shows a declining trend in the number of projects beginning in 2002, where governmental projects were the main recipients of the cutbacks. Further, it visualises the continued funding for regional NGOs as the bilateral program ended.

Figure 2: Yearly Swedish ODA to South Africa According to Implementing Agency, 1998–2018



(Source: Open Aid, 2021)

Interviewee 1 explained that the initial support was mainly directed towards traditional humanitarian development projects, to build houses and provide support for South African institutions. Interviewee 3 saw this humanitarian cooperation as a natural continuation from the apartheid period, as large parts of the population still lived in utter poverty. They also discussed the Swedish ambition to 'contribute to the rebuilding of the South African economy, to make it possible for them to take advantage of its many inherent strengths,' which included drastic reforms in the manufacturing sector.

A close institutional cooperation between governmental agencies in both countries constituted a major part of the post-apartheid development program. Interviewee 1 mentioned several such examples, including the police, the military, statistical agencies, and tax authorities. There was also an extensive program for municipal cooperation and dialogue which took place between around 20 municipalities (ibid). The CS (1999) highlights the early cooperation between the port cities Gothenburg and the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.[5] For the twentieth anniversary of this partnership, a celebratory booklet was released which credits the partnership to the deeply entrenched relationships that were established as a direct result of Sweden's support of South Africa's liberation movement (McCarthy and Botha, 2019: 2). It further emphasised the crucial importance of the Sida-funding that served as their initial financier.

Interviewee 2 highlighted that education and research programs have been highly prioritised throughout the bilateral cooperation, which has remained the focus of the ODA-funded regional cooperation taking place since 2013. The impact of this can be seen through the fact that South Africa has continued to be Sweden's biggest educational exchange partner throughout the period studied (ibid).

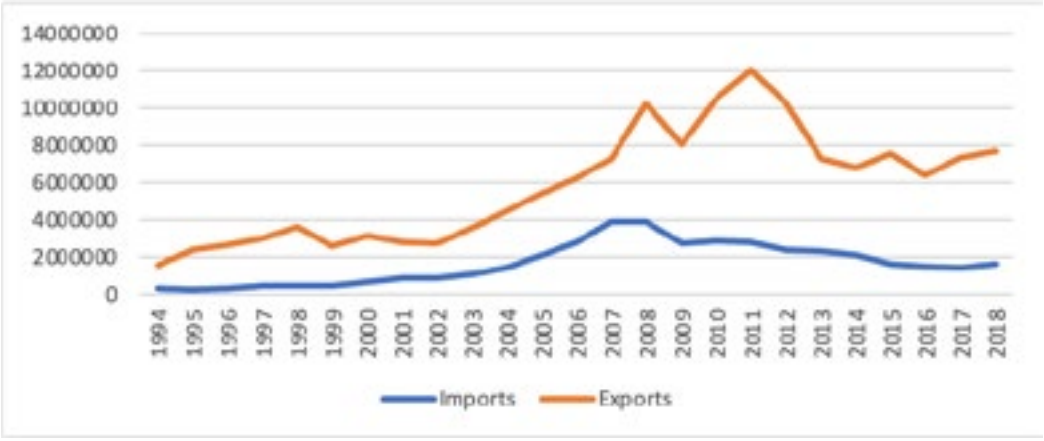
This subsection has shown the declining trajectory of the non-trade economic bilateral cooperation since the late 1990s. While it has coincided with a lesser need for close personal relationships, the broad cooperation that came out of the Swedish development assistance has created institutional

networks at the local, regional, and national levels of Swedish and South African societies, of which several remained active by the end of 2018.

Trade and Investment Cooperation

In the interview with Interviewee 2, they discussed the difficulty in calculating the value of the bilateral economic relationship, in part due to the complex structures of multinational corporations' value chains. Another factor is that Swedish trade with South Africa can benefit their economic sectors without impacting their trade statistics, for example through investment in human capital or the creation of jobs in their domestic markets. The interviewee added: 'it is safe to assume that a Swedish company active in South Africa has a positive impact on the bilateral economic relationship, regardless of whether it shows up in the trade statistics or not.' Due to these problems, Figure 3 below should not be seen as the complete picture of the trade relationship. It does, however, provide an indication of the economic terms of trade between the countries.

Figure 3: Sweden's Annual Commodity Trade with South Africa, 1994–2018



(Source: SCB, 2022a; SCB, 2022b)

Further, Interviewee 2 discussed the sectors and firms of special interest for Swedish trade and investments in South Africa. Historically, the mining sector has been of major importance for Swedish mining firms such as Sandvik and Atlas Copco, but also producers of mining equipment, an area in which Sweden is well established. Another sector of historic importance is logistics and transportation where 'Volvo and Scania have a firm grasp of the South African market.' A newer addition is consumer goods where H&M is the biggest Swedish firm active in South Africa. While most of these products have a high added value, South African exports to Sweden have historically been focused on agricultural goods. This is the main factor behind the imbalance in their terms of trade.

Export Promotion

At the time of South Africa's liberation, Sweden's ambitions for its future bilateral cooperation hinged on creating broad channels for mutually beneficial trade. Several interviewees highlighted the Binational Commission started in 1999, which Interviewee 3 described as a direct outcome of the close relationship that had been established between Former South African President Thabo Mbeki and Former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson. Interviewee 2 explained the aim and structure of the economic branch of the commission:

> It includes a trade and economy committee with two main objectives: one is to discuss global trade politics [...] the other is to come up with ideas and proposals to improve the bilateral trade relationship between both countries.

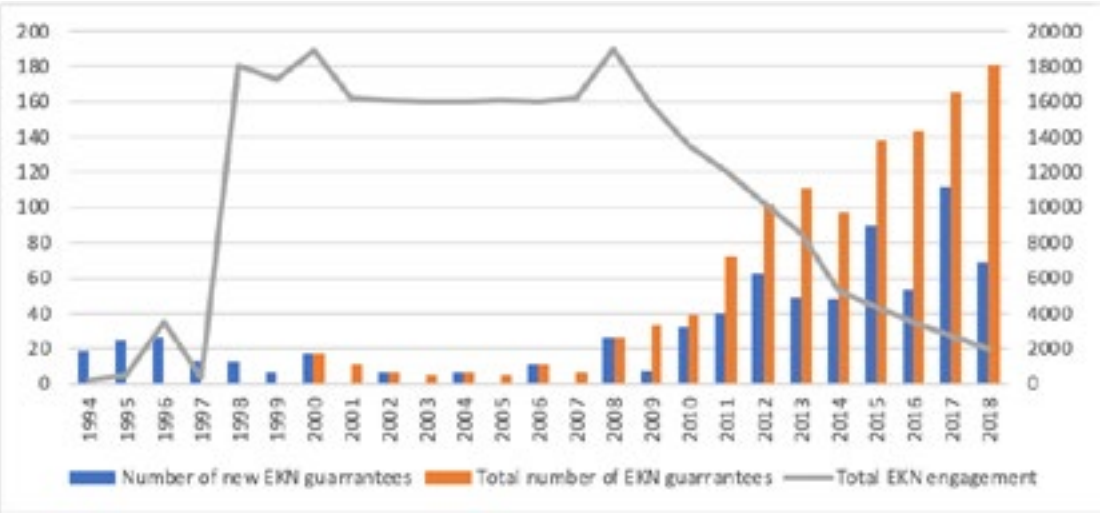
Beside this mutual program, the Swedish government works actively to promote Swedish exports globally. One example of this is the Swedish Open Trade Gate, a program established in 2005 to increase Swedish imports from developing countries (Kommerskollegium, 2022). Interviewee 2 discussed its aim as 'to find a model to increase South African exports to Sweden. We have started in the agricultural sector since it is already established.

The aim is to diversify our imports to a wider variety of goods.'

Business Sweden, an organisation tasked with helping Swedish firms expand their trade and investments abroad, was established in South Africa following the 1994 election. Interviewee 4 explained that their consultants worked side-by-side with Sida employees, a cooperation which continued until the ODA program was dismantled in 2013. One example of their activity in the newly liberated South Africa was a mentor-program where they established contacts between managers from South African businesses that expressed an interest in increasing their management skills and exchange knowledge, which were paired with suitable managers of Swedish firms.

Another form of Swedish export promotion is the export guarantees provided by the EKN.[6] These were prohibited in South Africa between 1965 and 1993, as a reaction to Sweden's growing opposition towards apartheid (LRA, 1993). Figure 4 below displays the number of EKN guarantees active and granted per year in relation to the total value of all outstanding EKN guarantees each year and visualises the considerable size of the JAS-deal approved in 1998. It further shows that the EKN approved a smaller number of new guarantees yearly leading up to 2008, after which there was a sharp increase in the number of new and total guarantees in South Africa. At the same time, the total value of EKN's engagement began to decline. This indicates that the approved engagements pre-2008 consisted of larger short-term guarantees, enough to offset the yearly payments towards the JAS-debt. Meanwhile, the declining total engagement and rising number of outstanding guarantees post-2008 demonstrates a sharp increase in long-term engagements of smaller sizes.

Figure 4: EKN Engagements in South Africa, 1994–2018



(Sources: LRA, 1996–2010, 2012–2015; Sturinge, 2022)

The South African Economy from a Swedish Perspective

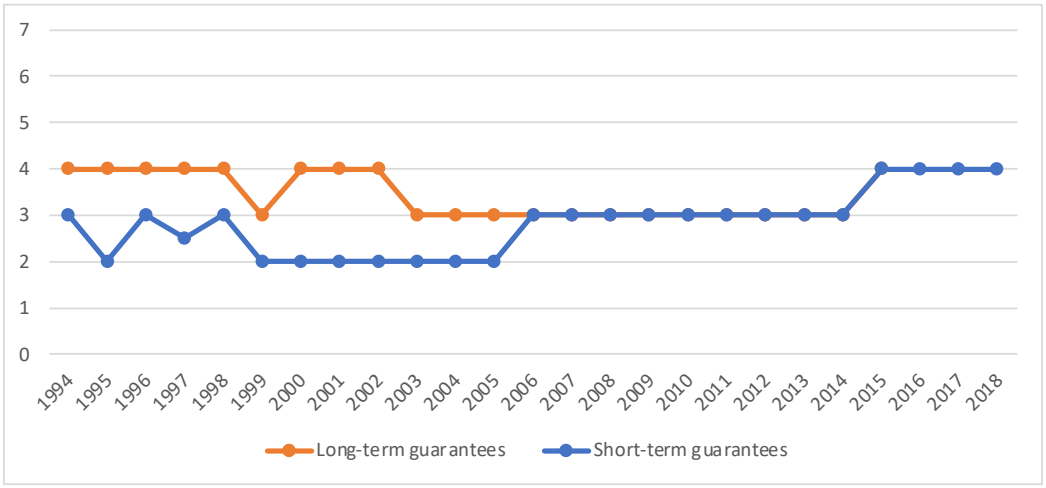
Although the collapse of the South African economy was the main cause for apartheid's eventual demise, there was a strong global interest in cooperating with them after its fall. This was in part a result of the promising outlook for the South African economy, in addition to their pivotal role on the African continent. Interviewee 5 explained that 'South Africa is an important hub for international companies that want access to Sub-Saharan Africa, especially for the countries in Southern Africa.' This is in line with previous literature, in which the South African market is viewed as a gateway to further expansion to the continent (Uddhammar and Stein, 2019: 177).

EKN's analysis of the South African economy displays some common themes for the years studied. The public finances and banking sectors are deemed strong and healthy, and the government policies and institutions are considered stable. There is one

exception to this, the year leading up to the election of Jacob Zuma as President of South Africa in 2009, during which there was some caution among international investors (LRA, 2008: 1). The impact of the turbulence from the power struggle within the ANC is seen in the literature as well, where it was found to cause larger companies operating in the region to turn to markets outside of South Africa (Uddhammar and Stein, 2019: 172).

Interviewee 4 concurs that the political climate got worse under Jacob Zuma, and that it had an adverse effect on Swedish firms' willingness to establish themselves in South Africa: 'Swedish media made South Africa sound like a circus [...] which made it harder to get through to Swedish companies that there was potential here.' However, the turmoil caused by Zuma did not have a direct effect on the risk premiums, displayed in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: EKN's Country Risk Assessment of South Africa, 1994–2018



(Sources: LRA, 1994–2015; Sturinge, 2022; OECD, 2021).[7] *[Figure shows EKN's risk assessment of the South African economy on a scale of 1–7, divided along the lines of short- and long-term contracts. 7 indicates the highest risk.]*

The increase in South Africa's risk classification since 2015 has been based on structural problems within the political and economic spheres, mainly the high rate of unemployment, poverty and the health crisis caused by the AIDS pandemic. Interviewee 5 explains it as 'a catch 22, where one problem causes the other – it is hard to escape the structural problems when a country has low growth caused by structural problems [...] it makes it hard for South Africa to get out of it.'

From the 2011 LRA report and onward, it is consistently mentioned that the Swedish experience in guaranteeing exports for South Africa has been of good nature. While there were some problems resulting from the global financial crisis in 2008, it only caused a minor inconvenience for the EKN and Swedish firms (LRA, 2011: 5).

The Impact of South African Economic Policies on Swedish Exports and Investments

The interviewees were asked about the impact that domestic economic policies in South Africa might have on Swedish investments and trade in the country. One problem that arose was how the South African economy might be perceived to be less stable or secure for Swedish companies that are not yet established there. One example is the discussion surrounding land reform, which could allow the South African government to claim private land as government property, discussed by Interviewee 2:

> Personally, I believe that this fear is exaggerated. [Taking over private companies' land] is not really the government's ambition. But the mere fact that this discussion is taking place and the questions that arise from it creates concerns,

which in turn can affect Swedish companies that might be interested in investing in South Africa.

Interviewee 4 identifies another common problem as 'local laws and regulations that can make it hard for these firms to reach their full potential. They might need substantial support to understand and adapt to this legislation.' This is found to be especially problematic in the mining and energy sectors. Interviewee 6 echoes the sentiment, stating that while there is an 'enormous potential in South Africa for Swedish trade,' there is a need to implement economic reforms to enable Swedish companies to reach their markets. A prominent case is the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy aimed at encouraging the economic participation of the disenfranchised Black population to decrease the extreme racial inequality inherited from the apartheid-era.[8] Interviewee 6 used the following example to explain how this policy can backfire:

> One problem that has arisen due to the BEE policy is that it is increasingly difficult for international firms to gain visas. When a company starts up their business here, the long-term goal is that South Africans will take over, but in the beginning, there is often a need to bring in experienced personnel that know the firm and have experience in such expansions [...] this kind of problems can cause a firm to choose to direct their business toward other countries and markets.

Another issue brought up by Interviewee 2 regards the policy's inefficiency at accomplishing its objective of decreased inequality: 'What difference has it made to the South African problem of racial inequality to have Black South Africans as part-owners of Swedish firms? Nothing at all. What it has done is create a Black elite.' This is in line with the literature on the South African economy (Thompsson, 2001: 302; Habiyaremye, 2022: 26). Interviewee 7 makes a connection between the ownership clause and corruption within the ANC:

> When companies need to have Black people in their management and as owners, what do firms do? They invite ANC-leaders to sit on their boards. They are given stocks, ownership, and money, which makes it a driving force for corruption. It is legalised corruption.

Interviewee 2 describes another part of the policy that can have a negative impact on Swedish companies' interest to invest in the South African market:

> The bigger proportion of the production process that is situated in South Africa, the more benefits they receive in the form of premiums [...] The more parts of the value chain that is located domestically, the better – because it generates local jobs [...] The downside is that it is expensive for Swedish companies to create customized production processes for the South African market, and in some instances, it leads to the companies backing out. It is just not worth the costs.

In the 2003 LRA report, it is noted that the BEE policy is becoming increasingly important, which might become a problem as suitable business partners are increasingly hard to locate. However, the same report states that this policy had not been shown to have any adverse effect on international investments to South Africa at the time (LRA, 2003: 1).

In summation, the collected view is that there are several South African policies that have had a deterrent effect on Swedish firms' willingness and ability to establish themselves in South Africa. However, these policies are not found to have impacted Swedish exports toward South Africa.

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The Apartheid-Era Heritage on Sweden and South Africa's Economic Relationship

When asked to discuss the impact of Sweden's historic relationship with the ANC on the development of the two countries' economic relationship, Interviewee 2 identifies institutional networks as the main heritage:

> The bilateral relationships are well-established, numerous and broad. This can be found in the special relationships between municipalities and in exchange programs for schools. It is our, by far, biggest research cooperation program. It is also found in our economic cooperation and business sector relationships. There are deep and established cultural exchanges. I think the broadness of our relationship is the inheritance of our previous efforts.

There is a consensus that the countries have drifted apart over time. Interviewee 3 explained that 'the engagement for cooperation diminished from a Swedish perspective. And from a South African perspective – it was mutual.' They added that the election of a Swedish government led by the Moderate Party in 2006 could be a contributing factor to this change: 'Thabo Mbeki had a strong relationship with and trust in the Swedish Social Democrats. As they left the government, I do not think the engagement was as strong for him.' Interviewee 2 has a similar view but points out that there were other forces at hand:

> It was mutual. Of course, our focus changed with different governments in Sweden [...] but I would say that it was more due to global developments that we drifted apart [...] we are one of many countries for South Africa and South Africa is one of many countries for us, but we are still important for each other.

Interviewee 2 further credits this transformation to the internal changes within South Africa that came with the fall of apartheid. Interviewee 3 agrees that it was a natural, and predictable, change: 'Sweden has shifted toward being one of many EU-countries [...] we understood that this would be the case since we were neither a big nor strategically important country for an ANC-government.'

In their interviews, both Interviewee 7 and Interviewee 8 brought up the early dialogue between Swedish firms and the ANC that began in the 1980s, building the base for future cooperation and trust. Interviewee 6 is sceptical about drawing a causal link between Sweden's apartheid-era efforts and Swedish firms' engagement in the post-apartheid period: 'My guess would be [...] that when Swedish businesses had the best offers, they would win the bid, if they did not, they would most likely not win it, regardless of their historical bond.' Interviewee 7 would, on the other hand, claim that the Swedish support of the liberation movement has had an important impact on the post-apartheid trade between the countries. In their interview, they discussed the existence of an unspoken debt of gratitude, stating that 'the ANC-elite was subject to strong pressure' to enable the re-establishment of Swedish businesses inside South Africa.

JAS 39 Gripen and Corruption

In 1999, the South African government bought military aircrafts from Swedish SAAB, in a deal that caused controversy due to the discovery of corruption and bribery in the procurement process (Resare, 2010: 210). A major part of the criticism relates to how Sweden utilised the personal and historical relationships established through the anti-apartheid movement to tip the scale for the benefit of SAAB's bid (Coetzee, 2021: 103). In fact, Resare (2010: 85–86) finds that they received the lowest ranking throughout the procurement process, and that despite several changes being made for the benefit of the Swedish bid, they ended up winning on a pure technicality.

Interviewee 7 expressed disappointment in how the Swedish government used its strong ties to the ANC in the JAS-deal: 'It was unjust of Göran Persson and the Social Democrats to kidnap the engagement and use it to sell weapons [...] the politicians made the entire bilateral relationship revolve around and support the weapons deal.' Reflecting on the government's participation in the JAS-deal, Interviewee 6 stated that 'in that kind of deal where the South African government is the buyer, the size of the deal is so substantial [...] and there are strict regulations on sales of military products, it is inevitable for the Swedish state to get involved in some capacity.'

The interviewees were asked to share their perception of the impact the JAS-deal had on the bilateral economic relationship between Sweden and South Africa. In these discussions, some general themes can be found. Interviewee 3 and Interviewee 8 both agree that the media coverage of the corruption accusations had an adverse impact on the relationship between the ANC and the Swedish government. In the words of Interviewee 3, 'the continuous publications that exposed corruption in relation to the JAS-Gripen deal [...] likely dampened the relationship somewhat.'

When asked how the controversy impacted the support of Swedish firms in South Africa, Interviewee 6 stated that they 'don't think it has made the Swedish state less interested in helping Swedish companies when they have the opportunity.' The interviewee added that the deal itself continues to have an impact on the economic relationship: 'If you look at Swedish exports to South Africa at around 7 billion SEK, about one third of it can be linked in some way to JAS.' This is in line with Interviewee 2's experience, that the main impact today is noticeable through the investments that resulted from the deal:

> It does not impact the everyday economic relationship, but the legacy of the deal is still present in South Africa. The planes are still there, and some of the companies that were a part of the offset-deal are still there.

Interviewee 7 shared that their 'perception of the weapons deal is that it [...] included several changes of the procurement rules to benefit certain bids. One component in this is, without a doubt, the bribery. Another is, I believe, a 'thank you Sweden.'' This is in line with the literature on the topic (Resare, 2010: 55; Coetzee, 2015: 8). It is also corroborated by Interviewee 3, who stated that they are 'prone to think that it was seen as a way to pay back the support Sweden had shown them [...] there are reasons to believe that there were some political motives behind the South African decision to go for SAAB.' Further, Interviewee 7 brings up suspicions that the JAS-deal, in addition to the controversy surrounding bribery, might have steered the ANC down a bad road:

> I have talked to members of Mandela's first term and members of ANC's National Executive Committee, who have corroborated that they are convinced that the bribery [...] tilted a normal procurement process, which infected the party from the top down.

Summary

This article has evaluated the apartheid-era's heritage on the economic relationship between Sweden and post-apartheid South Africa through an analytical framework built on Embeddedness Theory and Soft Power. The former focuses on the trust built through personal relationships, institutional networks, and economic cooperation, while the latter concerns the political and economic influence gained through personal relationships, policy implementation, and financial aid.

It finds that the invitation for Sweden to cooperate on sensitive reforms in the early years of the post-apartheid era is an indication of the deep trust that had been established from decades of support and partnership, and the political influence Sweden gained through their moral activism. In addition to the personal relationships developed between the ANC and Swedish representatives, it provided a strong institutional base for a close bilateral economic relationship.

The political relationship between Sweden and South Africa has, in many aspects, cooled down since the 1994 election. This is found to be a natural course of events, where the close personal ties that were established in the previous period have gradually disappeared. The main reason for this is that the context changed: with the end of apartheid, there was no need to continue the earlier cooperation as their common enemy was defeated. Another factor is that politicians have been replaced as the time has passed. One such example is how the close personal relationship between President Mbeki and Prime Minister Persson led to the establishment of several new channels for dialogue and cooperation. Their friendship added an extra dimension of trust and influence to the bilateral relationship, which disappeared as they were replaced by their successors.

A similar trajectory has been found in the economic relationship. The termination of the financial

aid program in 2013 meant that the institutional collaboration it had funded became weaker, and so did the economic influence that the ODA had provided Sweden. As the bilateral development cooperation gradually decreased in size, trade became the focus of the economic partnership. Sweden and South Africa have over time established several means to promote mutually beneficial programs to strengthen this relationship. These platforms create and intensify the trust between firms through the establishment of personal relationships and institutional economic cooperation. While the South African market is of high interest for Swedish firms, the structural problems facing their economy serves as the main obstacle for increased investments.

While the Swedish anti-apartheid movement was carried out in solidarity, in cooperation and between partners, the literature and interviews indicate that the relationship was imprinted with an unspoken debt of gratitude from the South African side. It can be argued that the discoveries of improprieties which followed the JAS-deal decreased the power imbalance between the two countries, which in turn had an impact on their continued economic cooperation. The Swedish government under Persson used up the influence and trust that was engrained through their close relationship with the ANC and Mbeki, for a deal that without a doubt had – and still has – a great impact on their economic relationship. The goodwill that was earned during the apartheid era is seemingly of less importance today, but its legacy of broad economic cooperation is still active and can be found in the binational committee, the deep educational partnership, and the many networks that are still present at national, regional, and local levels.

Notes

1. This article is based on the author's Master's Thesis carried out at Stockholm University in the spring of 2021.

2. Apartheid was a policy of total racial segregation, enacted by the National Party elected in 1948 to further increase the brutal oppression of the non-white population. Citizens' rights were based on the colour of their skin, with black Africans being worst off, forced into crowded reserves, and being stripped of their civil rights. It was met with a fierce domestic resistance campaign (Thompson, 2001: 190).

3. Magnusson (1974) does not have numbered pages.

4. The military deal was based around aircrafts of the model JAS 39 Gripen. The Swedish government was highly involved in the procurement process on behalf of SAAB, which became problematic when the deal was followed by substantiated reports of bribery and malfeasance (Coetzee, 2015: 12).

5. The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality was at the time of liberation known as the City of Port Elizabeth.

6. The EKN works to absorb the risk of Swedish exports. It enables foreign buyers to be provided with financing from commercial banks, where the EKN provides a guarantee to cover 95% of the risk in case the buyer fails to make their payments. It is funded by a premium that is based on the EKN risk assessment of the country and partner firm, which is paid by the Swedish exporter. EKN works closely with The Swedish Export Credit Corporation (SEK) which provides funding for commercial banks that might need cover for the funding of large deals with long payment plans (EKN and SEK, 2021).

7. In 1998, the OECD implemented a joint risk assessment and common risk premiums for long-term export guarantees, to enable companies from all member countries to compete on the same terms (LRA, 1999: 1). This reduced the opportunity for member states to use low risk assessments strategically to subsidise their own exports, which ensured healthy competition among the member states. It had previously been up to the EKN's assessment.

8. The BEE (also known as the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment policy, BBBEE) was enacted to decrease the nation's racial inequality by elevating ownership and management among the black population, encouraging them to take on roles that were previously restricted to whites.

It introduced structural rules that demanded a certain proportion of black stakeholders in companies that applied for government contracts and promoted firms that created local jobs for its disenfranchised population (Thompson, 2001: 302). The actual outcome was to elevate a small black elite, which increased the inequality *within* the black population. Hence, the existing barriers to a better quality of life for the country's poor remained (Habiyaremye, 2022: 26).

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South Africa, Sweden, and Good International Citizenship

By Suzanne Graham

Abstract

There are those who argue that a state embodying good international citizenship (GIC) must actively seek to improve the world around it, thereby making a positive contribution to overcoming global challenges. A good international citizen (state) must also be a proponent of multilateral cooperation, usually manifesting in global platforms such as the United Nations (UN). Scholars refer to middle power states being ideally situated in the power rankings of international affairs, respected by major and minor powers, to become custodians of emerging international norms and to pave a pathway forward for the community of states. Both South Africa and Sweden are seen as pivot countries in their respective regions and have a long history of shared desires and supports for freedom. This article will explore the notion of GIC and its desirability, and applicability, in relation to South Africa and Sweden. It employs a case study methodology approach in its research design and interrogates the extent to which South Africa and Sweden qualify as good international citizens according to four characteristics, drawn from the literature. The article finds that both Sweden and South Africa demonstrate elements of good international citizenship.

Introduction

After World War II and the increasing growth, and interest, in multilateral organisations, the spirit of state harmony and cooperating for peace had become a sought-after goal in the liberal international community, with many states attempting to work collectively to respond to global problems. Unfortunately, the Cold War interrupted this process, making this goal a simmering and unrealised vision for many parts of the globe. When former United States President George Bush (senior) spoke of a new world order in 1991 (Bush as cited in Nye, 1992), reflecting just treatment of all peoples and peaceful nations working together, the concept of good international citizenship (GIC) had already surfaced in diplomatic fields many years before[1] – although it is most often attributed to Gareth Evans, former Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs (see Evans, 1989).

When a group of like-minded states, such as democracies, 'conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions', an international society exists (Bull, 1977: 13). Although some have dismissed the notion of an international community as a cliché (and unattainable) (see Beeson, 2015); if ever there was an example of states needing to cooperate to resolve global challenges, it is the global coronavirus pandemic – an unprecedented (in the 21st century) disease sweeping across the world regardless of borders, nationality, wealth, land size, or population. One could argue that in the face of this global disaster, states should work together for the good of all, in harmony and not with selfish interests in mind because the problem is everyone's problem. However, even then examples of discrimination, unfairness, and inequality persist, in relation to vaccine access and roll out across the globe (see Achiume, 2022 and Bajaj and Maki, 2022 for reference to what has been labelled 'vaccine apartheid' by these and other authors). At the potential tail end of the pandemic, a possible third world war arises with Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, solidifying for realists that 'states will always be states' and causing liberalists to scratch their heads in bewildered disbelief. What does it take for states to stand up and advance a global cause ahead of selfish national interest but as part of a natural and moral obligation to contribute and make a difference in the international system of states? Where are the good guys? Where and who are the good international citizens? This article will explore how (if at all) South Africa and Sweden may fit within this category of states. It will begin by offering a literature review of GIC, then move on to apply the four characteristics of GIC as deduced from the literature to the two cases: South Africa and Sweden. It will then offer a conclusion based on this application.

Literature Review

GIC represents a role identifier for states keen to promote multilateralism and inclusive diplomacy and the facilitation of state harmony through mediation and other dialogic measures. International relations theories such as realism, cosmopolitanism, and rationalism each try to make sense of what defines GIC: '[R]ealism beats a path for the state, rationalism defines a middle road in international politics, and cosmopolitanism attempts to change the world for the better through the moral unity of human society' (Graham, 2008: 87).

Pert (2014) as cited by Abbondanza (2021: 181) highlights five areas that characterise GIC: 'compliance with the international law; support for multilateralism, willingness to 'pitch in' to international tasks, 'international good deeds', and leadership.' Scholars, such as Ahlhaus (2014) and Youde and Slagter (2013) refer to middle power states[2], ideally situated in the power rankings of international affairs and respected by major and minor powers, as potentially Good International Citizens. Examples from the literature include Canada (Wylie, 2009); Australia (Lightfoot, 2006; Hoffstaedter and Lamb, 2019; Abbondanza, 2021); and South Africa (Graham, 2008; Jordaan, 2010; Geldenhuys, 2011 and 2015).

Müller and Wunderlich (2013) explore Canada, Germany, and Sweden in the field of GIC with a focus on arms control. This article intends to contribute to the literature by offering an updated and more holistic, albeit brief, exploratory review of South Africa and Sweden and GIC in relation to four key descriptors or characteristics of GIC as drawn from the literature. The characteristics will be outlined later in this article. Both South Africa and Sweden are perceived to be middle powers[3] and pivot countries

in their respective regions and have a long history of shared desires and supports for freedom (Cilliers, 2018). A moral reputation is important in international affairs. It helps to influence cooperation as a form of a state's soft power (Crescenzi and Donahue, 2019). It has economic weight too: 'Reputation determines whether people support a country through their behaviors [sic]. Good reputation means more exports, more investments, more people coming to visit' (Trad, Chief Operating Officer at the Reputation Institute, quoted in Forbes, 2019).

Methodology

This article briefly explores the notion of GIC in relation to South Africa[4] and Sweden. It employs a case study methodology approach in its research design. Although Sweden is considered to be the 19th wealthiest[5] state in the world, compared to South Africa in 93rd position (Ventura, 2021), both states can be labelled as middle powers with between 0.3% and 2% of global power potential[6] (Cilliers, 2018).

In terms of bilateral relations, historically Sweden has longstanding ties with South Africa dating back to 1930 when a South African legation opened in Stockholm. In 1994, relations were raised to Ambassadorial level. Sweden supported liberation efforts during the apartheid regime in South Africa and former Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme, was well known for his speeches in international platforms against the 'repulsive system' (Palme quoted in The Presidency, 2022). Palme was awarded The Order of the Companions of O.R. Tambo in Gold by the democratic South African Presidency for his 'exceptional contribution to the struggle against apartheid and for a just world' (The Presidency, 2022).

This article will critically interrogate the extent to which South Africa and Sweden qualify as GICs according to the following four characteristics, drawn from the literature, and summarised by Graham (2008: 90–94):

- As the largest multilateral international organisation in the world, a good international citizen must respect the UN[7], its goals for peace, and especially its chief operating organ, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
- Good international citizens must place international society's welfare ahead of the incessant pursuit of national interests and must 'forsake' those interests where they conflict with human rights. Good international citizens should not support regimes which are gross violators of human rights.
- Good international citizens must respect the equal sovereignty of other states, uphold international law and respond to demands for justice. They must act multilaterally by relying on diplomacy and must seek to extend the level of harmony between states by mediating conflicts.
- A GIC must help to build regional and international organisations and promote democratic values including equality and human rights.

Sweden and South Africa: GIC Status?

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index (2021), which measures the democratic political institutions and freedoms in most states worldwide, Sweden is labelled as a full democracy and receives a score of 9.26 out of a possible 10. Full democracies are consolidated with an independent media; well-functioning, legitimate and accountable systems of governance, and protected liberties and freedoms. South Africa is a flawed democracy and scores 7.05 out of 10. Flawed democracies have free and fair elections;

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fundamental liberties are protected but in practice there are inconsistencies, as well governance issues. Sweden is ranked at number 4 in the world, and South Africa is number 44. According to Freedom House (2022), Sweden is 100% 'Free' and scores perfectly with 60/60 and 40/40 for civil liberties and political rights respectively. South Africa is also rated as 'Free' with a score of 79 out of a 100 with 33 out of 40 for political rights and 46 out of 60 for civil liberties. Based on these measuring tools, both countries are considered to be democratic, although South Africa can improve in areas (for example: addressing corruption; low voter participation; unemployment rates creating desperate citizens; mass looting as witnessed in July 2021; and xenophobic attacks (Gounden, 2021)). In terms of the World's Most Reputable Country Index (2019), Sweden is number 1. South Africa is number 38 (although the first out of African-listed states). Admittedly, only 55 countries are considered in this index and only a Group of 7 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States) are surveyed for their views so it does depend on their familiarity with the countries under investigation. Sweden has been ranked at number 1 in 2018 and 2019.

In terms of profiles at the UN, both nations have an impressive scorecard. Dag Hammarskjöld, a Swedish economist and diplomat, served as the second Secretary-General of the UN from 1953–1961 (United Nations, 2022). He was very well-liked and did much to unify the organisation and improve its responsiveness. Navanethem Pillay, a South African jurist, served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2008 to 2014 (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2022). Sweden has consistently contributed troops to UN peacekeeping operations – over 80,000 since 1948. South Africa too has contributed to UN operations since the late 1990s, with an average of 2000 uniformed personnel deployed per month to UN missions (De Carvalho, 2018). As of 31 May 2022, Sweden had 200 troops and South Africa 1131 in the field (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2022).

Sweden has served as an elected, non-permanent, member of the UNSC four times (1957–1958; 1975–1976; 1997–1998; 2017-2018). In its relatively short democratic history, South Africa has served three times already on the Council (1997–1998; 2011–2012 and 2019–2020). South Africa and Sweden began working together in the lead up to South Africa's third term on the Council. In late 2018, the two countries led an initiative for non-permanent members to meet up and talk about Council working methods, as a way to strengthen the role of these members in the Council. The South African delegation continued this initiative throughout its term and beyond (Mbete, 2021).

Sweden has never served on the 47-member UN Human Rights Council (HRC), although it has submitted its candidature to the body. South Africa has served four terms on the HRC (two terms between 2006 and 2010 and two further terms between 2014 and 2019); and played an important role in the transition of this body from the Commission on Human Rights to the HRC in 2006. South Africa has also submitted its candidature to the HRC for a further term (2023–2025). Despite the promotion of human rights serving as a principle priority in South Africa's foreign policy goals upon democratisation (Mandela, 1993), it has not fared too well in this regard, refusing to comment on country-specific human rights situations in global platforms, preferring to recommend that internal state processes be allowed to unfold or that regional bodies take ownership of human rights crises, and being criticised for its inconsistencies in this regard (Graham, 2016: 299). Despite never having served on the HRC, Sweden has nevertheless been an active participant in the workings of the HRC and has 'contributed to a wide range of cross-regional resolutions and initiatives' (Government Offices of Sweden, 2012: 4). The country has also successfully projected a very public persona to the international community of a nation 'committed to promoting and respecting human rights...[as] a core commitment [in its foreign and domestic policy]' (Government Offices of Sweden, 2012: 1).

This continued in April 2022, when Sweden voted along with 92 other nations, in favour of suspending Russia's membership of the Human Rights Council in response to Russia's invasion of the sovereign territory of Ukraine and related reports of human rights violations against the Ukrainian people by Moscow's troops. In that resolution, South Africa chose to abstain (United Nations Digital Library, 2022). There was backlash for South Africa on this, and other related UN votes on Russia's actions, as this was considered by some to be a soft and weak response (Charbonneau, 2022). South Africa's second

in charge at the UN, Ambassador Xolisa Mabhongo, explained that the Republic preferred to afford the 'newly established international commission of inquiry to investigate all alleged violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international law, and related crimes in Ukraine' the time to do its job. He declared that the resolution to suspend Russia was premature and political and instead the use of mediation and diplomacy and non-biased decision-making in the UN systems should be emphasized (A/ES-11/PV.10, 2022: 9). A technical argument exists that by supporting the workings of the UN system, South Africa demonstrated its commitment to good international citizenship, as this is one of the criteria. However, what of a GIC's role to respect the equal sovereignty of states? It appeared to onlookers that South Africa was not willing to do enough, to stand with the majority, in defending Ukraine's sovereignty against Russian aggression. A case can also be made for the argument that good international citizen states should make use of the global, liberal, platform to loudly advocate for human rights promotion and the protection of democratic principles and not reduce the organisation to a political talk shop through inaction. South Africa's reputation wobbled a bit over this,[8] although the Government did respond quickly to explain its reasons via national and international communication channels.

The Swedish Institute offers the world a bird's eye view of the country, telling a very neatly packaged and well-branded story of Sweden's policies and global goals on its website 'Sharing Sweden' (2022). Impressively, what Sweden sells on the global market is not simply rhetoric. It has been praised for its progressive feminist foreign policy position, being the first country to launch such a policy, in 2014, and its dedication to gender equality. Swedish Foreign Minister at the time, Margot Wallström, explained the move as a significant attempt by Sweden to stand 'against the systematic and global subordination of women' (Wallström, quoted in Vogelstein and Bro, 2019). Although a seemingly radical move at first, Sweden has set the bar and led other nations[9] to take up the call to action as Canada and Australia, amongst others, have now taken 'steps to integrate a focus on gender equality and women's rights into their international work' (Vogelstein and Bro, 2019). South Africa has also taken up the mantle in relation to the global women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. In 2019, former South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, declared that South Africa would use its third term to prioritise the WPS agenda including overseeing negotiations around, and the eventual adoption of, UNSC Resolution 2493. This resolution commits countries to supporting the full inclusivity of women at all stages of peace processes and although the final resolution was seen as a watered-down version, it was nevertheless a positive step forward for WPS. However, South Africa's reputation in this area has been tarnished somewhat as South African peacekeepers have been implicated in allegations of sexual abuse in African peacekeeping missions (Mail & Guardian, 2018).

South Africa has emerged as a moral leader in the field of global disarmament. Regardless of the debated motivations behind the decision of the F.W. de Klerk Government (see Friedman, 2017), South Africa is the only country to have voluntarily dismantled its nuclear weapons programme in 1989/1990. Since then, South Africa has continued to play a prominent role in this field at the UNGA's Disarmament and International Security Committee or First Committee, as well as at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and in other arenas such as signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which it joined in 1995, and which it chaired for the period 2007–2008. South Africa was also the 'first African state to destroy its stockpile of anti-personnel landmines and the first to publicly support the Ottawa Process by hosting the first Continental Conference of African Experts on Landmines in Kempton Park in May 1997' (Graham, 2016: 160). South Africa became a member of the UN Conference on Disarmament in 1996. South African diplomat Adbul Minty sat on the IAEA Board of Governors and was in the running for the Director-General position in 2009, although he was later defeated by Japan's Yukiya Amano.

Similarly, Sweden has also played a prominent, consistent role in multilateral platforms on disarmament and non-proliferation – referred to as the 'White Knight state' on these issues. This term is 'applied to a select few countries well known for long-established support and advocacy of nonproliferation and disarmament' (Bergenäs, 2010). Swedish diplomat and politician Hans Blix became Director General

of the IAEA from 1981 to 1997. Later, he took on the position of Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). Sweden's former foreign minister, Anna Lindh, spearheaded the initiative leading to the European Union's strategy to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Bergenäs, 2010). In 2019, Sweden's capital city was host to the launch of the Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament involving Ministers of 16 Non-Nuclear Weapon states. This grouping worked as an advocacy group to ensure that the role of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its review conferences be upheld and reaffirmed as the cornerstone of the global disarmament and the non-proliferation regime.

South Africa has also chaired regional and continental bodies and has declared itself an advocate of Africa's interests in multilateral forums. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa chaired the African Union in 2020 and was lauded for his initiatives to increase Africa's access to vaccines (in response to the coronavirus pandemic sweeping the globe), through the establishment of the AU's Africa Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) (Mlaba, 2021). Whilst South Africa's Government worked to project the vaccine interests of developing nations, Sweden contributed to the global vaccination campaign by donating 5 million AstraZeneca vaccines through Covid-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX). In Sweden's 2022 budget, the state has allocated the equivalent of 3 billion South African Rands 'to support access to vaccines in low-income countries' (Donor Tracker, 2022). The Swedish government has consistently committed to supplying Official Development Assistance (ODA) to countries in need of aid, ranking number 6 in the world and number 1 in terms of proportion of aid in relation to the size of its economy (spending around 1.4% of its gross national income) (Donor Tracker, 2022).

Sweden took on the international responsibility of accepting Iraqi refugees in 2006 and 2007, taking on nearly twice the number of Iraqi refugees taken by the United States (Sassoon, 2009: 102). In 2020, Sweden reported 12,991 registered asylum-seekers. In 2022, South Africa hosts a quarter of a million refugees and asylum-seekers from seven other African states (UN Refugee Agency, 2022). Despite Sweden's self-identifying as a multicultural, antiracist and post-racial society, examples of racism and xenophobia have been reported (Hübinette, 2013). The Government of Sweden has developed national plans to combat racism. In 2001, at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, hosted by South Africa, Swedish Minister of Industry, Employment and Communications at the time, Mona Sahlin, (2001) argued that:

> Governments have the primary responsibility for fighting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. But the shared responsibility of the international community must also be emphasised. If we cannot create a world in which everyone is respected and treated equally, we will endanger the future of every individual.

Sweden does make use of global platforms to fight the scourge of racism. South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu referred to democratic South Africa as a rainbow nation and the Republic has been lauded for its relatively peaceful transition to a democracy and its overcoming of its racist past (Everding, 2004). However, racism and xenophobia persist in this society too. Nevertheless, the South African government has, since 1994, repeatedly and publicly declared its international commitment to combat xenophobia, racism, sexism and other related intolerances by using the UN system and related international conferences.

Another global issue that is a concern for all states and their people is climate change. Sweden ranks highly in the Climate Change Performance Index in 2022 at number 5 out of a pool of 64 states. South Africa is ranked at number 39 and categorised as low performing. However, in the overall climate policy table, South Africa moves up to the 27th position and reflects a score of 'medium' in its International Climate Policy Performance. Once again, Sweden ranks highly in this table (Burck et al., 2021). South Africa has different energy needs and capabilities compared to Sweden and as South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa stated in February 2022: 'A one-size-fits-all approach to complex issues, such as a transition from fossil fuels that disregard the realities on the ground in Africa, will simply not work, and is neither just nor equitable' (quoted in Gerber, 2022). This underscores the point that different levels of development require different

policy responses depending on different needs. Just because one country finds itself in a position to do something positive, and another cannot perform at a similar level, does not and should not mean that they are not committed to change but simply that they are confronted by different realities at that moment in history. Ultimately, all states can make a contribution to 'building a better world'.[10]

Conclusion

This article employed a case study methodology approach in its research design and briefly interrogated the extent to which South Africa and Sweden qualify as good international citizens according to four characteristics, drawn from the literature. The article finds that both Sweden and democratic South Africa demonstrate elements of good international citizenship. As good international citizens, together, both countries have committed themselves to advancing women's human rights in international relations forums, as well as in improving the working methods of the UN Security Council, and these are two areas in which the two countries could collaborate more on in future. Despite varied economic status, histories and points of reference, both have positioned themselves as states wanting to play positive roles in international relations in multiple platforms and in multiple ways. Admittedly, it is impossible for states to be absolute 'saints' in world affairs. The international system of states operates in a far more complex and nuanced fashion for this to be a realistic goal. However, states, by way of their government's foreign policymaking; global initiatives and consistent efforts to better the world through democratic principles, can be role models for other states. If we factor in that national interest will always be a given, as states have a duty to their citizens, by demonstrating that it is in the national interest to operate internationally through goodwill and cooperation, good international citizens can make a positive difference in global humanitarian affairs.

"The article finds that both Sweden and democratic South Africa demonstrate elements of good international citizenship. As good international citizens, together, both countries have committed themselves to advancing women's human rights in international relations forums, as well as in improving the working methods of the UN Security Council, and these are two areas in which the two countries could collaborate more on in future."

Notes

1. The phrase GIC had not been well recorded publicly until Evans spoke of it in the late 1980s, 'although it is sometimes attributed to the great Liberal Canadian Prime Minister of the 1960s, Lester Pearson' (Evans, 2015). However, the former Governor General of Canada Daniel Michener had publicly adopted this expression for the first time in a speech he made in 1967 (see Michener, 1967).

2. Middle powers are often referred to in four ways: geographically, normatively; positionally and behaviourally (Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal, 1993 cited in Abbondanza, 2021). Later scholars take into account the impact of a state's foreign policy (Carr, 2014), as well as states' self-identifying as middle powers when attributing power to states (Teo, 2018).

3. Although Spies (2022) refers to South Africa as having more 'awkward' power than any other kind of power, Spies contends that 'South Africa is often included in analyses of middle power on account of its international reputation and foreign policy behaviour. The country's norm entrepreneurship is evident in matters such as nuclear non-proliferation, conflict resolution, the provision of development assistance and diplomatic leadership in multilateral forums. However, in quantitative terms, South Africa's material capabilities fall short of the conventional middle power range. In qualitative terms, its international behaviour is atypical as well and riddled with contradictions. These anomalies reflect the complex domestic identity of 'the world in one country'. It straddles the Global North–South divide, and this microcosmic symbolism contributes significantly to the country's ideational power.'

4. This refers to democratic South Africa (since 1994).

5. It is difficult to measure wealth, as all countries have impoverished people and wealthy people, but gross domestic product (GDP) is a useful indicator of the financial health of a state. In 2022, South Africa's per capita GDP was $4,932,724 compared with Sweden's $48,768,503 (World Population Review, 2022).

6. '...[A]nalysis of potential middle-power partnerships offers some insight by drawing on the Global Powers Index (GPI), part of the International Futures (IFs) forecasting system. GPI is unique as it attempts to include aspects of soft power in its calculations and forecasts of state power capacity, such as the number of embassies and treaties a state is party to. Other components in GPI include the contribution of demographics, technology, size of the economy and military capacity' (Cilliers, 2018).

7. Bearing in mind that arguments do exist around the utility of this organisation and some of its outdated, immoveable structures; it remains the only universal organisation offering members states, down to the smallest state, the equal opportunity to have a voice in global affairs.

8. Democratic South Africa does have a history of resorting to ping-pong politics at the UN (Graham, 2016: 104).

9. Currently, other states advancing a feminist foreign policy agenda are Canada (since 2017); Luxembourg (2018); France (2018); Mexico (2020); Spain (2021), and Libya (2021) (Thompson, Ahmed and Khokhar, 2021: 1).

10. This phrase, and the intent behind it, features in many of South Africa's foreign policy documents.

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South Africa and Sweden in the UN Security Council

By Angela Muvumba Sellström and Suzanne Graham

Abstract

The UN Security Council is the world's most established forum for safeguarding international peace and security. It has, however, suffered from significant deficiencies in legitimacy and effectiveness. The permanent five (P5) members control the Council's agenda and block action on conflicts because of their own national interests and geopolitical rivalries. New research (see Graham, 2022; Olsson, Muvumba Sellström, and Chang, 2021; and for example, Bode, 2018; Pay and Postolski, 2022; and Farrall, Loisell and Prantl, 2020) suggests that the elected ten (E10) members are, however, able to project their own interests and preferences, and shape decisions from inside the Council, particularly on conflict situations and themes that affect Africa. Indeed, conflict in Africa makes up two-thirds of the Council's workload, and 85% of UN military peacekeepers are deployed to the continent. This short article explores the recent memberships of Sweden (2017-18) and South Africa (2019-20). Elected states have played an active role in terms of promoting cross-cutting themes, including strengthening Africa's Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda, to varying degrees. Elected members can distinguish their short tenures on the Council by signalling their contribution to global affairs through thematic events and resolutions. By presenting South Africa and Sweden's record of conduct on these themes, the article explores differences and similarities in E10 practice. The main contribution is an illustration of how elected states pursue a common agenda, using diverse methods of engagement. This variation is important for understanding the UNSC, since it demonstrates the Council's pluralist nature, and the interplay of its least powerful members through policy practices of specialization and interdependence.

Introduction

The non-permanent members have little real weight as their time on the United Nations (UN) Security Council is fleeting, two years only, and this makes it difficult to build up institutional memory in this forum as well as little opportunity to settle into, and adapt to, the working methods of the Council. Yet, some of the ten elected (E10) members strive to influence Council deliberations, decisions and debates and have a comparative impact on UNSC resolutions and decisions and are essential players in the formal and informal practices of the Council (Martin, 2020; Langmore and Thakur, 2016). Previous research and popular analysis tend to treat the Council as a unitary actor, with most attention on the permanent five (P5) states or on hot conflict issues, and to ignore the expertise being built up by the E10. Eclectic scholarly literature on the UN Security Council has underscored the gaps in knowledge about its permanent and non-permanent members (see Schia, 2017; Einsiedel, 2016; and Schrijver and Blokker, 2020) while highlighting its work on a range of thematic policy areas such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) (for example Bellamy, 2015); women, peace, and security (Davies and True, 2019); or climate change (Scott, 2015). To the extent that scholars have addressed the shared and competing interests among UNSC members, research has examined the five permanent members' institutional leadership (see, for example, on China in Fung, 2018; and on Britain and France in Hill, 2016). The result is a fuzzy image of weak and powerless elected states, subservient to the most powerful states and their preferences. The reality, however, is different. Many elected states have their own priorities and agendas, and are increasingly vital to the working methods of the Council and to the progression of important regional and thematic priorities. On this basis, this article compares the objectives and actions of two recent non-permanent memberships – South Africa and Sweden. Their E10 tenures offer insight to the shared and different means of navigating the Council.

This article aims to explore E10 behaviour to deepen understanding of the UNSC from the perspective of non-permanent states. Its ambition is to highlight the variation in the conduct of these states and their converging and diverging praxis in the thematic work of the Council. It is an exploration and an initial empirical step forward. It also raises insight into how the UNSC is pluralist and not a unitary actor. The purpose is not to theorise E10 behaviour or to raise critical perspectives. This article is about something other than whether or not E10 states are pursuing particular agendas authentically or effectively. Instead, it contributes to the burgeoning discussions about what E10 states do, independently of their inbuilt handicap of impermanence and a lack of veto power. It seeks to facilitate a better understanding of E10 choices in their engagement. Indeed, even on relatively universally accepted policy issues, they choose differently.

The structure of the analysis is based on questioning *how* the E10 state implemented its approach toward thematic issues. The article focuses on the cross-cutting themes because of their increasing prominence in Council work, and as the locus of visible efforts by elected states to contribute to the UNSC memorably and markedly (Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang, 2021). The article focuses on Africa's Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda, two themes that are prominent on the Council's workload (see Adebajo and Muvumba Sellström, 2022) with two-thirds of its resolutions dealing with Africa and the majority of its deployed military peacekeepers on the continent. Typically, the WPS agenda is taken up as a part of elected member campaign promises (Jormanainen, Kurath and Muvumba Sellström, 2022), and its founding resolution 1325 was adopted under Namibia's presidency of the Council in October 2000. While the US and Britain hold the pen for this thematic area, E10 members have strengthened the Council's working methods on these issues to advance its implementation. The article presents South Africa and Sweden's conduct records on these themes and explores differences and similarities in approaches. The main unit of analysis is the state's membership, and the article covers the range of thematic work undertaken through formal and informal methods. It draws in crucial relationships between the E10 state and its domestic politics and regional homes. It thus compares aspects of South African and Swedish interests and stakes at home and with other African and European states and their respective regional organisations.

South Africa's[1] situation is unique in that it is rare for an elected 10 (E10) member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to be re-elected three times in such a short period of time (2007–2008; 2011–2012; 2019–2020). Similarly, the South African government has remained unchanged over that period in as much as the governing party, the African National Congress, has remained in power since 1994 (Graham, 2022). This has helped the Republic adjust to the UN system without the added disadvantage of constant change and discontinuity. In the lead up to South Africa's latest Council term, in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly vote, 95% of the members supported the Republic's bid to join the Council for a third time (Brosig, 2018). This signals a continued and significant degree of trust on the part of the UN members in the Republic's ability to be re-afforded the chance to fill an African seat in this platform. Indeed, for the latest UN vote, South Africa was the only country endorsed by the continental body, the African Union (AU).

Sweden's most recent membership in the UN Security Council in 2017–2018 was secured in the first round of voting in the General Assembly, with 69% of votes from the body for one of the two seats available to the group of Western European and Other States. The term was its fourth in the organisation's history. Its previous memberships took place over an average of twenty-year intervals in 1957–1958, 1975–1976 and 1997–1998. Importantly, Swedish membership is also anchored in Nordic multilateralism and a coordinated policy of fielding a Nordic candidate to the UNSC for every second two-year mandate. As countries with small populations heavily integrated into global trade and security networks, the Nordic countries are sensitive to unpredictable and chaotic developments on the international scene. They prefer multilateral solutions to complex problems that affect them but over which they may have limited influence. For these states, issues such as forced migration, unabated conflict, and the impacts of climate change need addressing transnationally. Nordic countries see financial support to the UN and to peace and security as part of their respective national interests (Jakobsen, 2018). The Swedish government led by the Sweden Social Democratic Workers Party from 2014 ramped up Sweden's campaign and eventual membership objectives, strategies and initiatives along these lines, striving to also promote its own feminist foreign policy on the global stage of the UN Security Council.

South Africa and Sweden offer insight into the support of two important thematic foci of the UNSC, namely Africa's peace and security and the Council's relationship with the AU and the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. Both foci have come to be integral to the work of the E10. In the case of South Africa, efforts to strengthen conflict management and peacekeeping by the AU have been a persistent trend in its memberships, and featured prominently. South Africa announced in 2019 that it would use its third term to prioritise the women, peace and security agenda (Graham, 2022). The Republic also expressed a drive to continue conversations around bringing the UN and AU peace and security architecture even closer together, building on this theme from its previous terms on the Council. Sweden, on the other hand, has deferred to European Union (EU) and African preferences though promoting regional cooperation (Engelbrekt, 2020). It chose, however, to centre its 2017–2018 membership on the integration of WPS into the everyday business of the UN Security Council (Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang, 2021). South Africa, a proponent of WPS, has been less prone to systematic implementation of the gender equality theme. These nuances in emphasis are opportunities for mutual support and joint action. For E10 states, the way forward will be to use respective areas of strength to bolster common interests while in the Council.

South Africa

The South African Government's position at the UN Security Council, throughout its three terms on the Council in 2007–2008; 2011–2012; 2019–2020, has been dedicated to advancing African interests, including through conflict resolution efforts and the promotion of women in peace and security initiatives, amongst other initiatives (Graham, 2022). South Africa's goal for its third term was to build on the legacy of Nelson Mandela, especially since 2018 served as the centenary of Mandela's birth, and so a renewed faith in what Mandela stood for carried South Africa into its third term on the Council. By the end of 2020, South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Naledi Pandor, highlighted the Republic's attempts whilst on the Council to silence the guns in Africa, the emphasis on preventive diplomacy and inclusive dialogue shining through quite prominently, and building on the WPS agenda (Pandor, cited in DIRCO, 2021).

“South Africa was instrumental in using its UNSC Presidency in January 2012, to emphasise the need to strengthen the relationship between the UN and regional organisations, in particular the AU, in the maintenance of international peace and security. UNSC Resolution 2033 was adopted unanimously to strengthen cooperation between the two bodies.”

Democratic South Africa has since 1994 advocated in its foreign policy for a rules-based international order, driven by multilateralism[2] and democratic values (see Nel, Taylor and van der Westhuizen, 2000; Spies, 2010; De Carvalho, Mutangadura, and Leijenaar, 2020; Hendricks and Majozi, 2021). It continues to view the UN as the best platform within which to promote these foreign policy goals. In 2020 in Madrid, South Africa was part of a joint statement by many countries expressing a renewed commitment to multilateralism in its ‘Reinforcing Multilateralism together building on the United Nations 75th Anniversary Declaration’ (The Presidency, 2020). Indeed, as De Carvalho, Mutangadura and Leijenaar (2020) contend, ‘multilateral institutions like the UN are important as they allow countries to pool resources and exchange ideas. They provide the space to debate and reach compromises on common approaches to development, stability and collective security’. Moreover, as Spies (2010: 89) argues, South Africa can have influence in global governance platforms if it uses its ‘multilateral specialist’ persona to harness diplomatic niche areas such as conflict resolution, for example. This suggests that even E-10 members can contribute to the outcomes of the UNSC despite innate challenges linked to time and experience on the Council. However, Hendricks and Majozi (2021: 65) criticise South Africa’s implementation of its goals in practice, arguing that although currently the Republic is in ‘a position to be a thought leader in key multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU), especially on peace and security’, it may come to nothing if ‘the country does not invest in the necessary research and dialogue needed to achieve this’.

In relation to South Africa in this article, the two key themes highlighted by South Africa’s Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) as important areas for the Republic at the UNSC in 2019–2020 are explored (Pandor, cited in DIRCO, 2021; NAP, 2020). The themes are: the advancement of the UN-AU peace and security architecture (APSA) and the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. Was South Africa able actively to contribute to these themes during its latest UNSC term and can these be regarded as diplomatic niche areas for South Africa in its so-called ‘multilateral specialist’ role?

South Africa and APSA at the UNSC

African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) refers to the primary tools, at the disposal of the African Union, for dealing with conflict resolution and the promotion of peace on the continent. The central pillar of the APSA is the AU’s Peace and Security Council (PSC) which was launched in 2004. Prior to this, the predecessor to the AU, the Organisation of African Unity, held the view that the main responsibility for peacekeeping in Africa lay with the United Nations (Williams, 2009). This was problematic though as the UN ‘proved reluctant to take the lead in resolving African conflicts’ (Williams, 2009: 605). The PSC became operational as the AU organ committed to responding to Africa’s conflicts. However, over the years, it has become more necessary to align the UNSC and AU PSC peacekeeping efforts, priorities, and planning, and to avoid duplication, considering that: ‘The UN and AU are the two most important decision-making institutions for crisis management in Africa, accounting for about 70% of the crises tabled for discussion by the former’ (PSC Report, 2021).

South Africa was instrumental in using its UNSC Presidency in January 2012, to emphasise the need to strengthen the relationship between the UN and regional organisations, in particular the AU, in the maintenance of international peace and security. UNSC Resolution 2033 was adopted unanimously to strengthen cooperation between the two bodies.

Previously, South Africa had also been heavily involved in the successful adoption of UNSC Resolution 1809 (2008), adopted with a similar goal of bringing the UN and AU closer together (Graham, 2022). During its 2019/2020 UNSC term, South Africa continued to advocate for the need for the UN and AU to work together in resolving conflict in Africa. The Republic supported UNSC Resolution 2457 in 2019, which echoed previous resolutions on the working relationship between the AU and UN. However, in his explanation of vote, South African Ambassador Mxolisi Nkosi emphasised 'the principle of comparative advantage, complementarity and burden-sharing' between the two bodies and the controversial debate over how to pay for peace operations in Africa, by using United Nations assessed contributions, which Ambassador Nkosi argued: 'provides the most reliable, sustainable and predictable means for United Nations-mandated AU peace operations' (S/PV.8473, 2019: 22).

Unfortunately, South Africa was unable to make headway on the peacekeeping finance debate during its third term. As mentioned earlier in this article, South Africa had helped to pass resolution 1809(2008) that would 'enhance the predictability, sustainability, and flexibility of financing regional organizations' peacekeeping operations under a UN mandate'. However, the debate lingered for years without any real progress. More recently, in January 2020, the UNSC failed to reach agreement on a resolution, that:

> would see a 25:75 funding split between the AU and UN using UN-assessed contributions for Council-authorised AU-led missions, threatening the UNSC and AU PSC relationship. South Africa and other A3 members were caught off guard when Addis Ababa stalled the resolution to afford its heads of state an opportunity to ascertain what the 25 per cent would mean for the AU in reality at the February 2020 Summit (Graham, 2022: 19).

South Africa had failed to fully consult the AU, when in July 2019 the Republic had led an A3 delegation to Washington to seek support for its new draft resolution on this issue. South Africa was out of step with Addis Ababa's thinking, indicating that despite AU support for South Africa as a representative of Africa on the Council, this support should not be misconstrued as blanket approval for South Africa's independent actions. South Africa had more success, although hard-won, on its interests in the WPS agenda.

South Africa and the WPS Agenda at the UNSC

Despite elements of patriarchy remaining in South African domestic society, as well as alarming stories of femicide and gender-based violence[3] across the Republic (Mail & Guardian, 2022), there also exists a strong and longstanding women's movement that advocates for and ensures positive change. This translates into South Africa's foreign policy agenda too. In its first National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security 2020–2025, the NAP (2020: 2) set out to 'create a safer and peaceful South Africa, Africa, and world for women [and] girls...[to] enable meaningful participation for women in peace processes; and prioritise their needs, experiences and agency in all conflict and non-conflict contexts'. Historically, democratic South Africa has been an active participant in international forums promoting the interests of women. At the global level, the Republic has ratified the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), approved at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, amongst others.

The unanimous adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325, in October 2000, on women and peace and security set the stage for further similar resolutions at the Council. The WPS agenda is 'a policy framework that recognizes that women must be critical actors in all efforts to achieve sustainable international peace and security. WPS promotes a gendered perspective and women's equal and meaningful participation in peace processes, peacebuilding and security' (Riascos, 2022). Although South Africa could be criticised for the long delay in enacting its NAP on WPS, considering that the Resolution 1326 was passed two decades ago, the Republic has 'actively worked to improve women's participation in peacebuilding and their protection in situations of armed conflict' during its latest term on the UNSC (De Carvalho and Kumalo, 2020). South Africa took the lead during its October 2019 UNSC Presidency to sponsor UNSC Resolution 2493 which reinforced the organisation's commitment to Resolution 1325 and to all forthcoming WPS resolutions. Previously,

during its first UNSC term (2007–2008), South Africa had actively supported UNSC Resolution 1820 (2008) focusing on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict (Graham, 2022).

Whereas other states, such as Sweden, have openly and publicly declared their position on WPS in multiple platforms, South Africa is overdue in indicating to the wider community what the government's WPS plan is and in implementing its own plan. Nevertheless, De Carvalho and Kumalo (2020) contend that despite this:

> South Africa's plan is … unique, as it's neither entirely a foreign policy tool nor a domestic policy – it's a mix of both. It acknowledges that the country's international engagements on women, peace and security cannot be separated from the violence women experience within its borders. It is an important step in ensuring that progressive foreign policy improves the lives of South African women.

South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Naledi Pandor, chaired the open debate before the resolution was adopted and the Republic had to lead very difficult negotiations to enable the resolution to pass through a Council consensus. By taking a very public stance in pushing through UNSC Resolution 2493, the South African government was able to demonstrate its investment in the WPS agenda.

It is important to note that 'informed consensus and dialogue became important for South Africa, which together with Sweden, had led an initiative since late 2018 for E10 members to get together and up to speed on Council working methods. South Africa saw this as a way to strengthen the role of the E10. Even after South Africa left the Council, it continues actively to host these monthly meetings in Pretoria, and globally, to engage E10 diplomats in following Council themes and debates' (Graham, 2022: 18–19).

Sweden

Sweden's objectives for its most recent tenure on the Council in 2017–2018 centred around strengthening the rule-based international order. It placed four themes or priorities as its guiding strategy: international law, human rights, gender equality and a humanitarian perspective. The Swedish bid for a Council membership was announced in 2004, but its campaign only took real shape in 2014 (Engelbrekt, 2020: 34). The overall campaign promised a Swedish tenure that would concentrate on creating opportunities for the Council to work effectively. It underscored that 'the Council's agenda was Sweden's programme of work' (Government of Sweden, 2017: 2). The overriding problem for Sweden and indeed, the Nordic viewpoint, was that at a time of global turbulence and change, the UNSC was underutilized, increasingly perceived as irrelevant, and hostage to the geopolitical preferences and strategies of the P5. Membership in the Council also had an intrinsic benefit to Sweden's foreign policy capacity. Engelbrekt (2020) notes that a term in the UNSC places extra demands on a state the size of Sweden, requiring additional government financial and human resources and prioritization of the Council in the foreign policy arena. Arguably, however, the experience of the UNSC membership is considered by Swedish diplomats as integral to developing the foreign service's competence and building up its global networks and thus, an investment for the future. During the Swedish membership period the Council adopted 115 resolutions and 48 presidential statements and issued 180 press statements (Government of Sweden, 2019: 6).

Sweden and APSA at the UNSC

The Swedish engagement on APSA was also hinged upon its overall development strategy and policies. The Gambian crisis started off Sweden's term, coinciding with its first presidency month in January 2017. Swedish representatives supported cooperation among the Council; the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS); the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and the AU (Government of Sweden, 2019: 54). Its permanent mission also worked closely with Senegal's (a member of the Council during 2016–2017) on the resolution supporting Adama Barrow, who was the winner of the December 2016 elections. The resolution reflected the position of ECOWAS and the AU and was passed unanimously in the Council (Resolution 2337, 2017). Among the other conflict situations featured in the Council's work were South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel

“Sweden aimed to make the Council a more credible and consistent force for protecting and promoting international peace and security. Significantly, as the first country in the world with a feminist foreign policy, Sweden sought to achieve this broader aim by incorporating gender equality into its objectives, strategy and choices.”

(Government of Sweden, 2019). In these situations, the Council acted to address peace processes and peace support operations, and these were not particularly controversial. Indeed, peacekeeping operations in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia were terminated during Sweden's membership. In addition, the Security Council lifted sanctions against Eritrea in November 2018. Sweden, in its second presidency month of July 2018, promoted cooperation between the UN and the AU and the inclusion of African civil society. During this presidency, Sweden's Foreign Minister Margot Wallström also participated in a joint trip for the UN and the AU to the Sahel region of West Africa (Chad and Niger). The one challenge faced by Sweden was the need to follow up on the murders in the DRC of UN experts Zaida Catalán, a Swedish national, and Michael Sharp, an American (Government of Sweden, 2019: 118).

Sweden's approach was also further complicated because it was strongly aligned with African states but shared European perceptions about the framework for financing African peacekeeping. In 2017, the Secretary-General, António Guterres, offered a set of proposals on UN-AU decision-making and UN financing of African peace support operations. Stockholm agreed with various proposals – also from the African elected members, generally from Senegal in 2017 and more specifically from Ethiopia in 2018 – for concrete steps towards cooperation, including access to UN financing from its budget (Government of Sweden, 2019: 44). It saw the importance of access to regular, and predictable funding for peacekeeping but sided with the broader EU set of conditions for accountability to human rights principals (Government of Sweden, 2019: 45). In the end, however, this position undermined support for financing as envisaged by several African states, and eventual withdrawal of the AU's trust in a good faith effort by the more affluent countries on the Council.

On a broader scale, Sweden strove to promote E10 dynamics, which became a priority of its membership. These efforts were central to Stockholm's concern that the P5 dominated formal and informal tools of the Council in their favour. In November 2018, Sweden initiated a meeting of the then and incoming elected members with the Secretary-General. Such an engagement aimed to encourage regular and routine informal briefings from the Secretariat on situations that were not already on the Council's working agenda (Government of Sweden, 2019). Finally, Sweden supported Security Council reform and increased geographical representation, primarily of Africa. These policy stances about membership and capacity were Africa-centric and ultimately part of Sweden's conception of how best to promote the shoring up of Africa's peace and security.

Sweden and the WPS Agenda at the UNSC

Sweden aimed to make the Council a more credible and consistent force for protecting and promoting international peace and security. Significantly, as the first country in the world with a feminist foreign policy, Sweden sought to achieve this broader aim by incorporating gender equality into its objectives, strategy and choices. Furthermore, in every negotiation, discussion and result of the Council, it would pursue integration to make the WPS agenda 'core UNSC business.' Previous E10s, such as Spain (2015–2016), already preferred to forego introducing new WPS norms for implementation. This was taking it one step further.

The strategy called for systematic integration of gender in work with the Council in country-specific conflict or country situations. Stockholm believed that its efforts would be more meaningful if focused on implementation within the context of addressing

substantial gaps facing women and girls and men and boys in clear and pragmatic ways rather than generating new thematic priorities. The focus on specific situations was characterised by proposals to increase women's meaningful participation and inclusion in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and to prevent or stop patterns of conflict-related sexual violence. In concrete terms, Sweden would pursue WPS integration in all UNSC outcomes – press statements, presidential statements, resolution texts and all other documents and activities (Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang, 2021).

Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang (2021) have carried out a systematic analysis of the Swedish engagement on WPS. First, they underscore Sweden's strategic and systematic approach to WPS. Second, the approach produced achievements primarily in normalising the integration of a gender perspective into Council decisions. In their view, the membership translated into two new realities. First, it led to greater accountability for gender in reports from the Secretariat, improved mandates and feedback from UN departments and representatives of the Secretary-General about how WPS was being implemented. Second, it created a new standard of integration of concrete, context-specific, operational language in Council resolution drafts, presidential statements, press statements, committee reports, reports of the Secretary-General and briefings to the Council. The integration approach involved persistent, tailored navigation of the formal and informal working methods of the Council.

Swedish representatives regularly and consistently 'raised their hands' about gender. The study by Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang (2021) shows that UN staffers started to pre-empt Swedish questions by reporting on gender issues in the first year of the membership. Regarding putting the language in Council resolutions, Sweden was not tied to the previous language approved for resolutions by the theme's penholders – the UK (for WPS broadly) and the US (for conflict-related sexual violence). Instead, Swedish representatives canvassed advice, evidence and ideas from civil society in conflict situations, other member states, and their foreign service experts to provide credible and timely advice. Sweden also championed the idea of having more women civil society briefers, and it was during its second presidency in July 2018, that the Council first achieved gender parity in briefers. Sweden also sought to engage officials in the Council early on and to propose WPS language at the early stages of drafting. Evidence of success includes changes to the language in new resolutions for conflicts with older mandates, including in the DRC and Mali. The legacy of Sweden's WPS approach is not secure since the robust language in UNSC resolutions may not necessarily lead to implementation on the ground. However, since the end of 2018, there has been a persistent increase in WPS language in Council resolutions (as noted in Adebajo and Muvumba Sellström, 2022: 5).

Discussion

This article has highlighted the different ways that E10 states approach their respective aims on the UN Security Council. It contrasts South African and Swedish memberships in relation to Africa and APSA; and to gender and WPS. The presentation of these elected member strategies and approaches in two important thematic praxis demonstrates the variation in conduct of E10 countries, even on similar priorities for their memberships. The variation can be depicted as a reflection of the plural nature of the Council, and points to specialisation and interdependence by elected members. While South Africa's approach to APSA was integral to its identity as a frequently elected African state on the Council, its achievements can be traced to particular outcomes in earlier membership terms, particularly with regard to cooperation with regional bodies, and relations between the UN and the AU. In its 2018–2019 term, Pretoria continued to pursue better collaboration in favour of African interests and to support specific UNSC decisions – evident in terms of particular resolutions. Sweden also actively supported engagement with African regional organisations. However, on UN financing of AU peacekeeping, it conditioned its support and remained rooted to European framing on the issue. On WPS, South Africa continued to use a strategy of key resolutions, proposing UNSC resolution 2493 that sought to reaffirm the normative framework of WPS. In contrast, Sweden, instead focused on integration of WPS into UNSC resolutions. It is difficult to say which approach, for which theme, will yield the most lasting and meaningful results. South Africa's membership included signature, thematic

measures on both APSA and WPA; while Sweden had an integrated approach albeit to a lesser degree on APSA than on WPS. Each country leveraged its capacities and preferences differently.

The analysis of the South African and Swedish memberships would benefit from further comparative research on other E10 states and their tenures, and yet, the differences in approach to APSA and WPS suggest that one can discern that the non-permanent membership can involve specialisation and that states' varied approaches, certainly on thematic issues, nonetheless allow for interdependence within the E10 group. On APSA, there is clear specialisation on the part of South Africa. Its sense of ownership on building better UN-AU cooperation, utilising its turn in the presidency for special APSA thematic work, and supporting various resolutions, is evidence of Pretoria's prioritisation of APSA. However, its leadership on peacekeeping financing for Africa, including leading a delegation of the A3 in negotiations in Washington, suggests more. South Africa was specialising in the APSA theme, including by setting out on its own approach, beyond the AU's own guidance and preferences. Sweden also specialised, but on WPS. Stockholm's approach of integrating WPS into every resolution and outcome of the Council, rather than on a signature event was critical to its own identity as the first country in the world with a feminist foreign policy. Its decision to try to mainstream rather than to engage in thematic special events or signature resolutions meant that it was also applying some of its own expertise in weaving gender analysis into the everyday work of foreign policy and development assistance, and pointedly was an attempt to fundamentally advance the WPS agenda at the Council; much as South Africa boldly went its own way on APSA and financing for peacekeeping. These specialist approaches, however, did not mean that South Africa and Sweden were working entirely independently. Their approaches fit neatly within stated ambitions of other E10 states and broader thematic priorities. This demonstrates the interdependence of E10 thematic work. Given the short two-year terms available for enacting their priorities, E10 state agendas and strategies appear to be in sync with general praxis of themes, over time. Sweden's WPS work was built also on the lessons from Spain, Indonesia and going back to the first state to host a special session on the theme, Namibia, in October 2000 (Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang, 2021). South Africa engaged the other African members of the Council in its APSA work (Graham, 2022). Both countries' respective thematic work on Africa and gender, APSA and WPS, should also be understood as mutually reinforcing and complementary.

Debate and discussion about the UN Security Council's elected members tend to pivot toward the issue of the UNSC's reform (see, for example, Adebajo and Muvumba Sellström, 2022; and Security Council Report, 2022). A consensus seems to be emerging, however, with important P5 countries such as the US, China, and Russia openly agreeing that Africa should be allocated a permanent seat on the Council (Security Council Report, 2022). Notwithstanding the relatively novel shift toward reform of the Council, non-permanent membership plays a vital role in the context of global governance systems. Non-permanency in the UNSC sets up its members for relative accountability to peer states, converging at times with a global audience of Council-watchers such as the media and civil society. Small, middle power, and emerging states are equally subject to rigorous processes. The system of rotational tenures ensures that countries must campaign for election and that their legitimacy is derived from a vote by secret ballot in the UN General Assembly. The two-year terms are distributed across geographic regions, and the election process is intense and competitive. Members are therefore also keen to demonstrate their ability to be on the main stage of international peace and security. Elected members regularly introduce new issues, voices and processes into the Council, championing thematic issues such as climate and security, WPS, and human rights issues. While observers often focus only on P5 dynamics, the E10 as a group is increasingly vocal and visible, and its members host special sessions, joint media engagements and, increasingly, common positions. While they do vote primarily in their interests or regional affiliation and have yet to perform as a coherent group by utilising their joint veto, E10 membership is an opportunity to display leadership. Some key non-permanent states are also keen to build up institutional memory and intra-group relations of the E10 group.

The possibility that an E10 state can accomplish all of its objectives is unlikely. The term in the Council is a short two years, with frequent interruptions and crises

and an evolving agenda. The P5 have institutional mastery of UNSC working processes due to their permanence, their veto power and their dominance over the 'penholder' system and thus, the drafting process for Security Council resolutions. Elected states are often left only to chair working committees and face an avalanche of diplomatic bureaucratic administration in these bodies. Finally, elected states are simply less well-resourced, with small and global South countries least likely to have sufficient human resources to substantively cover all the conflict situations, thematic debates and managerial matters that are within the remit of Council membership. It would help if they could bolster their capacities individually and collectively through information-sharing and cooperation.

South Africa and Sweden sought to see the group of the E10 work better together and jointly convened elected members at the capital level, outside New York, in Pretoria, in November 2018 (Government of Sweden, 2017; Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang, 2021). The ambition was that this gathering would become an annual meeting and provide an opportunity to strengthen E10 cohesion and prepare incoming members. Perhaps, through such initiatives, E10 states may leverage their comparative advantages in policy knowledge and expertise, networks and resources to jointly advance their respective and collective agendas.

Conclusion

This short article explores the recent memberships of Sweden (2017–18) and South Africa (2019–20) in the UN Security Council. It focuses on the work each state enacted in two cross-cutting themes, APSA and the WPS agenda. New research (see Graham, 2022; Olsson, Muvumba Sellström and Chang, 2021; for example, Bode, 2018; Pay and Postolski, 2022; and Farrall, Loisell and Prantl, 2020) contends that E10 states are active participants in the UNSC and project their own interests and preferences, particularly on conflict situations and themes that affect Africa. Thematic work is a significant aspect of non-permanent membership. It is beyond the confines of geopolitical rivalry and institutional dominance of the permanent members, who control the penholder system and have outsized roles in determining outcomes for the Council's work on conflict situations. Thematic work does allow E10 states to demonstrate their leadership in global affairs. African peace and security, broadly, is ideally suited to thematic emphasis. Most of the Council's workload is on conflict situations in Africa, and the body's cooperation with the AU has advanced significantly. The WPS agenda is universally proclaimed as a priority of every elected state. By presenting South Africa and Sweden's records of conduct on these themes, the article explores differences and similarities in E10 practice. It illustrates the variation of the E10 and explores how elected states pursue a common agenda while using diverse approaches. This variation demonstrates how the UN Security Council is pluralist and highlights the specialism and interdependence of E10 engagement.

Notes

1. In this article, reference to South Africa will be used to represent the Government of the Republic of South Africa.

2. Multilateralism in foreign policy refers to a specific choice by at least three or more states (and other actors) to advance international cooperation, usually through an arranged institution or organisation, in order to respond to common challenges. Dervis (2020) weighs in on the continued value of multilateral organisations such as the UN. He states that 'the universal U.N. membership…is uniquely valuable in allowing countries with different political regimes to cooperate, provide global public goods and achieve important economic and social goals on which they can all agree' (Dervis, 2020).

3. In 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa referred to gender-based violence as South Africa's 'second' 'devastating epidemic' (the first referencing the coronavirus pandemic that swept the globe in 2020) (quoted in Ellis, 2020).

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South Africa:

A Growing Embrace of Feminist Foreign Policy?

By Jo-Ansie van Wyk

Abstract

In 2014, Sweden became the first country to adopt a feminist foreign policy. Although a new Swedish government abandoned the country's feminist foreign policy in October 2022, Sweden has inspired many other states to adopt such a foreign policy to advance the status of women and girls. These developments have not gone unnoticed in South Africa, where historical relations between Sweden and the country's liberation movements endure in post-apartheid South Africa. Unlike Sweden, South Africa never adopted or declared a feminist foreign policy due to historical and cultural reasons, and different conceptualisations of women, gender, and feminism. Instead, under the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) since 1994, South Africa has diplomatically capitalised on its liberation struggle and human rights credentials; the latter which, to some extent, have for some time superseded a more focused emphasis on women's rights. A more nuanced foreign policy focus on improving the status of women and gender equality emerged partly due to international developments regarding women, peace, and security. Hence, the contribution explores feminist and/or gendered aspects of South Africa's foreign policy of *ubuntu* (human-ness and humanity) and diplomatic practice, and the implications thereof. It has shown that South Africa's growing embrace of elements associated with a feminist foreign policy includes memorialisation and symbolism (i.e. linking the liberation struggle and female stalwarts to foreign policy), positioning women in progressive internationalism, and integrating women in the definition of South Africa's national interests.

Introduction

Sweden–South Africa bilateral relations go as far back as the colonial period in Southern Africa. A truncated historical overview since the 17th century includes Dutch rule at the Cape, and numerous Swedish missionaries, scientists, and sailors stepping ashore and travelling the interior of what is now South Africa. Notable Swedish travellers to and in the Cape Colony included, amongst others, explorer Olof Bergh, missionary Otto Witt, Captain Carl Gustaf Ekeberg, Carl Peter Thunberg, Anders Sparrman (a student of the famous Swedish botanist Carl Linnaues), and Johan August Wahlberg (Sellström, 1999: 118–136; Skott, 2010: 371). Whereas these early contacts were predominantly scientific and commercial in nature, a more political dimension emerged prior to and after the Boer War (1899–1902) in Southern Africa. Besides increased Swedish immigration to the Cape Colony, a volunteer Scandinavian Corps and Ambulance Unit was organized in Sweden and other Nordic states and dispatched to join the Boer side. The Unit was deployed during the Siege of Mafeking and the Battle of Magersfontein where Sweden encountered fatal losses and soldiers were captured. After the war, South Africa erected monuments in memory of the Scandinavian Corps (Gerdov, 2016: 54–78).

In the early to mid-20th century, relations were disrupted by the two World Wars. By now, predominantly economic relations were soon compromised with the onset of legally enshrined apartheid after the South African elections of 1948. Sweden's activism and criticism against apartheid became the dominant feature of bilateral relations, while Sweden invested heavily in South African liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC) which came to power in 1994 (Sellström, 1999: 118–136). For decades, Sweden provided humanitarian and financial aid amounting to almost US$ 400 million to the ANC from the 1970s to mid-1990s, causing a diplomatic rift in official relations between Stockholm and Pretoria (Washington Post, 1996). Diplomatic relations were also severely affected by the assassination of Olof Palme, the Swedish Prime Minister, and a critical anti-apartheid supporter, on 28 February 1986. At the time, South Africa regarded Palme as an 'Enemy of the State' and a decision was taken that 'necessary action' should be taken against Palme (South Africa, 1985). A former apartheid death squad commander, Eugene de Kock, later testified that the apartheid government was behind the assassination (Sellström, 1999: 28).

As post-apartheid South Africa moves into its third decade, South Africa and Sweden maintain full and extensive diplomatic relations, with elevated bilateral relations through a structured mechanism, the South African–Sweden Binational Commission established in 2000. For South Africa, its relations with Sweden are founded on strong Nordic support and solidarity during the liberation struggle and are based on 'mutually shared values of democracy, equality, and social justice, as well as mutually beneficial bilateral economic trade and cooperation' (DIRCO, 2022).

Given the historical relations between Sweden and the ANC, the focus of this special issue, and mindful of the major differences between these states, it is an opportune time to focus on gender equality and women's empowerment as a declared shared value. Both states have in recent decades taken decisive foreign policy directions. South Africa, for example, has consolidated its African Agenda (i.e. the centrality of Africa in its foreign policy), whereas Sweden's foreign policy has taken a decisive feminist turn from 2014.

Whereas scholarship on global examples of feminist foreign policy has proliferated since Sweden adopted a feminist foreign policy, and whereas scholarship on South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy have proliferated, research on South Africa's foreign policy in the context of the notion and practice of a feminist foreign policy remains scant, with Schoeman and Sadie (2004), Masters (2017), van Wyk (2019), Mbukanma and Strydom (2021: 17696–17712), Haastrup (2020: 199–216), and Magadla and Cornell (2019) notable exceptions. Hence, this contribution aims to fill this gap. Moreover, the rationale for this study is that Sweden's normative entrepreneurship regarding feminist foreign policy is instructive and provides an analytical and practical framework to analyse and assess South Africa's declared domestic and international commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. Moreover, the Swedish experience have instructional value for states embarking on a process to craft and implement

a feminist foreign policy. It is also instructive to determine the outcomes of other states' foreign policy and diplomatic emphasis on the status of women, and the WPS agenda.

Scholarship on the substance, practice, effect of and analytical approaches to a feminist foreign policy differ widely, focusing on, among other aspects, an ethics of care, good states and good global citizenship (Aggestam, Rosamond, and Kronsell, 2019: 23–39); a specific working method, an ability to confront contestation, and normative innovation (Aggestam and Rosamond, 2019: 37–48); and the practice of a feminist foreign policy (Zilla, 2022: 1–7; Cheung et al., 2021: 1–21). Convergence, however, is evident in the position that the number of women in a foreign ministry does not necessarily constitute a feminist foreign policy. Moreover, a masculine and male-driven global order has neglected – even ignored at times – women and gender in the world (Youngs, 2004: 75–87); often contributing to, amongst many other consequences, GBV and gender inequality. These aspects resonate with South Africa's declared foreign policy, gender commitments and WPS agenda, but can South Africa's foreign policy be typed as feminist, and what are the implications thereof?

Using a qualitative analytical methodology and reading of official Swedish and South African sources, the contribution unfolds in four parts. The next section outlines the background to, substance and practice of Sweden's feminist foreign policy. Against the background of the Swedish feminist foreign policy model, the third part of the contribution explores feminist and/or gendered aspects of South Africa's foreign policy of *ubuntu* (human-ness and humanity) and diplomatic practice, especially since the tenure of President Cyril Ramaphosa since 2018. Since assuming office, President Ramaphosa has focused on gender-based violence (GBV) in the South African context. Moreover, during his tenure, South Africa has served in influential international leadership positions, including a third term on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (2019–2020), and chairing the African Union (2020) and the Brazil-Russia-India-South Africa (BRICS) grouping (2023). The fourth part of the contribution reflects on the prospects of a feminist foreign policy for South Africa. The final part of the contribution ends with concluding remarks.

Made in Sweden: Background, Substance, and Practice of Feminist Foreign Policy

Since 2014, Sweden has been widely regarded as the normative entrepreneur and leading practitioner of feminist foreign and trade policy. Under a red-green government coalition, it became the first country to adopt a feminist foreign policy to advance its historical commitment to human rights and gender equality (MFA, 2019: 11). Following elections in October 2022, a more conservative new Swedish government under the Moderates Party abandoned the country's feminist foreign policy (*Svenska Dagbladet*, 2022), stating that the notion of a feminist foreign policy 'obscures the content of the policy' but that the focus on gender equality will remain (Sjöbeck, 2022). Despite these changes, the Swedish Socialist Democratic Party and the Green Party coalition that instituted the policy have created a new foreign policy framework (i.e. a feminist foreign policy) that had, for example, been adopted and/or under consideration by other governments around the world.

For Sweden, its feminist foreign policy has responded 'to the discrimination and systematic subordination that still mark the daily lives of countless women and girls around the world', as well as the country's peace, security, and sustainable development agenda (MFA, 2019: 9). Besides the normative substance of its feminist foreign policy, Sweden has also paved the way for the practice of a feminist foreign policy, which, for

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Sweden, entails the application of a 'systematic gender equality perspective throughout foreign policy' (MFA, 2019: 9). Focusing on the 4Rs (Rights, Representation and Resources, and Reality), Sweden has followed an intersectional approach that recognised differences in living conditions, levels of influence, and the needs of women. In recognising this, Sweden has identified seven objectives of its feminist foreign policy:

- Full enjoyment of human rights
- Freedom from physical, psychological, and sexual violence
- Participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding
- Political participation and influence in all areas of society
- Economic rights and empowerment
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)
- Internalisation and the practice of a feminist foreign policy in government (MFA, 2019: 11, 19, 30–48).

To achieve these, Sweden has proposed a practical methodology that entails gender-equality consciousness and gender-balanced domestic and international events, mainstreaming gender in communication, mobilising gender commitment and resources to achieve gender equality, gender awareness in cultural cooperation, and establishing networks and platforms for common gender agendas and practices (MFA, 2019: 59). The country has also identified several subsidiary areas where it has intended to apply this methodology: foreign and security policy (peace and security; human rights, democracy, and the rule of law; disarmament and non-proliferation), international development cooperation, trade, and promotion policy (MFA, 2019: 63–90). In 2017, Sweden released a review of its implementation of its feminist foreign policy. In measuring this, it has used several indicators to determine whether it has achieved the seven objectives of its feminist foreign policy. This was followed in 2021 with the Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) release of an Action Plan, *The Swedish Foreign Service Action Plan for Feminist Foreign Policy 2019–2022, including Direction and Measures for 2021*, i.e. an operational plan for the practice of its feminist foreign policy. The action plan identified several operational practices, normative commitments, objectives, and actions, namely:

- Analysis and information gathering
- Accountability and influence
- Agenda-setting, events, delegations, and visits
- Alliance-building, platforms, and Groups of Friends
- Dialogues to influence and collect information
- Promotion and skills development
- Negotiations, monitoring mechanisms and reviews
- Procedures for grant management, processes, and reporting
- Positions in multilateral organisations, institutions, and peace support operations (MFA, 2021: 22–28).

It is too early to determine the success of the Action Plan and the overall impact and consequences of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, especially since its termination in October 2022. But how does Sweden's bilateral partner, South Africa, perform?

South Africa and Sweden's 4Rs

As the Swedish experience has shown, a feminist foreign policy is a comprehensive foreign policy that abolishes 'all forms of gender domination and oppression and aims to overcome gender stereotypes. It also seeks to give women the opportunity to participate in decision making, to represent the state, and execute the "hard" issues related to a country's external relations and status' (van Wyk, 2019). A feminist foreign policy thus entails both abolitionism and democracy: abolishing male domination and patriarchy and enabling and maintaining women's access to power at all levels. To achieve this, norms, numbers and practices have to be aligned. Toni Haastrup (2020: 199–216) has explored gender in the context of South African foreign policy by focusing on commitment, substance, and practice: aspects that this contribution builds on. These aspects resonate with Sweden's feminist foreign policy's 4Rs: Rights, Representation and Resources, and Reality (MFA, 2021: 22–28).

South Africa's normative commitment to women's rights, empowerment and gender equality is expressed in its Constitution (South Africa, 1996). Moreover, Chapter 9 of the Constitution has created seven 'state institutions supporting constitutional democracy', including a Commission for Gender Equality. As laudable as this commitment to women's rights and representation has been, contradictions have emerged between the law, society, and reality relating to the concepts of and definition of woman, gender, and feminist/feminism. Legally and socially, in South Africa, a woman is predominantly identified in terms of heteronormativity. The concepts woman and gender are often used interchangeably, creating paradoxical policy, wasted resources, ineffective responses, and outcomes (realities). Moreover, in South Africa, gender-based violence (GBV) is also predominantly regarded as violence against women, stressing the neglect of the nuances of the meaning of woman and gender. As recently as August 2022 and speaking on National Women's Day, President Ramaphosa again equates gender-based violence with violence against women only (Ramaphosa, 2022).

Added to this confusion and conflation have been the notions of, for example but not limited to, feminism and womanism, and their divergent understandings. Feminism in post-apartheid South Africa remains a challenged and a niche political practice, often equated with Western liberalism and denying the role and status of women in an African and traditional context. Besides this, the state of feminism and the feminist movement in post-apartheid South Africa have been questioned, especially in the context of liberation movements' strong women's liberation credentials and agenda. In addition to this, cognitive gaps have emerged. The ruling party's Women's League remains the custodian of the ANC's women's liberation credentials but in practice the Women's League has been accused of endorsing and maintaining heteronormativity and policies that are not advantageous to women (Hassim, 2015). Measured in terms of Sweden's 4Rs, the creation of a Cabinet portfolio on women (coupled with youth and disability) located in The Presidency is laudable but evidently has not added a more nuanced gendered approach to the country's domestic and foreign policy. Moreover, in South Africa, numerical improvements on women's representation and appointments, and on so-called gender mainstreaming, have not translated into accountable gender policies and outcomes improving women's lived experiences and status. Often, women who have benefitted from women empowerment opportunities have contributed to the further entrenchment of elite interests (Hassim, 2022: 43).

The Swedish model requires women to be present and represented when agendas are set, and decisions made. Moreover, women's issues need to be on the agenda and women have to be appointed to key foreign policy and diplomatic positions, especially to realise the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda.

Since 1994, South Africa has had four female foreign ministers (Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Maite Nkoana Mashabane, Lindiwe Sisulu and the incumbent Naledi Pandor), and two female deputy foreign ministers (Reginah Mhaule and Candith Mashego-Dlamini). Compared to this, South Africa has never had a female president or a female head (i.e. director-general) of the foreign ministry. Besides this, only one woman has served as the chairperson of the parliamentary committee on foreign relations and cooperation since 1994. Within the ruling ANC's foreign policy machinery, women have also played a secondary role. No woman ever led the international relations desk of the party during exile, and it was only recently that women were elected to chair the international relations and diplomacy sub-committee of the ANC. By 2023, Lindiwe Zulu serves in this position but oversees a committee consisting predominantly of men. Ambassadorial appointments are also not reflective of South Africa's gender demographics as women comprise less than 45% of the country's ambassadors. These numerical advancements have not changed the challenges that South African women face. For example, gender-based violence (GBV) in South Africa reached war-like proportions during the global pandemic, preceded by, and coinciding with, rampant state capture in South Africa. Sadly, women have been perpetrators *and* victims of state capture, which has had an impact on the country's foreign policy architecture and fabric as connected women benefitted from lucrative contracts and other women experienced GBV in this environment.

In the absence of a declared feminist foreign policy, South Africa can, at best, be described as a state that values and contributes to the improvement of the

> Due recognition is given to women stalwarts that are memorialised as symbols of South Africa's foreign policy principles, practices and objectives, but it remains to be seen if these initiatives will produce a marked shift to a feminist foreign policy or a qualitative improvement of Sweden's 4Rs relating to the status of women in South Africa

role and status of women (Haastrup, 2020: 199–216). However, normative commitment and practice have not translated into qualitative improvements in the lives of most South African women. More female parliamentarians have been elected and women have been appointed to major Cabinet portfolios such as international relations and cooperation, and defence and state security. However, these women oversee bureaucracies and systems that maintain an entrenched gender bias. The country's foreign policy bureaucracy illustrates this. The director-general of the foreign affairs department has always been male, and its internal structure follows a conventional masculine geographic approach to international affairs. In fact, a review panel of the department consisted mainly of men (MIRCO, 2019: 1), a trend followed predominantly by the parliamentary oversight portfolio committee.

The said review panel, under the heading '*Some Salient Observations by The Panel*', mentioned women twice only:

31. South Africa has also played an important role on the promotion of the rights of women as exemplified by the roles played by a number of South Africans in the UN and other multilateral bodies. This includes roles in the CSW [Committee on the Status of Women], Beijing Conference, CEDAW [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women], UN Women and in UN Peace Missions. The challenge is to ensure consistent and reliable support for all those working in global structures (MIRCO, 2019: 10).

Despite this disappointing little reference to the status of women in a major foreign policy review, some tangible and symbolic developments have since become evident of a practical commitment and routinisation to improving the role and status of women, aspects that are not necessarily out of step with the ideals of a feminist foreign policy. As indicated earlier, Sweden has identified seven objectives of its feminist foreign policy (MFA, 2019: 11, 19, 30–48). All, but one (Internalisation and the practice of a feminist foreign policy in government), of Sweden's objectives converge with South Africa's declared foreign policy objectives and principles. Besides this, as outlined in the next section, evidence suggests new developments – in line with Sweden's 4Rs – regarding the status of women in South African foreign policy.

New Thinking and Practices Regarding the Status of Women in South African Foreign Policy

The remainder of this contribution focuses on three major developments in South Africa's foreign policy practice that resonate with the 4Rs of Sweden's notion of a feminist foreign policy. The first development relates to the memorialisation of the liberation struggle and linking it to the country's international status and human rights credentials. This is not new as, for example, the memorialisation of Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo through a UN Day and the naming of the foreign ministry headquarters has shown. However, a new development is the practical memorialisation of women liberation personalities and linking it to South Africa's foreign policy, illustrating a substantial and practical shift to symbolise and improve the status of women in foreign policy. The second development relates to the ANC's foreign policy discussion document released in anticipation of the party's 55th National Conference in December 2022, and third, the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation's (DIRCO) release of the *Framework Document on South African National Interest and Its Advancement in a Global Environment*.

Memory and Symbolism: Linking the Liberation Struggle Female Stalwarts to Foreign Policy

Besides the reported increase of women in South Africa's foreign policy architecture (Mbukanma and Strydom, 2021: 17696–17712), another development within the country's foreign policy arena has been the recognition, remembrance, and veneration of, especially, high-profile women in the liberation struggle.

Memory and symbolism are powerful foreign policy sources and resources that reflect a state's identity, values and interests. Non-material in nature, memory and symbolism recalls past realities to address current realities and challenges. Memory and symbolism can be mobilised to compensate for the lack of material resources, justify a particular foreign policy position and indicate intention and direction. The examples of Gertrude Shope and Charlotte Maxeke are illustrative of this.

In response to UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) which affirms the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, and peacebuilding, DIRCO has operationalised the resolution by memorialising ANC struggle stalwart Gertrude Shope by establishing the Gertrude Shope Women's Mediation Network and the Getrude Shope Annual Dialogue Forum. Annually, DIRCO hosts the Gertrude Shope Women's Mediation Network training in August (Women's Month in South Africa) which is followed by the Getrude Shope Annual Dialogue Forum where women peace-builders and mediators from Africa share their experiences and best practices in peace and security efforts. According to DIRCO, it had been training 350 African women mediators since 2015 (SAGNA, 27 August 2021). Shope has thus come to symbolise South Africa's peace diplomacy, and a practical response to UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000).

Another example of the memorialisation of women liberation leaders is that for some years, the South African government has declared certain years in memory of a struggle stalwart, declaring, for example, 2021 as the Year of Charlotte Maxeke. Foreign minister Naledi Pandor (2022) provided some insights into this practice, its symbolism and how her ministry has linked this to South Africa's foreign policy and the status of women in foreign policy. Once The Year of Charlotte Maxeke was declared, DIRCO initiated a legacy initiative, The Charlotte Maxeke African Women's Economic Justice and Rights Initiative in memory of Maxeke (1871–1919) as 'an embodiment of her values and leadership qualities' and describing Maxeke as, amongst other descriptions, an internationalist, Pan-Africanist, and human rights activist, thus connecting South Africa's foreign policy principles and practices to the liberation struggle, and the status of women in the foreign policy context:

> As an Internationalist she travelled to at least two continents when travelling was not as easy as it is today. This gave her exposure to other cultures and a broader view of the world beyond the shores of South Africa. Ma Maxeke was an early ambassador of our country, forging people-to-people ties. Throughout the choir tour, she exchanged ideas with her contemporaries, shared information, and used art to bring South Africa to the world. She also worked with suffragists both in Europe and the US during the tour. After she returned home, she participated in a number of international conferences, where she highlighted the plight of African women. She advocated for cooperation and understanding between the people of South Africa and those friends she made through the tour and during her studies abroad. For example, she used her relationship with WEB Du Bois – one of her lecturers at Wilberforce University – to continue to inform the world about the conditions of Africans in South Africa. This is documented in some of her letters with this outstanding Pan Africanist.
>
> Ma Maxeke was also a powerful Advocate for women's rights. She led the first women's march of 1913 in Bloemfontein against the early introduction of passes. Maxeke was a pioneer in one of the greatest of human causes, working under extraordinarily difficult circumstances, in the face of prejudice – not only against her race, but against her gender. Her courage and leadership allowed her to transcend religious and cultural barriers (Pandor, 2022).

Foreign Minister Pandor (2022) has also reiterated that The Charlotte Maxeke African Women's Economic Justice and Rights Initiative 'is anchored in South Africa's foreign policy, which is Pan Africanist in form

and internationalist in content'. Elaborating on the foreign policy and diplomatic relevance of the Initiative, Pandor explained it as South Africa's contribution to the Global Acceleration Agenda to empower women and girls, stating that The Charlotte Maxeke African Women's Economic Justice and Rights Initiative is 'an important component' of South Africa's Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda and a practical expression of our diplomacy of Ubuntu, as it aims to strengthen South Africa's international solidarity work. It is an affirmation and a validation of women's economic justice rights as fundamental human rights. South Africa recognises that while more efforts have gone to advocating for the civil and political rights of women, the economic rights of women and girls have been largely neglected. It is for this reason that South Africa chose to focus its efforts under the Generation Equality Forum on Economic Justice and Rights.

Furthermore, Pandor indicated the significance of the Initiative by explaining that President Ramaphosa has attended the Paris Generation Equality Forum in 2021 that adopted the Global Acceleration Plan (GAP) for the empowerment of women and girls globally. In Paris, Ramaphosa outlined South Africa's commitments to the GAP for the next five years that includes The Charlotte Maxeke African Women's Economic Justice and Rights Initiative as one of the programmatic commitments. In fact, the Paris Generation Equality Forum has endorsed the Charlotte Maxeke Initiative as a collective commitment, thus recognising Maxeke as 'a global icon and symbol of women's economic empowerment' (Pandor, 2022). For Pandor, this endorsement has created an opportunity for international collaboration with global stakeholders to mobilise global support for women's leadership (Pandor, 2022).

Commenting on the work of the Charlotte Mannya-Maxeke Institute (a Maxeke-related family non-governmental organisation), Pandor (2022) explained that the Institute plans to build the Charlotte Mannya-Maxeke African Girls School of Excellence, which Pandor described as aligned with DIRCO's programme, *Africa Future Leadership Development Program,* to develop future leaders, and inculcating:

> [T]he values of Pan-Africanism, integrity and selflessness through mentorship and training opportunities for youth on foreign policy and diplomacy work. A platform will be created for women diplomats to share perspectives and explore opportunities to promote the empowerment of women and girls in Africa.

Besides the Charlotte Maxeke African Women's Economic Justice and Rights Initiative, DIRCO also hosted the African Women's Leadership Award in May 2022 in recognition of African women leaders who have advanced African development (Pandor, 2022). In addition to recognising women, DIRCO has established several short-term projects to enhance the status of women, as well as their role in foreign policy. These include the:

- Establishment of the African Women's Leadership Training Program on Economic Justice and Rights for African women leaders to provide insight on Economic Justice and Rights, and a networking platform for African women leaders to share best practices and experience.

- Hosting of a Women's Trade Fair to showcase African women's products and services to continental and global markets, and to raise awareness about the opportunities provided through policy initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

- Establishment of an annual Fellowship for African Women in Diplomacy in honour of Maxeke, 'targeting African women in diplomacy', offering degree and non-degree education opportunities to the 'next generation of African women in diplomacy…to groom female public servants inspired by the values of Charlotte Maxeke, such as ethical leadership, empathy and excellence' (Pandor, 1922).

The liberation struggle has also been a women's struggle. Due recognition is given to women stalwarts that are memorialised as symbols of South Africa's foreign policy principles, practices and objectives, but it remains to be seen if these initiatives will produce a marked shift to a feminist foreign policy or a qualitative improvement of Sweden's 4Rs relating to the status of women in South Africa as both Shope and Maxeke could be regarded as traditionalists in whose name a feminist foreign policy would seem misplaced.

Foreign Minister Pandor's (2022) reference to Maxeke as an internationalist is linked to a second development, progressive internationalism, regarding the positioning of women in the foreign policy context.

Positioning Women in Progressive Internationalism

In preparation of the ANC's 55th National Conference in December 2022, the party, as it always does prior to a national conference, released various discussion documents, including a document on the country's foreign policy and international relations. These discussion documents are important future policy indicators. Titled '*In Pursuit of Progressive Internationalism in a Changing World*', the discussion document on foreign policy outlines, amongst others, an analysis of the 'international balance of forces' (ANC, 2022: 83). It has acknowledged that this has a 'gender dimension with patriarchal systems' that remains globally entrenched while deepening poverty among women (ANC, 2022: 83). In its assessment of the 'international balance of forces', the ANC (2022: 83) has acknowledged it has:

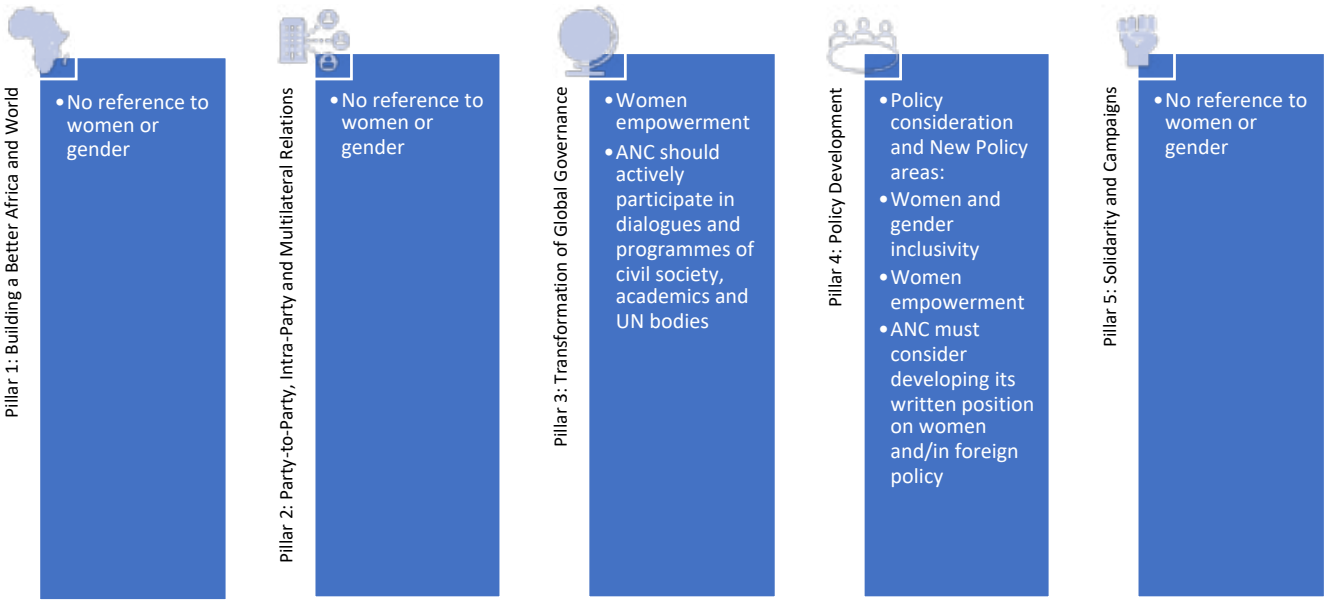
> [a] gender dimension with patriarchal systems remaining entrenched the world over, that deepens poverty among women. Women bear the brunt of global trends in socioeconomic inequality, conflict and violence, environmental degradation, exploitation, and oppression.

However, while acknowledging increased international calls for women's inclusion in the economy, politics, and global decision, it has lamented the failure to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, adopted in 1995. The ANC (2022: 83) has observed that:

> the need for a progressive feminist movement across the world has become even stronger. Discussions on the meaning of feminist foreign policy in theory and practice have also gained momentum across the world, including in South Africa.

The discussion document has further outlined the foreign policy organisational programme of the ANC and has reorganised its foreign policy position around five pillars outlined in Figure 1, which also indicates the reference to women and gender in terms of this reorganisation.

Table 1: The Five Pillars of the ANC's Foreign Policy Reorganisation, 2022



(Source: Author's own compilation adapted from ANC (2022: 84–89))

In terms of its foreign policy organisational programme's five pillars (see Figure 1), Pillar 4 (Policy Development) has identified women and gender inclusivity, and women empowerment as foreign policy considerations and new foreign policy areas. However, the ANC has stated that women and gender inclusivity into foreign policy should take the global focus on the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into account. Moreover, such a foreign policy should also be mindful of the UN, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and unspecified other international bodies' focus on women empowerment 'through climate change and technology and financial and economic inclusion' in line with the African Union Decade on African Women Financial and Economic Inclusion, adopted in 2020 (ANC, 2022: 88).

In this regard, the party has mentioned that calls for women's inclusion in the economy, politics and global governance have grown and that the role of UN Women is critical in this. It also recalled the failure to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, adopted in 1995. Following this, the ANC has asserted that the 'need for a progressive feminist movement across the world has become even stronger' (ANC, 2022: 83). The party has acknowledged that 'discussions on the meaning of feminist foreign policy in theory and practice have also gained momentum across the world, including in South Africa' (ANC, 2022: 83). However, the discussion document did not mention any specific sources or signs pertaining to this.

Regarding feminist foreign policy, the ANC has offered no details on and commitment to adopting such a foreign policy. Instead, it has noted 'the growing embrace of the idea of a feminist foreign policy' amongst its international 'progressive partners' (ANC, 2022: 88). It has noted 'the danger that this is being hijacked by powerful western forces for reasons that have little to do with the interests of women of the world' (ANC, 2022: 88). However, the party has noted that it 'must consider developing its written position on women and/in foreign policy' (ANC, 2022: 88). The ruling party's 2022 foreign policy document and its reference to women in the context of foreign policy has been a marked departure from the party's 2017 discussion document on foreign policy (ANC, 2017) that made only two references to women and none to gender issues. Despite these changes, the ANC seems to sit uncomfortably with 'powerful western forces' that may have hijacked feminist foreign policy. On a more positive note, the ANC has expressed its intention to consider the development of a position on women 'and/in foreign policy' (ANC, 2022: 88). The ANC comes short of committing itself to the notion of feminist foreign policy but is has surely taken note of international feminist foreign policy initiatives since Sweden declared its policy in 2014.

Integrating Women in the Definition of South Africa's National Interests

A third foreign policy development relating to women has been South Africa's release, on 1 August 2022, of the *'Framework Document on South Africa's National Interest and its Advancement in a Global Environment'*, which proposes:

> [a] definition of South Africa's national interest and its elements, the means to pursue these interests and their practical application in the domestic and global environment (DIRCO, 2022: 3).

The Framework Document, released by DIRCO, has been the first foreign policy document that has been released since the publication of the Zuma cabinet's approval of a foreign policy white paper, '*Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu*', in 2011 (DIRCO, 2011). The latter includes only two references to gender (in the context of addressing past injustices and changes in global demographics) and none to women (DIRCO, 2011: 3, 12). The 2022 Framework Document, however, contains more references to women. It refers to the historical role of women in the country's liberation, which resonates with the memorialisation and symbolism of women in the foreign policy context mentioned. The Framework Document refers to, for example, safety as one of the elements of South Africa's national interests. Regarding this element, the document focuses on women in the context of GBV, gender equality, the WPS agenda, and women's empowerment (DIRCO, 2022b: 6, 10, 11, 14, 15). Under the heading of means to promote and pursue the country's national interest in relation to other states, the Framework Document refers to the country's values and principles (including a reference to the WPS agenda), the social dimension of economic diplomacy (including the plight of

women in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa), the role of women in country's defence and security diplomacy, and health diplomacy (DIRCO, 2022b: 17, 18, 26).

The Framework Document returns to the liberation struggle and describes the liberation struggle as, inter alia, against patriarchy, while it also refers to Pan-Africanism as a reaction to, for example, patriarchy (DIRCO, 2022b: 8, 10). This is clearly aligned with the ANC discussion document (ANC, 2022) released a few months prior to the Framework Document. The DIRCO policy document outlines the negative impact of GBV on the status of women, and South Africa's commitment to gender equality, and women's empowerment, as well as reiterating the role of women in the WPS agenda and economic development in Africa (DIRCO, 2022b: 10, 12, 14).

The Framework Document signals a clear departure from South Africa's previous foreign policy statements, i.e. that the status of women and gender equality are regarded as integral elements of the country's national interest. Women's historical exclusion and activism is highlighted, as well as the value attached to the role of women. However, it is clear from the Framework Document that, for South Africa, the status of women remains a challenge despite the aspirations and efforts to improve it and to achieve gender equality. The document is silent on improving women's representation, role and influence in foreign policy decision making but in a section under the heading '*South Africa's Approach: Past, Present and Future,*' the document:

> [r]ecognises the important role that women should play in all aspects of peace processes, prevention, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. South Africa continues to champion the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at a UN and continental level, advocating for their inclusion and leadership in decision-making during peace processes (DIRCO, 2022b: 18).

South African foreign policy and diplomatic practice regarding women is often complemented with reference to and practice of gender. The South African government has repeatedly declared the promotion of women as a major focus of its domestic and international agenda. Historically, the ANC as the ruling party has been resistant to the notion of feminism and feminist policies as understood elsewhere. Instead, the women/gender normative commitment and practice has been contextualised in the country's broader constitutional context that focuses on addressing historical injustices, and the promotion of human rights. The developments regarding women in the context of South Africa's foreign policy confirms South Africa's principled position on women's rights, as well as a growing embrace of women in/and foreign policy.

Conclusion

The contribution has started with contextualising South Africa and Sweden's relations. It has distinguished Sweden's notion of a feminist foreign policy as an approach to South Africa's foreign policy and the status of women therein. Convergences have been found but South Africa remains hesitant to adopt the notion of a feminist foreign policy. However, South Africa's growing embrace of aspects of what a feminist foreign policy entails have been identified.

Since the announcement of its feminist foreign policy in 2014 until its termination in 2022, Sweden has provided a new analytical, conceptual, and practical foreign policy framework to understand and improve women's status and gender equality by, inter alia, highlighting 4Rs (rights, representation, resources, and reality) in this context (MFA, 2019). It is too soon to assess the impact of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, and whether it has indeed achieved its intended objectives. Sweden has inspired several states to reconsider their foreign policies, development aid, and practices. In South Africa, given the close historical and contemporary links between Sweden and the ANC, the ruling party has taken note of these developments, and called for a consideration of the notion of a feminist foreign policy and to develop a written position on 'women and/in foreign policy' (ANC, 2022: 88).

South Africa does not have a declared feminist foreign policy but normatively, as indicated, the country's foreign policy converges with the objectives of Sweden's feminist foreign policy. An ethics of care underlies the principle of *ubuntu*, and South Africa's declared diplomacy of *ubuntu*. Women have been

and remain in top foreign policy positions in South Africa. The country's normative commitment to the improvement of the situation of women and girls has been expressed repeatedly. However, the practice of this commitment, and the country's status as a good international citizen, remains a concern when it remains silent on human rights issues in, for example, China. Moreover, the country's WPS agenda seems to be counterfactual in the context of its position on Russia's war on and in Ukraine since the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022.

South Africa is unlikely to institute a state-driven and endorsed feminist agenda as exemplified by Sweden's declared and practiced foreign policy. As indicated, the notion of feminism has somewhat lost traction in the ruling party's greater emphasis on human rights, gender equality, and women's rights. It is also unlikely that the country will adopt a feminist foreign policy as it is currently understood. However, the status of women in the country remains a concern as GBV runs amok and counters South Africa's credentials as a good state where human rights are upheld as a break with the country's past.

These developments, notwithstanding, have not arrested South Africa's engagement with and on women's issues. Numerical improvements in women's representation in the country's foreign policy establishment are not sufficient to aspire to be a good state or a good international citizen. Global consensus converges on the practical recognition and visibility of women. Three recent developments in South Africa's foreign policy context have been presented. These developments have been linked to Sweden's notion of the practice of foreign policy. Here, the practice of remembering, recognising and the visibility of women have been presented by focusing on linking the liberation struggle to women's struggle through the operationalisation of the legacies of women liberation stalwarts, Gertrude Shope and Charlotte Maxeke. Secondly, the contribution has shown the extent of Sweden's feminist foreign policy as it manifested in the ANC's discussion documents for its 55th National Conference. The last example referred to focused on South Africa's consideration of its national interests, a consideration aware of the WPS agenda, and the domestic context in South Africa. These examples have illustrated South Africa's own 'growing embrace' of key notions of a feminist foreign policy. Irrespective of the nature of a state's foreign policy, it must strive to and achieve improvements in the status and representation of women and the abolition of all forms of gender domination, oppression, and gender stereotypes. Post-apartheid South Africa's growing embrace of elements associated with Sweden's formulation and practice of feminist foreign policy is evident. This contributes to the evolution of foreign policy in general and feminist foreign policy specifically. First, the South African case, over time, has shown that positioning women in high profile foreign policy positions matters. It makes women visible and ensures that they are present at the table. Second, South Africa has also shown that women's numerical representation matters. Over time, the number of women in the South African foreign policy establishment has increased and given substance to South Africa's commitment to women in/and foreign policy. In the third instance, the South African case has shown than non-material resources such as memorialisation and symbolism can be an important element to recognise, empower, and promote women. The cases of Gertrude Shope and Charlotte Maxeke have shown how this has become institutionalised in the South African foreign policy context. Unlike Sweden, South Africa has been hesitant to adopt the term and full substance of a feminist foreign policy for the reasons mentioned earlier but this has not prevented South Africa's own growing embrace of notions of feminist foreign policy.

Finally, the South African case offers insights into avenues for future research on the substance and practice of feminist foreign policy. The Swedish case has shown that specifically formulated foreign policies can be disrupted by changes in government. Moreover, the notion of feminist foreign policy has also evolved since Sweden's adoption of it, showing the impact of Sweden's normative entrepreneurship. For South Africa, Mexico's intention to adopt a feminist foreign policy will also be instructive as Mexico also represents a non-European country. The expectation is that Mexico will not just transplant the Swedish model but adapt it to domestic realities.

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Exploring Sweden and South Africa's Responses to Mass Migration during the Period 2015–2019

By Pragna Rugunanan and Celine Meyers

Abstract

Sweden and South Africa are two major transnational destinations and attract large numbers of refugees and migrants, primarily due to their ease of immigration policies. Besides their unique historical relations which can be traced back to as early as the 1890s, both countries continue to experience high volumes of mass migration and forced mobility which peaked in 2015. Following the so-called 'Syrian refugee crisis', Sweden witnessed the second largest asylum applications in Europe. At around the same time, South Africa experienced its highest backlog of asylum applications. It is against this backdrop of a long and diverse history of relations and ongoing migration that we seek to engage with the responses of both countries to mass migration using a comparative approach. The article presents a historical perspective of migration between Sweden and South Africa and examines their ongoing migration policy debates. It concludes with an analysis of current political contestations and some key lessons for each country.

Introduction

Mass migration into Sweden and South Africa is not a new phenomenon. In 2015, both countries welcomed an unprecedented number of refugees in search of protection. Refugees are defined as 'those who are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion' (United Nations Human Rights Commission, 1951: 14). The so-called 'Syrian refugee crisis' or 'European refugee crisis' sparked considerable media and scholarly attention across the globe (Jones and Shaheen, 2015; Müller et al., 2016). More than 4.5 million refugees fled from an outbreak of conflict and violence in Syria, which signalled the largest refugee exodus in recent history (UNHCR, 2022). Of the 4.5 million refugees, Sweden attracted the second largest asylum applications in Europe (approximately 163,000) primarily due to its championship earned as a historically refugee-friendly country (Statista, 2016; Tanner, 2016).

Similarly, South Africa attracts numerous migrants and refugees from the Southern African region (UNHCR, 2016). Statistics from 2016 showed that an estimated 90% of all migrants in South Africa hailed from the African continent, of which 85% come from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (Masuku, 2020). The following year in 2017, asylum seekers originated predominantly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Somalia, Pakistan and Nigeria. While data on undocumented migrants remain inaccurate in South Africa, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) estimates that there are approximately two million undocumented migrants, constituting a large component of African descendants in the country (Ferraro and Weideman, 2020). Data for refugees and asylum seekers are slightly more accurate. In 2015, there were an estimated 110,000 refugees in South Africa, which declined in 2016 to an estimated 97,000 refugees (Ferraro and Weideman, 2020).

South Africa is particularly attractive to neighbouring countries as a result of its status as the second 'economic powerhouse in Africa' following Nigeria (STATS SA, 2021; Kamer, 2022), and as an economic hub in the southern African region. The country is considered a haven by those escaping extreme poverty, political violence, and civil war. Over time, South Africa has issued several Special Dispensation Permits to migrants from countries such as Angola, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe. Prior to 2009, for instance, Zimbabwean nationals enjoyed exemption permits (Yu, 2022). However, recent announcements suggested that these permits would expire in December 2021 with a grace period of 12 months (Yu, 2022). Comparatively, Sweden has recently engaged in a series of high-profile diplomatic disputes. Since 2015, harsher measures were enacted by both countries to combat the growing number of asylum seekers and refugees in the respective countries. The participation of foreigners in the South African economy is an important political and economic issue within South and southern Africa.

Sweden has characteristics that present a suitable case for a comparative study with South Africa. Despite the two countries' relations, and similarities in culture and politics, there exists a continuous pattern of similar migration policies. For many years, Sweden maintained a liberal and inclusive approach to immigration and cultural diversity, taking a strong stance against racism (Hagelund, 2020). While Sweden enjoyed the status of Europe's most welcoming country for refugees, border control policies changed significantly after 2015. Growing anti-immigrant sentiments were exacerbated by rising violence in migrant communities after the newly elected government in Sweden tightened border control policies (Gavlak, 2022).

South Africa's immigrant policies have never been as liberal as Sweden's, but both countries recently aimed to reduce the arrival figures of newcomers. While Sweden and South Africa shared common policy goals after their mass migration influxes, they legitimised and operationalised these policies differently. It is against this backdrop that we seek to examine the responses of Sweden and South Africa to mass migration using available media reports and desktop research. We primarily relied on a literature and policy review which was appropriate for this study. This article briefly examines the historical links between the two countries and their ongoing migration policy debates. It concludes

with an analysis of current political contestations and some key lessons for each country. The article contributes to the current literature by comparing the migration policies of both countries. The article also presents a historical perspective of migration between South Africa and Sweden, which is an under-researched area.

Migration Between South Africa and Sweden: A Historical Perspective

Sweden and South Africa share historical links dating back to the 1890s (Gerdov, 2016; Kuparinen, 1991). Research documents how members of the Scandinavian Corps (countries comprising Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Sweden) supported the Boer side briefly during the South African War (1899–1902) (Gerdov, 2016). This support was met with contention, and most of the Scandinavians residing in South Africa were opposed to the corps at the time. Scandinavian immigration to South Africa peaked around the 1890s and again around 1900 (Gerdov, 2016). We can assume that Swedish nationals were among this group of early migrants to South Africa (Kuparinen, 1991: 13). There are few historical materials that record the early migration of Scandinavian nationals to South Africa. Kuparinen (1991) notes that earlier records were listed in only a few lines of migration to South Africa. The South African state did not keep proper records of early immigration streams and only introduced statistical records for immigration in the early twentieth century. Further historical links of Swedish nationals can be traced back to the 1930s (Sellström, 1999). Migration to South Africa was seen as a new choice destination with economic opportunities creating a strong pull factor for the early Scandinavian immigrants.

“Both countries are engaged in continuous discussions about migration policies after key episodes of migration influxes in 2015. The time period of 2015 to 2019 provides a useful framework for understanding the contested political issues in both countries, at least until the Covid-19 pandemic.”

The formation of these relations intensified considerably during the South African democratic elections in 1994 when Sweden was the only Western country in Europe to extend official political and financial support in efforts to promote an anti-apartheid movement (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2003; Wallström, 2015). During this period, more than 50% of the ANC’s civilian budget came from Sweden (Julin, 2020). A bilateral partnership was officially celebrated in 1999 and South Africa has since remained one of Sweden’s strongest coalitions in Africa (Sellström, 1999).

South Africa and Sweden share a strong belief in the rule of law, non-discrimination, respect for human rights, gender equality, and public participation. Alongside this, the two countries also share ambitions in regional as well as international settings, with a targeted focus on democracy, human rights, and poverty within the structures of the African Union (AU), New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), European Union (EU), and United Nations (UN). Bilateral relations between South Africa and Sweden continue to expand and intensify, and the two countries cooperate on regional and multilateral issues of mutual concern (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2022). With a shared history and a firm belief in the same fundamental values, there is a solid ground for further discussions on how to meet future migration challenges (Julin, 2020).

Migration Policy Debates in Sweden and South Africa from 2015 to 2019

Both countries are engaged in continuous discussions about migration policies after key episodes of migration influxes in 2015. The time period of 2015 to 2019 provides a useful framework for understanding the contested political issues in both countries, at least until the Covid-19 pandemic.

Migration Policy Discourses in Sweden

Migration policy discourses in Sweden are described as 'never-ending' and are represented as the 'harshest' paradoxical anti-refugee debates the country has ever witnessed (Byuengtsson, 2020; Sorensen, 2017). Sweden accepted far more asylum seekers per capita than other European state member countries in 2015 (Tanner, 2016). Sweden was only second to Germany in terms of the numbers received for asylum applications: it received approximately 163,000 applications (Tanner, 2016).

Following the unprecedented influx of refugees entering Sweden in 2015, major shifts from a relatively liberal asylum stance to a highly restrictive law and policy were seen (Skodo, 2018). These shifts raised numerous disputes in the country which reinforced perennial debates about the end of 'Swedish exceptionalism' (Rothstein, 2014; Rydgren and van der Meiden, 2018; Schierup and Ålund; 2011; Tomson, 2020). As Sweden remained known for its liberal migration policies for the longest period, boasting as the only European country with an open-border policy, the origination of the Syrian refugee crisis led to a 'fragmented' and contradictory response to temporary asylum measures and family reunification laws (Skodo, 2018).

In 2016, newly-arrived refugees were subjected to temporary laws initiated in June which allowed them to stay for three years, if indeed they were classified as 'real' refugees. In the case of those migrants needing protection, they were afforded only thirteen months of protection (Rabo, Tun and Jörum, 2021). This policy was in line with the Prime Minister's view that European countries should bear the burden of the refugee crisis. From late 2015 onwards, Sweden had taken a disproportionate number of migrants and the other European countries subsequently had to bear a larger share of the burden. In 2016, these laws underwent significant modifications to restrict permit residence opportunities for asylum seekers and their families (Government Offices in Sweden, 2016; Skodo, 2018). Many of these modifications resulted from political contestations between major government parties that concentrated on making Sweden less accessible and less attractive to immigrants. The common belief was that Muslim refugees from 'war torn' countries like Syria posed considerable political and societal challenges in the country (Skodo, 2018). Some of these issues were narrated as directly related to the surge in violent crime in the country as well as the increased 'financial burden' on the Swedish welfare system (Tomson, 2020; Traub, 2021). High crime rates in Sweden were blamed on incoming refugees, resulting in the country – once known for its low rate of crime – being considered as one of the highest gun violence hotspots in Europe (Henley, 2021). The gangs were identified as primarily second-generation immigrants from the Horn of Africa (Traub, 2021). The gang violence is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon and, as such, there is little support to specifically point out migrants from the Horn of Africa.

These incidents led to several paradoxical debates since 2015. On the one side of the debate, the Green Party together with the Left Party argued that the new proposed laws would segregate immigrant families and limit lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) refugees who cannot reside with their partners in their origin country to enter Sweden. A major critique centred on the deprivation of healthcare to refugees who resided in the country on temporary permits (Tomson, 2020). Conversely, the Swedish democrats and liberal-conservative Moderate Party raised high levels of dissatisfaction and requested that harsher measures be put in place. To do so, these parties advocate that immigrants return to their origin countries, while restricting those who are attempting to enter Sweden (Bengtsson, 2020). The remaining political parties and migration experts in Sweden argue that these measures pose paradoxes that contradict the United Nations convention signed by Swedish officials (Bengtsson, 2020). As such, very little agreement between Swedish political parties could be reached due to two opposing views on immigration policies. There is unanimous agreement on the implementation of a stricter policy, with the exceptions of disagreement from the Green and the Left Parties. The overall picture is that the migration policy has turned in a much more restrictive direction, but the support for this turn is large. The two major parties are in favour of a strict policy and two of the smaller non-socialist parties are also in line with this.

Sweden has embodied a feminist gender equality policy that strives to eliminate gender discrimination in society. It has enacted family-friendly policies to achieve its dream of a gender-equal society.

More recently, gender equality is curtailed by social issues of class and ethnicity (Lane and Jordannsson, 2020). As of October 2022, the new right-wing government announced that it would be 'ditching' the 'feminist foreign policy' implemented by the previous government (*The Guardian*, 2022). In 2016, when Sweden's policy on migration and refugees was amended, it effectively halted any reunification between refugees and their family members. This is in contradiction to the gender equity policy of the Swedish government. In addition, women have been underrepresented in receiving residence permits in Sweden with 44.8% and this figure continues to decrease owing to threats to family reunification (Helbert, 2018).

Restrictions to the right to family reunification for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection in Sweden came with numerous legal, practical, and financial obstacles. These amended laws were particularly challenging for women refugees in Sweden (Edenborg, 2020). Research by Mangrio et al. (2019) reported that most recently arrived refugee women experience a lack of access to the Swedish language and culture. This lack of access was most pronounced in the areas of education, health care, and employment. Separation from their loved ones and the lack of access to resources led to significant feelings of loneliness and depression. Family reunion is also a strong element in support of successful integration strategies and programs, as well as an important factor in reducing mental health issues among refugees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) expressed great disappointment that the family reunification mechanism, as a legal pathway, has been curtailed to such a great extent. Uddin (2022) points to twelve cases of family segregation between Syrian refugee parents and their children. The most recent case of family separation was amplified through a social media campaign that raised awareness on how Swedish officials prohibited Syrian refugee parents from connecting with their children on account of claims related to physical and psychological harm (Uddin, 2022). The family's last-born child was only five minutes old when the baby was taken away from the refugee mother, gaining widespread social media attention in an effort to reunite the children with their parents. This is one example that showcases the threat of family reunification laws in Sweden.

UNHCR strongly believes that supported and well-managed access to family reunions enables many women and children to access protection safely (Nicholson, 2018). Effective and prompt family reunification procedures help discourage communities from resorting to criminal smuggling networks, remove the risk of undertaking dangerous journeys, and ensure more gender equity in terms of access to protection. The current legal framework in Sweden may infringe on the rights of the child, as outlined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). It may also risk negating the positive right to family reunification provided for in the EU Directive on Family Reunification.

Migration Policy Discourses in South Africa

Current migration policy debates in South Africa remain contested and equally contentious (Van Lennep, 2019). Political contestations in South Africa are characterised by continuous paradoxical discourses on the freedom and inclusion of African migrants into the social and economic welfare system (Van Lennep, 2019). While the country has been able to hold onto its position as a haven for African migrants, several political parties and civil society organisations have been vocal in their opposition to the South African migration policy. The South African government has been accused of being too soft on migrants and unable to control mass migration into the country, leading to a rise of social intolerance amongst local citizens (Mukumbang, Ambe and Adebiyi, 2020). More recently, incidents of xenophobia against African migrants have surged dramatically, indicating an increased intolerance against foreign nationals. As such, South Africa has been facing pressure from social activists[1] and political parties to introduce a tougher and more restrictive migration policy to address the social and economic challenges associated with mass migration into the country (Peralta, 2022).

During the apartheid era spanning from 1948 to 1991, immigration in South Africa was tightly controlled by the Aliens Act of 1991. This law was designed to prevent the spread of non-white races to South Africa. Immigration typically took place through a two-gate policy where the 'front gate' welcomed certain 'desirable' white immigrants, while the 'back gate'

was for those deemed undesirable African migrants for temporary residence. The policy was primarily enforced by the South African Police Services (SAPS). The Aliens Act of 1991 was repealed in 1995 by the Immigration Act of 1995. Subsequently, the Refugee's Act of 1998 was introduced to allow asylum seekers to move freely, work, and study in the country. In response to concerns over the misuse of Immigration Acts and the accusation that apartheid-era legislation was still in place, despite South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994, amendments followed in 2008, 2011, and 2017 to curtail these rights (Kavuro, 2022). The 2017 White Paper on Migration (Department of Home Affairs) highlighted that irregular migration was a threat to the security of the country and that the use of the Aliens Act of 1991 and the Refugee's Act of 1998 was not consistent with the spirit of the Constitution (Kavuro, 2022).

> "Viewed as 'burdens' and 'disease carriers' on several media platforms such as news articles and social media platforms, migrants and refugees live in constant fear because of insensitive xenophobic stereotypes. On the other hand, African women migrants who access healthcare at public medical institutions tend to experience violence while giving birth."

National debates largely centred on the issue that the asylum system in South Africa is no longer regulated but rather abused by unauthorised migrants seeking job opportunities in the country (White Paper, 2017). This has led to the South African government putting new measures in place such as the Border Management Bill of 2020 to enforce securitisation. The growing anti-sentiments steer policy makers in South Africa to adopt these dissuading positions rather than inclusivity toward migrants (Maunganidze, 2021). While the policy and law applying to refugees in South Africa is progressive, this approach is circumscribed by the growing anti-immigrant sentiments and the barriers refugees face in terms of accessing their rights to social protections such as legal documents, social grants, and the security of stay.

These are some of the reasons that explain why the South African government's progressive ideas are seldom reflected in implementation plans. Current implementation plans suggest that special permits will be terminated by the end of 2022 and those seeking to remain will be evaluated based on skills that are required in the country (Bekker, 2022). Threats to break up families are high on the agenda, in addition to a lack of access to basic services such as education and health care. Further consequences of this threat are that the current policy is not able to address the root causes of the problem (Bekker, 2022). The South African government has been trying to address the issue of competition and migration in the country by implementing a variety of policies. These include the introduction of the Border Management Bill of 2020 which can also lead to the loss of property, jobs, and livelihoods. These are just some of the consequences for refugees in South Africa.

South Africa places a strong emphasis on gender equality and has one of the highest numbers of women represented in parliament. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) commended South Africa for its 'strong political will' in advancing women's rights (United Nations Human Rights Commission, 2021). However, the increasing intensity and violence against women is the highest globally. While the South African government has ratified many important international conventions and charters, it has not ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

Without legal documentation, many Zimbabweans, Mozambicans, Somalis, and several other African migrant populations are subject to what is often referred to as 'medical xenophobia' or 'medical outcasts' in the public and academic discourse (Crush and Tawodzera, 2011; Richter, 2015; Batisai, 2020). These terms stand in stark contrast with South Africa's National Health Act No. 61 of 2003 (Section 27) which guarantees unconstrained access to basic health services and support to all persons,

including non-nationals who may require emergency medical treatment (Department of Health, 2003). Several media representations show how migrants are repeatedly confronted with health exclusions, discrimination, stigma, abuse, and homophobic attacks from both health care personnel and local citizens (Alfaro-Velcamp, 2017; Fox, 2018). Some of the main assumptions and views held in these media discussions are the country's inability to provide free health to non-nationals and the idea that local citizens should be prioritised.

Viewed as 'burdens' and 'disease carriers' on several media platforms such as news articles and social media platforms, migrants and refugees live in constant fear because of insensitive xenophobic stereotypes. On the other hand, African women migrants who access healthcare at public medical institutions tend to experience violence while giving birth. For instance, a 30-year-old Zimbabwean woman's baby fell to his death at Mamelodi Hospital in Pretoria East in 2019 (Mahlangu, 2019). It is alleged that the migrant woman gave birth standing after the nurses refused to help, despite her bleeding and the fact that she had informed the nurses that she was in pain and felt as if the baby was coming. Her cry for help was met with xenophobic utterances: 'This is not Zim...close your legs and go there...' (Mahlangu 2019). These denials of care violate human rights and have a gendered, racial, and class impact – with poor, black women enduring the most of this discrimination (Willie, 2018). National laws need to be able to cater for the complex realities of women migrants' varied activities within the lower end of the informal economy – the woman braiding hair in an open market while trading beauty products and occasionally working as a domestic worker. Normative references to men workers can also function to restrict women's ability for family reunification.

Discussion

This article has examined the current political contestations regarding migration in Sweden and South Africa. In doing so, it has looked at the different ways in which the two countries have responded to the current migrant crisis. Since 2015, there has been a dramatic shift in the migration governance of both countries, reflecting the turn towards tighter control of migration policy after the Syrian refugee crisis. The move to more right-wing conservatism globally influences the nationalistic overtones in both countries. The rise in negative sentiment towards refugees and asylum seekers both in Sweden and South Africa could be attributed to the use of social media platforms, where xenophobic and nationalist sentiments fuel inflammatory sentiments against migrants. Refugees and asylum seekers become targets for the social ills experienced in both countries. This is evidenced by the persistent and rising xenophobic attacks, particularly against black Africans, in the South African context and a growing anti-immigrant sentiment in the case of Sweden; protests, physical assaults and the burning of infrastructure have resulted in a tightening of asylum legislation (Tanner, 2016). The Syrian crisis also sparked an increase in the securitisation of nation states, evident also on the African continent.

One of the emerging global outcomes of the Syrian refugee crisis is the increase in the securitisation of countries by reinforcing their border security. This is enacted by using third countries as buffer states (Segatti, 2011; Mueller et al., 2022). Through monetary incentives, the EU outsources its border security to authoritarian regimes of North Africa to prevent sub-Saharan and other migrants from crossing into the EU. Schapendonk (2012) and Zaiotti (2016) report that these regimes accept large sums of money to bolster and fund their border security. In turn, violence is meted out to sub-Saharan migrants to prevent them from crossing over into the EU (Mueller et al., 2022). More research on the state's role in border externalisation from a South African perspective needs to be undertaken. Given South Africa's largely progressive constitution, this emphasis on border externalisation has perpetuated the view that South Africa is unwelcoming to migrants and remains exclusionary. Similarly, EU states that outsource their border security to those North African states create a false narrative about their liberal policies of inclusion. Mueller et al. (2022: 4) argue that these states perpetuate a 'weaponization' of migration issues and put migrants further at risk. The coercive nature of these authoritarian regimes reflects poorly on the African states, who carry the brunt of their destructive actions, while the EU states escape from the public eye.

The move to more far-right nationalist policies of exclusion and anti-immigrant sentiments has

continued in the post-pandemic era after 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic, which effectively brought the world to a standstill in 2020, resulted in the increased securitisation of many nation states and tightening migration policies that restricted access to migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The election of the new centre-right government might have severe implications for Sweden's image as a progressive leader in migration policy and gender equality. In October 2022, the new government quickly rescinded its feminist foreign policy, a policy that foregrounded Sweden as a leader in the European Union (EU). The new government is expected to make far-reaching amendments to its progressive immigration policy by reviewing and restricting benefits to immigrants which will have implications for family reunification, curtailing immigration laws and restricting entry (DW, 2022).

Since 2016, Sweden has re-introduced border controls. In South Africa, a new border management system was implemented in 2022, seeking to tighten the porous border control of the country (Bekker, 2022). The revision and tightening of migration policies and the policing of border controls have implications for family reunification for migrants. These aspects should be given attention as both countries traverse the changing pathways of migration management amidst fluctuating political dynamics, the insidious Ukrainian war, and rising inflation across the world. Both countries need to consider sustainable solutions for family reunification with a targeted focus on migrant women's needs and vulnerabilities.

Notes

1. For example, the Operation Dudula movement, which stands for 'force out' in Zulu, is a resistance movement targeted at 'PutSouthAfricansFirst'. It is an anti-foreigner, anti-illegal immigration group which started in 2021 around Soweto in Johannesburg.

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BOOK REVIEW:

Swedish Foreign Policy, 1809–2019

A Comprehensive Modern History

Graeme D. Eddie

Review by Julia Forsberg

Reading Graeme D. Eddie's book – *Swedish Foreign Policy, 1809–2019: A Comprehensive Modern History* – is a remarkable history lesson. And don't get me wrong, it is in no way like the boring, never-ending, tedious history lectures held by a dull teacher who talks way too slowly; it's something else. While being a historical review, the book is a real page turner! It's detailed, it's informative, yet gripping. In the current reality, where Sweden is joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and where the Sweden Democrats, a populist right-wing party, are now the second largest party, it is relevant to look back in order to understand the present. Reading this book is an excellent start.

The book provides a comprehensive overview of Sweden's foreign policy during the period 1809 to 2019, offering nuanced perspectives and analyses of the ever-changing relationship between the country and its surroundings. Naturally, it covers foreign policy, but it also encompasses defence policy and the quaint neutrality policy. In fact, the account of the Swedish defence and its industry during the eventful years from 1990 onwards is unexpectedly elaborate. The same is true about the neutrality policy, which is explored over a span of 50 pages. Even an overview of the years before the ones formally covered in the book is included. The part about Sweden's *Stormaktstiden* (the period of greatest power) was especially detailed. The choice to officially start the book in 1809, 'year zero', makes sense as the author explains that it was a year of great national trauma that created something similar to a restart for Sweden, establishing a new political order – which was followed by a new foreign policy.

The author has gone through an impressive amount of material in the writing of the book: articles, reports, government bills, statements, and election results, to name a few examples. This qualitative case study also offers many descriptions on an individual level, depicting a range of different politicians and their views throughout the years: Anders Björck's opinion as defence minister on the possibility of an all-Nordic security union, Margaretha af Ugglas' excitement as foreign minister for the upcoming chairing of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and Göran Persson as prime minister and his arguments in favour of Sweden adopting the Euro.

“The book provides a comprehensive overview of Sweden's foreign policy during the period 1809 to 2019, offering nuanced perspectives and analyses of the ever-changing relationship between the country and its surroundings. Naturally, it covers foreign policy, but it also encompasses defence policy and the quaint neutrality policy.”

Throughout the book, the descriptions of Sweden's policy choices are done in an impeccable way. These descriptions range from explaining how the unsuccessful Scandinavian defence union and post-war failure of the UN led to the policy of non-participation, to the decisions that steered the country into closer European collaboration and later into membership of the European Union. Throughout, the author is able to boil down complex decision-making processes to something palpable.

While impressively mastering the art of being informative and engaging at the same time, the book is missing a certain perspective on the present day. Not using the immense knowledge of foreign policy history to make sense of, and possibly explain, current events such as Sweden joining NATO, is a lost opportunity. I would have really loved to read the author's take on today's reality. I guess no historian is keen to predict the future, but what about using what we know about history to understand today? Isn't that the whole USP (Unique Selling Point) of studying history? Maybe I'm missing the point. Each chapter could have ended with a 'current perspective' paragraph. This would be compatible with the layout, as the focus of the book is mostly on

the twentieth century, especially on the years from 1970 onwards.

The author does share his own take on some parts, and has a strong voice throughout the book. His analyses are equally accurate – and I don't know how he does this because the areas covered are at times quite dry – as they are funny. Some examples are when he writes about Sweden's new security policy maxim and calls it 'newish'; when he describes how Sweden was once part of EU28 but then EU27 with a 'goodbye UK'; when he calls the intense first period in office for the foreign minister Ann Linde in 2020 a 'baptism of fire'; when he explains how economists jumped at the chance to criticise the Swedish welfare system and the 'demolition process' of it started in the early 1990s; or when he describes how the Swedish population was nowhere near as positive towards a EU membership as the current prime minister Bildt with the words '*they had quietly and reluctantly taken the ferry crossing to Europe*.'

The book is incredibly detailed, covering a large time period and range of events. I would strongly recommend it, especially to anyone interested in Sweden, history, foreign policy, or the thing we call society in general. And even if the author does not make an analysis of today, he makes sure that readers are capable of doing that by themselves. In a time where many things are uncertain, the focus is commonly placed on possible next steps and future developments. What will happen when Sweden joins NATO? Will Russia invade other countries? When will the war in Ukraine end? Thoughts like these make sense: we want to make sure, or at least create the feeling of making sure, that we will be safe. But simply looking forward, without taking the lessons from the past with us, is foolish. In order to prepare and strategically plan to guarantee a safe future – for all – it is absolutely necessary to understand and analyse the past.