

**ASSESSING ASYMMETRY IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS:  
US-SOUTH AFRICA RELATIONS: 1994-2008**

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY**

in the subject

**INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NOVEMBER 2010**

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## SUMMARY

When the new South African government took power in 1994, the United States (US) pictured a bright future with a strategic country. They envisioned a strong partnership in political, economic and security realms. Although the US has consistently labeled their bilateral relationship with South Africa as ‘excellent,’ government officials from both countries at the end of 2008 expressed concern about the perceived crisis that US-South African relations was in. Against this backdrop, this thesis explores the bilateral relationship between the US, a global power, and South Africa, a regional power, assessing the key issues from 1994-2008. This thesis attempts to achieve an understanding of the relationship by using a new paradigm developed by Professor Brantly Womack of the University of Virginia (US), entitled asymmetry theory. His theory, which was developed after decades of studying the political landscape between states in Southeast Asia, addresses the effects of national disparities on asymmetric bilateral relationships. This thesis breaks new ground by testing Womack’s asymmetry theory in relation to the US and South Africa, two countries located outside the continent of Asia. Moreover, this is the first study where the theory has been applied to a relationship between a global and regional power.

This thesis argues that there was a considerable downward swing in US-South African relations during the Bush Administration due to the confliction of several vital principles in each country’s foreign policy, the structural implications of asymmetry, and the lack of an institution where US and South African government officials could quickly communicate to clarify any disputes or misperceptions that may have arisen.

This thesis argues that the bilateral relationship has changed from normalization to normalcy throughout the time period although there are still significant hurdles to overcome in the future. Additionally, this thesis argues that the value of asymmetry theory has proven itself in its illumination of the dynamics of the relationship.

## **KEY TERMS**

International relations, foreign policy, United States, South Africa, asymmetry theory, diplomacy, political behavior, political analysis, presidency

## CURRICULUM VITAE

Scott T. Firsing, an American citizen and permanent resident of South Africa, is an international studies lecturer at Monash South Africa, a campus of Monash University Australia. Mr. Firsing is a graduate of Rutgers University and American Military University.

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## DECLARATION

I, *Scott T. Firsing*, declare that **Assessing Asymmetry in International Politics: US-South Africa Relations 1994-2008** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Signature

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Date



## LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It has been a great honor to write a thesis on a topic that I have such an immense interest in. Since the beginning of 2006, I have been away from a country that I dearly love and a country I am proud to call my home; the United States of America. The people of South Africa have been nothing but kind, considerate and supportive since day one.

To the hundreds of South Africans I have met over the past few years; a warm and sincere thank you. I truly appreciate your hospitality during the time I have already spent in your country. It has been a great experience and I am looking forward to even more great years in the future.

To my wife Rene. I don't know where I would be without you. Your support and dedication throughout this entire period has been beyond measure. It is only fitting that the day I submit this thesis is our five year wedding anniversary.

My greatest thanks to my promoters Dr. T Hoeane and J K Van Wyk for their advice and guidance. Your comments, suggestions and criticisms were extremely valuable.

I would furthermore like to thank all the people from the US Embassy in Pretoria and the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, who many assisted me on more than one occasion.

To everyone else who assisted me on this thesis in one way or another, thank you.

***Scott T. Firsing***  
***November 2010***

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABM	Anti Ballistic Missile
ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
ACOTA	Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance
ACRI	African Crisis Response Initiative
ACRF	African Crisis Response Force
AFRICOM	United States African Command
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
Amcham	American Chamber of Commerce
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
Armcor	Armaments Corporation of South Africa
AU	African Union
BCF	SA-US Bilateral Cooperation Forum
BDC	US-South Africa Business Development Committee
BEM	Big Emerging Market initiative (US)
BNC	US-South Africa Binational Commission
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, China
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence (US)
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs (SA)
DOD	Department of Defense (US)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry (SA)
EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
HRC	Human Rights Council
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBSA	India –Brazil –South Africa Dialogue Forum
ICC	International Criminal Court
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRPS	International Relations, Peace and Security cluster (SA)
KAS	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
MAGO	Muslims Against Global Oppression
MAIL	Muslims Against Illegitimate Leaders
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIA	National Intelligence Agency (SA)
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSA	National Security Agency (US)
NSC	National Security Council (US)
PAGAD	People Against Gangsterism and Drugs

PCFA	Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs (SA)
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (US)
SAAF	South African Air Force
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAIIA	South African Institute of International Affairs
SANDC	South African National Defence College
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
TIDCA	Trade, Investment and Development Cooperation Agreement
TIFA	Trade Investment Framework Agreement
TRIPs	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UNISA	University of South Africa
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USTR	United States Trade Representative
WCAR	World Conference Against Racism
WOT	United States-led War on Terrorism

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THIS THESIS**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION TO THIS THESIS**

## **1. Introduction**

This thesis attempts to contribute to the field of political science by analyzing United States-South Africa relations from 1994-2008 utilizing one of the newer theories in international relations known as asymmetry theory. Developed by University of Virginia [USA] professor Brantly Womack, asymmetry theory is based on the idea that a bilateral asymmetric relationship is not simply one in which each side brings vastly different capabilities and vulnerabilities to the negotiating table. This difference in capacity creates a difference in perspective. Overall, asymmetry theory has attempted to show that with different starting points, asymmetry can lead to a stability and normalcy that goes against current International Relations theories about asymmetric relationships between nations (Gungwu 2006).

The majority of Womack's work has focused on Southeast Asia. Therefore, this thesis is the first full length work using asymmetry theory to analyze the bilateral relationship between countries located outside of that region. Moreover, this thesis is the first study utilizing asymmetry theory that focuses on a global hegemon [the US] and a regional leader or regional hegemon [South Africa]. This will test the universal applicability of Womack's theory, as well as extend the academic knowledge base of the bilateral relationship between the two nations.

Since the 'South African Miracle' in April 1994, and more specifically since the attacks on the United States of America (US) on 11 September 2001 (hereafter 9/11) and the subsequent US policy, such as the US led war on terrorism (WOT), the majority of literary attention when dealing with US foreign policy towards Africa has focused on the entire continent or on regions such as the Horn of Africa. Sagala (2006:1) proclaims scholars who write on US interests in Africa as if Africa is one large country miss an important clue to understanding US interests in

Africa. The Institute for Security Studies (2005), one of South Africa's leading think tanks dealing with issues such as terrorism in Africa, is also quick to highlight the fact that most studies and articles fail to differentiate between countries on the continent - instead treating it as a land mass as opposed to 54 sovereign states. This is seen as one of the main fundamental shortcomings of the research done to date.

This failure to individually analyze is a prodigious mistake especially when dealing with a country of South Africa's caliber. Writers (Marais 1998; Cilliers 1999; Schoeman 2000; Gelb 2001; and Womack 2006b) who focus on South Africa's foreign policy have dictated that it is almost impossible to overstate South Africa's leadership role in Africa. Various factors such as South Africa's military and economic status have accounted for this position.

On 19 July 2007, former US Ambassador to South Africa Eric Bost delivered the fifth lecture of Diplo-Speak at the University of South Africa (UNISA) on the topic, "US Foreign Policy Priorities for Africa". Introducing Ambassador Bost, Principal and Vice Chancellor of UNISA, Professor Barney N. Pityana, reiterated the strategic importance of the relationship between the US and South Africa and that the depth of this complex relationship called for a serious and sober engagement by scholars and students of diplomacy (UNISA 2007). One of the main motivators for this work was to answer Professor Pityana's call and to test the author's hypothesis that South Africa is a crucial ally of the US and that greater future collaboration will be needed between the two nations to ensure regional and international stability.

## **2. Literature review**

Much of the work on US-South Africa relations emphasizes the apartheid period. With such a remarkable achievement by the people of South Africa and the wide variety of stories that goes with it, it is understandable why most literature focuses on this time period. However, it

also became clear that the majority of this literature centers on topics such as sociological issues of culture and racism. Nevertheless, there are a few key works on US-South Africa relations that focus on the 1980s through the transition period into the mid 1990s, and more importantly examine government-to-government relations and somewhat touch on perception.

Davies (2007) provides an in-depth study of the US policy of constructive engagement towards South Africa during the Reagan Administration and is one of the rare works that looks at the situation from both the US and South African perspective. Davies concludes that US policy towards South Africa was a Cold War driven policy, which allowed Washington to continue its important relationship with South Africa without appearing to endorse apartheid. Unfortunately, Davies time period of research ends in 1988, when former US President George HW Bush was elected.

Lyman (2002) offers an unexamined view of America's role in South Africa's transition phase, however this serves as his personal account while US Ambassador to South Africa from 1992 to 1995. Although useful in understanding his point of view, it fails to encompass the perceptions of other key individuals from both countries.

The studies that focus on US-South Africa relations during the post-apartheid era are few and far between. Hesse (2001) provides one of the rare full-length books on the topic, with emphasis on each country's African foreign policy. Moreover, Hesse's research is extremely useful due to his quoting of various newspapers (therefore capturing the perception of key foreign policy decision makers through interviews with journalists), published official documents, and academic journals that are no longer available. What Hesse's research fails to examine is the vital perceptions of the US State Department and the South African Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).



Hesse's research concludes in the beginning of 1998. Thereafter we find a significant gap in full-length studies that address US-South Africa relations. Any study that analyzes the bilateral relationship using theoretical pretenses is almost non-existent. With both South Africa joining the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as a non-permanent member, and the announcement of the new US African Command under the US Department of Defense (DOD) that is responsible for all 53 African countries, known as AFRICOM, saw a significant increase in literary attention towards the topic in 2007. Ploch (2008) writes a brief summary of US-South Africa relations that is useful in addressing some of the key issues, yet fails to provide any depth to help explain why certain incidents occurred or why the countries agree or disagree on certain issues. Underwood (2008) calls for the US to strengthen its relationship with the South Africa due to its influence in the region, but focuses mainly on AFRICOM, excluding other important topics.

### **3. Purpose and objectives**

The main objective of this thesis is to uncover and analyze the complex and asymmetric relationship between the US and South Africa from 1994 till 2008 and to assess what validity, if any, does asymmetry theory have in explaining seeming (or real) contradictions in this bilateral relationship.

This thesis discusses the interactions between the US and South Africa focusing on a wide range of foreign policy issues such as diplomacy and economics, but with a specific focus on issues of international security.

### **4. Approaches and methodology**

The methodological approach is guided by three major strategies: the use of secondary printed material, primary sources in terms of printed official material and hitherto unpublished

material and finally written and oral interviews. This triangulation of source material enables the author to verify information acquired through the various different sources.

Studying the documents obtained and assessing the information is the most obvious procedure along with interviewing the central players who have extensive knowledge of the foreign policy and practices of both countries. Overcoming the deficiencies of using document research, interviews were conducted with individuals in both their professional and personal capacity. Interviews with individuals such as government employees, acting in their professional capacity, are beneficial as it prompts them to respond to the questions raised as if it were normal policy statements so as to reduce the spectra of criticism. The advantage here is that it provides information that can be compared and contrasted to the information obtained from official printed material.

Most interviews conducted in both the US and South Africa were oral and face-to-face. They were semi-structured with the author having a list of questions and topics that needed to be covered during the conversation. Many of the vital questions remained the same, such as the person's thoughts on the overall bilateral relationship. However, later questions often varied depending on the individual's subject of expertise. Notes were taken during the interview and more thorough notes were written down directly after each interview. Qualitative questionnaires were also sent electronically when a personal interview was not possible. Although the information will necessarily be more limited, in many instances it was still very useful<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annexure A for an example of communication, Annexure B for a completed written questionnaire, Annexure C for a list of sample questions used for anonymous and academic sources and Annexure E for the full list of all interviewees.

Information was also obtained from discreet source enquiries<sup>2</sup>. The advantage and aim of using discreet source enquiries is it provided access to sensitive information that normally is not available in the public domain, which is of significance to this thesis.

Research was gathered from experts in many different fields whom had knowledge in the area. This included not only current and retired government and military personnel, but also non-governmental organization (NGO) employees, and professors from both the US and South Africa. Having different expert opinions and answers not only reduced the problem of unreliability, but in reality, validity was increased. The combination of the methods listed previously generated the information needed to thoroughly address the topic throughout the entire thesis.

## **5. Scope and limitations of the thesis**

This study serves as a basis for examining America's bilateral relationships with 'middle powers' and will more importantly serve as an additional guide to Womack's already completed work on asymmetry theory. Engaging in such an analysis will hopefully reveal some degree of predictability in states' actions along with understanding and appreciating the extent in which the US and other countries such as South Africa can forge beneficial and peaceful relations for both sides in the future.

To adequately discuss the topic, the time limit of this thesis is from the birth of the 'new' South Africa in 1994 till the end of 2008. The rationale is that the perceptions and major issues under discussion could be analyzed from the moment the African National Congress (ANC)-led government took power. Such a historical analysis will contribute to a better understanding of

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<sup>2</sup> All interviewees were informed prior to the interview, whether face to face or written/telephone questionnaire, of the author's work and his intention to use the information provided by the source. Moreover, they were asked if they wanted to maintain anonymous status in order to properly protect themselves due to the sensitive nature of some of the matters discussed (See Annexure A). These anonymous sources are listed throughout the thesis as Source One through Source Ten.

both countries perceptions of not only themselves, but of the other country as well. It is important to appreciate the framework that the ANC laid out from the very beginning in order to analyze the effects of US foreign policy on the country and their actions. Discovering their true actions and reactions to various major events will prove vital in assessing the relationship.

There are limitations of this study. Any author studying a country and its relationship with another by discussing the topic with the most relevant people involved would theoretically have to talk to hundreds of people from both America and South Africa. This is simply not possible due to monetary and time constraints, amongst other reasons. To overcome this, the author attempted to talk with a wide range of the highest level of government and non-governmental officials that he felt are the most pertinent to this thesis after reading dozens of articles and books on the subject and after preliminary discussions with certain individuals. However, instances arose where the author was denied an interview with extremely high-level government personnel such as American and South African presidents<sup>3</sup>. To overcome this, their speeches, interviews and other relevant documents were scrutinized in order for the author to better understand their perception on the country or a particular issue.

Using asymmetry theory as the theoretical choice also has its limitations; the most important being how new the theory is to the political science field. Unlike other political theories, like the Democratic Peace Theory<sup>4</sup>, which has been around for decades, asymmetry theory has rarely been tested and reviewed by other researchers. This means regardless of the outcome of the study, the theory will still need to be examined extensively by other political scientists in numerous bilateral and multilateral situations. In addition, asymmetry theory focuses

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<sup>3</sup> See Annexure D; response from the Presidency of South Africa. The author was never contacted again after the initial response.

<sup>4</sup> Democratic Peace Theory holds that democracies rarely, or never, go to war with each other. The philosophical idea goes back to Immanuel Kant in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Scientific evaluation of the theory began in 1960's.

heavily on qualitative research instead of quantitative. The author attempted to overcome this as much as possible by analyzing statistics such as United Nations (UN) voting records.

Another limitation foreseen is the reliance on only asymmetry theory, and not a mixture of International Relations theories. This can cause issues if the theory has certain elemental weaknesses or flaws. One anticipated shortcoming based on initial readings of the theory is the vast amount of attention focused on the asymmetric structure of the relationship, and not on the goals, beliefs, and identities of the State itself and the individuals who occupy foreign policy decision-making power positions. The author attempts to overcome this perceived weakness, by utilizing a similar approach used by many Constructivists<sup>5</sup> and Foreign Policy Analysts<sup>6</sup>, in order to make a substantial contribution to knowledge in the field.

## **6. Contribution of study**

There are several reasons why such a study is necessary. According to Womack (2006a:3), although questions of war and peace provide the strongest illustration of asymmetric relations, 'attention to a broad spectrum of relationships, especially in the current period of normalization, will facilitate both a well rounded view of the effects of asymmetry and also a better understanding of methods of managing asymmetric relations.' This thesis attempts to accomplish this feat, and at the same time will:

- Provide the first full length work using asymmetry theory to analyze the bilateral relationship between countries located outside of the Southeast Asia region.
- Supply the first study utilizing asymmetry theory that focuses on a global hegemon [the US] and a regional leader or regional hegemon [South Africa].

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<sup>5</sup> Constructivists typically examine state behavior in international relations in the context of state characteristics. This means that each state is unique and has certain characteristics that influence its foreign policy.

<sup>6</sup> Foreign Policy Analysis argues that occurrences between States are grounded in human decision makers, acting either alone or in groups.

- Grasp a better understanding of the power dynamics between the US and South Africa and its impact on the overall state of relations.
- Illuminate specific areas, whether political, economic, or cultural, that had a major effect on the general relationship.

Based on the literature review, this thesis will also fill a void by contributing a great deal more research and analysis that:

- Examines particular events that took place in US- South Africa relations from 1998 - 2008, where the literature is significantly lacking, which will assist in filling the gap in literary research and will assist future researchers.
- Looks specifically at the self-perceptions of both countries, as well as that of each other using theory to assist in this venture.
- Aims to analyze all of the important issues to show that agreements and disagreements regarding the key issues can be interrelated, thereby leading to an overall improvement or deterioration in the bilateral relationship.

## **7. Research questions and structure of study**

Keeping the abovementioned background and thoughts in mind, this thesis focuses on answering broad and issue based questions on the general bilateral relationship such as who played a large role in each country's foreign policy making and did it have an impact on US-South Africa relations during the time period? How has the relationship evolved or changed from 1994 to 2008? What were the main factors/issues involved in that process?

Moreover, it is important for this thesis to concentrate on asymmetry theory and answer the following questions:

Is the American-South African relationship part of the more general Western theories that assume that the more powerful dominate and the less powerful comply, or does it more closely resemble a typical asymmetric relationship as dictated by Womack's theory? Does asymmetry theory assist in understanding this bilateral relationship? How valid are the various aspects of Womack's asymmetry theory and does it prove useful in today's structure of international relations?

To answer these questions, this thesis is broken down into nine chapters.

## **Chapter two**

Here the discussion deals with Womack's asymmetry theory. This rough overview of the theory is generic and will articulate the basic essential components of asymmetry theory. The basic point is to display to the reader what Womack's theory does, what its value is, and how it compares to other International Relations theories. A detailed application of Womack's theory in relation to the US and South Africa will be provided in chapter eight.

## **Chapter three**

Chapter three entitled, 'Overview of US and South African Foreign Policy and Their Determinants' presents an overview of both countries' foreign policy and the individuals who make the decisions. It will apply a similar approach used by Foreign Policy Analysts, thus focusing on uncovering the foreign policy decision-makers, and their goals, beliefs, and perceptions. This breakdown will assist in later chapters when various issues will be examined from both the American and South African perspectives.

## **Chapters four-seven**

The purpose and goal of these four chapters are twofold. Firstly, the data gathered on the bilateral relationship during the time period is presented based on topic. This information is summarized and put through intense analysis. This enables us to determine the role perception played in the various events that took place along with factors such as identity, context and leadership.

Chapters four through seven discusses the most vital issues in the relationship during the time period, as determined through interviews and research. As Womack (2006a:4) approached his main work on China and Vietnam, it is ‘first necessary to consider the general conditions affecting the relationship before analyzing its development.’ These issues will be broken down into the following sections: Money and Power that focuses on economic and defense relations (chapter four); Allies and Enemies, which looks at the role other States played in the relationship such as Iran, Iraq, Israel, and Syria amongst others (chapter five); Global Fights analyzes the global war on terrorism and HIV/AIDS, as well as battles fought between the two countries’ in multilateral institutions (chapter six); Focus on Africa rounds off the overview by examining Zimbabwe, democracy promotion and China’s role on the continent (chapter seven).

This approach is an attempt for a comprehensive analysis of interactions between the US and South Africa rather than a narrower focused study that is constantly keeping Womack’s theoretical percepts in mind. Womack (2006a:3) makes an important point when he writes, ‘the most appropriate method for a new approach to a topic is to include all relevant phenomena. It might be more convenient to limit the scope of the study, but a limited scope would assume the irrelevance of factors beyond its domain of attention.’



## **Chapter eight**

In chapter eight, the thesis uses the topical analysis put forth in the previous four chapters to test the applicability of asymmetry theory using the general guidelines provided in chapter two. It will also provide a greater understanding of how well the asymmetric relationship was managed from 1994 to 2008.

## **Chapter nine**

The critical research questions are answered in this, the final chapter, and concluding remarks are made.

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## **2. OVERVIEW OF ASYMMETRY THEORY**

### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of Womack's asymmetry theory, which again, is a relatively new paradigm that addresses the effects of national disparities on international relations. Asymmetry theory argues that asymmetry inevitably creates differences in risk perception, attention and interactive behavior between states and which can lead to systemic misperception (Womack 2004:351). This synopsis is presented by examining various general outlines of Womack's theory (Womack 2001; 2003a; 2003b; 2003c; 2004; 2006a; 2006b; and 2008b). This summary will serve as a basis for analyzing the validity of his theory in chapters eight and nine.

### **2. Asymmetry theory**

Gungwu (2006) comments that some countries are empirically stronger than others, however modern theories of international politics, deriving from Westphalian normative assumptions of sovereign equality, tend to overlook this fact, treating asymmetry as a form of abnormal, remediable imbalance. Womack addresses this concern in his 'asymmetry theory.' The analytic approach of asymmetry theory is different from current Western international relations theories, and especially in America. However, it does have elements in common with most present day theories. For example, like classical realist theory, asymmetry theory assumes that capacities matter and that states attempt to maximize their interests (Womack 2006a:18). It is similar to constructivist theories in that it stresses perception and interaction. But despite the similarities with numerous theories, 'asymmetry theory is not a syncretic sampling of what appears attractive from each of the other theories, but rather a reinterpretation of international relations from a fundamentally different starting point (Womack 2006a:19).'

Almost all theories interpret asymmetry as an imbalance of capacities and power, a disequilibrium that creates either subordination or a competition for domination. Womack (2006a:20) asserts that states in an asymmetric relationship are usually viewed as similar actors, plus or minus the disparity in capacities, rather than as actors whose interests and perceptions are shaped by their relative positions. Womack gives the example of card players who might be dealt a bad hand at one time and a good hand at another. Womack (2006a: 20) makes the assumption that the interests and perceptions of states in international relations are indifferent to their relative positions, and that misperceptions result from individual mistakes rather than from relational structures. Even theories that deconstruct the state actor or pay special attention to ideology and values tend to do so without regard to the disparities in specific relationships.

Asymmetry theory also differs from most international relations theories in that it does not assume that relative power implies control. Womack (2006a:20) asks the relevant question: if the most powerful prevail, why are there so many weaker states still in existence, and why are the powerful so often frustrated? He found that most asymmetric relationships are negotiated and not simply dictated by the stronger side. Often neither side in an asymmetric relationship can secure its aims with available resources, which ends eventually in a stalemate.

Womack (2006b) explains there is a misunderstanding of regional powers such as South Africa due to the fact that South Africa is larger than its neighbors but not a contender for global power. Since the relationships between regional powers and their smaller neighbors are asymmetric, and in turn the relationships between regional and global powers are asymmetric, the problem of regional powers such as South Africa is especially complex and interesting.

Womack (2006b, 2010:79) found when looking at three regional powers, India, Brazil and South Africa that each had quite a different relationship to its regions. For example, India

and Brazil are considered central to their regions, according to Womack (2010:79), but they differ in their exposure to global powers and their relationships to their neighbors – Argentina for Brazil and Pakistan in the case of India. Nevertheless, all three are expanding both economic and political relationships outside of their regions, and require deference because it cannot allow negotiation to encourage challenges (Womack (2010:99).

Womack indicates that asymmetry theory is concerned with the reality of managing relationships between partners with unequal capacities and it does this by analyzing the relationship from both sides; in this case, from South Africa's point of view and America's point of view. Above all, asymmetry theory is a new paradigm that addresses the effects of national disparities on international relations. This asymmetry inevitably creates differences in risk perception, attention and interactive behavior between states that can lead to a vicious circle of systemic misperception (Womack 2004:351).

Womack's (2006a) first full-length book on his theory focused on the asymmetric relationship of China and Vietnam. The foreign relations between the two countries are foremost in his analysis, but Womack also incorporates ideology, development policy, culture and trade. Two of the earlier chapters sketch central features of how China and Vietnam view themselves and their relations with other nations. Ultimately he found that China and Vietnam experienced nine different types of possible asymmetric relations in its over thousand-year history. This history helped test and develop his theory by "[looking] in the historical record for its structure (Womack 2006a:95)."

Womack's (2010) second full-length book is actually twenty chapters broken down into four sections based on his essays written over the last decade. The first section queries some of the larger assumptions in current International Relation theories and introduces other ways of

looking at them. The second and third sections examine Chinese ideas of foreign relations. The last section focuses on China's relations with Asian States.

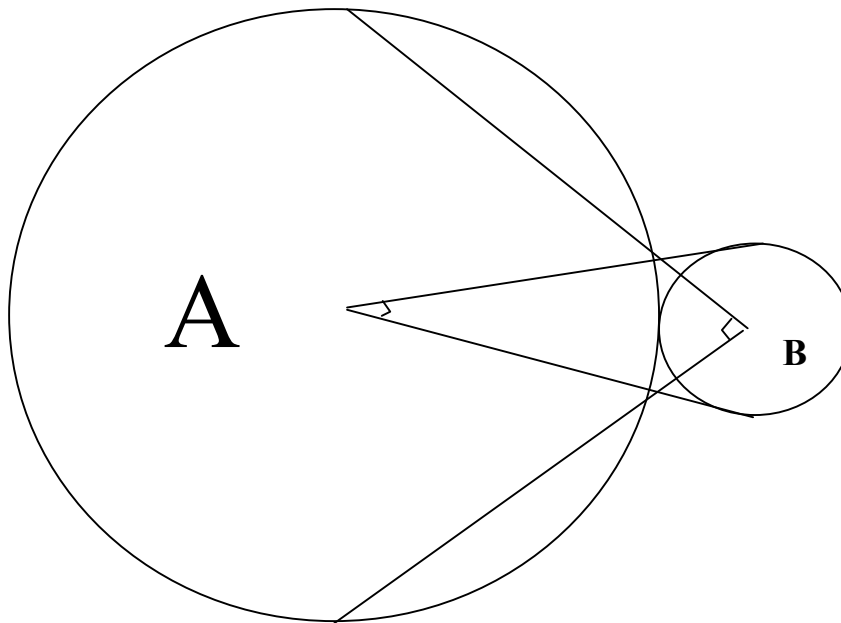
In order to address the issue of the asymmetric relationship between the US and South Africa, this thesis follows a similar structure to that of Womack's first 'asymmetry theory' book (Womack 2006a). This thesis uses the groundwork of his theory to help elucidate contradictions in the American/South African bilateral relationship.

### **3. The strong versus the weak**

According to Womack's theory, the weaker country in a bilateral relationship (B) should be attentive to what the more powerful (A) says and does, while (A) will not be as attentive to (B), or as quick to respond. A's leading position will not imply control and B's greater attention will not imply that A will not misinterpret their statements or actions. The leading position merely means that A's behavior will have a greater impact on B than B's behavior will on A because A is more important to B than B is to A.

The weaker country is simply a smaller part of the more powerful country's world than vice versa, and according to Womack (2006b:6) these different interests generate different perspectives. From B's point of view, A will have to be watched carefully because of the risks and opportunities it presents. From A's point of view, B will not by itself present much opportunity or risk compared to other relationships (Womack 2003b:92). Thus the relationship,  $A \Leftrightarrow B$ , in reality functions as two sub-relationships:  $A \rightarrow B$ , and  $B \rightarrow A$ . Each side will be most interested in how it is itself affected by the relationship, and—because of asymmetry—each will be affected differently (Womack 2006b:6).

**Figure 2.1- Asymmetric Attention**



Source: Adapted from Womack (2005:79)

This difference in perspective in turn will lead to a difference in perception. The larger country simply fills more of the smaller's horizon (Womack 2003b:96) so all in all, the relationship should be more vivid to the smaller. Figure 2.1 above provides visualization on that concept. B's entire leadership will most likely be attentive to the A and not just their experts who deal with A. As Womack (2003b: 96) puts it, B will sleep with its 'A eye' open due to the fact that B has more to gain or lose in the relationship. Therefore, B should tend to be too anxious and too suspicious of A. Womack states: 'Of course, any two countries, like any two individuals, can misperceive one another. However, in an asymmetric relationship, the possibility of structurally-based misperception is introduced;' (Womack 2006b:6) A should tend toward errors of inattention, and B should tend toward errors of over-attention.

The relationship between a global power and a regional power will be more complex given the diversity of regional situations and roles of regional powers. One feature that all regional leaders have in common is what Womack calls the 'centricity of attention.' South

Africa, for example, has an asymmetric bilateral relationship with its surrounding countries, that is SA>Botswana (i.e. SA has larger economy, military and so on, therefore it is more powerful than Botswana), SA>Mozambique, SA>Zimbabwe, SA>Angola and so on. In each of these bilateral relationships (i.e. SA>Botswana) the exposure and therefore the interest of South Africa's partner in the relationship (i.e. Botswana) is greater than vice versa. Furthermore, because all of the states are interacting, these relationships are not isolated from one another, and they form a pattern (Womack 2006b:10).

Womack (2006b:10) states that 'regional powers collectively constitute the next level of international nodes below the superpower, and in the context of multinodality the importance both of their regional leadership roles and of their direct interconnections is increasing.' Regions are becoming more open because of global interactions, but neighboring states remain the points of most intense contact.

#### **4. Inattention and overattention**

How much attention B should receive from the A is not an easy question to answer. Womack (2006a:81) points out that almost by definition, B is not, by itself, a security threat to A. Additionally, perception of threat is the most powerful motivator of attention, especially at the national level. If a threat is nonexistent then for the most part, only opportunities exist. However, the opportunities that B offers A would be also limited (Womack 2006a:81). Many of these specific opportunities would be perceived and pursued by specialized interests within A.

In an asymmetric relationship the less powerful are very aware of both the importance of the relationship and the fact that the more powerful plays the leading role (Womack 2006a:82). Therefore, the leadership of B should be more attentive to the bilateral diplomacy of the relationship, as touched on previously. B's leadership might also be tempted to ascertain what A



thinks and to uncover what they are 'up to.' In effect, B will be tempted to spend more effort trying to analyze A's politics vis-à-vis B than the A spends coming up with the policy, 'and this may lead to distortions of overattention (Womack 2006a:82).' The fact of vulnerability to A will lead B to be sensitive to all possibilities of A's actions. For example, if A abruptly changes its attitude or even general policies towards B that will affect the relationship, B must be prepared for the change.

B's leaders may be tempted to buffer its direct exposure to A's superior capacities by joining with the A in multilateral associations and agreements (Womack 2006a:83). According to Womack, such multilateral arrangements bind both sides and provide an indirect venue for both sides. A second method may be for the weaker to join with other small states on matters of common interest or in regional associations. The reason for this is because such associations provide a better public forum for B's concerns while at the same time they do not threaten A (Womack 2006a:83). A third method is for B to ally itself with another major power to challenge A. This can be a risky maneuver. B might intend the relationship with the other power to be partial or arms-length. However, the problem is that from the perspective of the A, B may immediately create a crisis. If A escalates its attempts to force B into line, B may perceive an even greater threat to its interests and even to its existence than the stronger side intends (Womack 2006b:7). B may panic, and try to balance against A by allying with its known adversaries. If this occurs, A might portray B as part of some larger problem and ignore the specific interests and concerns of B (Womack 2006b:7).

Climates of friendship or hostility make a greater difference regarding attentiveness in asymmetric relations than in symmetric ones. By 'climate' Womack (2003b:98) means the general framing of the relationship in contrast to the day to day interactions. If the overall

climate of the relationship is friendly, then the advantages of the relationship will be felt more acutely by B. Since B will be more attentive to A and more coordinated in its policy, it is better positioned to exploit the 'nooks and crannies' of the relationship (Womack 2003b:98). Even if A perceives unfairness, it will likely be slower to respond because of the lower urgency of the matter from its perspective and greater effort of coming to a decision. Moreover, it is likely that A, in normal times, will only be attentive to issues that have special interest to them. Furthermore, the general leadership of A will not have a high level of expertise on B, so when an issue arises their attention will be on that specific problem (Womack 2003b:98). They may even have to rely on expert advice.

## **5. Deference, autonomy and misperception**

Relative status and acknowledgment of this status also plays a large role in asymmetric relationships. The question of relative status is more painful for the weaker side (Womack 2003b:97). Status-equalizing aspects of the relationship, such as common memberships in multilateral organizations and exchanges of state visits are likely to be far more important to B than to A. Within the relationship, B will strive for acknowledgment of autonomy, as they feel that its interests could be transgressed by A's superior power (Womack 2003c:538). Beyond the bilateral relationship itself, B can increase its sense of relative status by enhancing its collective identity with other states. It can also decrease the sense of status disparity by calling attention to the problems and deficiencies of A.

On the other hand, A will expect deference from B, that is, acknowledgment of the real difference in power. If B does not respect the realities of the relationship, 'it might cause friction by demanding an illusory equality, or it might collude with other states' against A (Womack 2003c:538). When the asymmetric relationship becomes disturbed, A's attempts to force B's

deference can appear to threaten B's autonomy, and their attempt to assert autonomy can appear to deny the reality of A's power. If a crisis arises, A will be inclined to use its power to push B into line. In a crisis, B would tend to see the bullying by A as an existential threat.

Regional powers are larger than many but still very much smaller than a global power in today's complex regional or global environment. Therefore, according to Womack (2008b:20), 'it is not surprising that intermediate powers are the strongest supporters of multilateral legal regimes, because they are powerful enough to be part of the 'establishment' but vulnerable enough to want great powers to be bound by rules.' Due to the fact that B is only a regional power and cannot control the global matrix, it wants the global environment to be predictable (Womack 2006b:13). However, there will be a divide between the A's interest in global norms and those of B. A is not vulnerable to intervention, and therefore is not sensitive to the threat of intervention in the enforcement of global norms. Nevertheless, to the extent that global norms are procedural or require multilateral consensus, they restrict the options of the A (Womack 2006b:13). A thus 'prefers aggressive norms when they conform to its preferences, and avoids norms that impose restraints on its freedom of action (Womack 2006b:13).' On the other hand, because B can be the target of global intervention, it is less likely to support aggressive international norms, especially if these norms are the preferences of A. Furthermore, international norms and institutions that regularize international behavior and provide venues to seek multilateral resolutions are especially valuable to B (Womack 2006b:13).

Applying the general asymmetric pattern of autonomy and deference to the situation of global power-regional power, autonomy implies that A should acknowledge the special role of B in its region, while deference would imply that B would not use its regional leadership to challenge the authority of A (Womack 2006b:12). Just as in any bilateral relationship, autonomy

and deference are in a delicate balance. The particular interest that both sides have in reaching a common understanding on an issue is reinforced by their general interest in maintaining a cooperative relationship. However, according to Womack (2006b:13), 'differences of concrete interests and perspectives, domestic political pressures, and misperceptions can lead to conflicting positions.'

Security, or defending **one's** territory, is one of the more vital issues; if not the most vital issue in an asymmetric relationship. A will have security concerns relative to B despite its much larger size. If B commits to the deference in the asymmetric relationship, it should not have an inflated idea of its own strength or endanger A's security by alliances hostile to A and/or commit other 'foolhardy actions' (Womack 2001:136). Womack (2001:136) points out that deference is usually more evident in the restraint shown by smaller countries in their pursuit of activities that they know would be sensitive to the larger country.

For B, bilateral security will be an even larger concern. It requires that A clearly acknowledges the boundaries and autonomy of B. If A pushes against B's space, the disparity of capacity becomes a threat to B (Womack 2001:136). Therefore, according to asymmetry theory, B can be expected to be hypersensitive to gestures by A that implies a subversion of the barriers between them. Additionally, B would appreciate gestures that acknowledge sovereign autonomy. Again, the relationship between A's expectation of deference and B's expectation of acknowledgment is delicate, but not in itself contradictory (Womack 2001:136).

All of the 'pushing and shoving' in an asymmetric relationship can result in characteristic misperceptions. If B extrapolates from A's bullying behavior to what A could do to B, then B is likely to become paranoid toward A (Womack 2006:85). B will see each push or shove from A as a step toward war. On the other hand, if A extrapolates from B's assertive behavior, A will see

B as untrustworthy, which could ally with others and threaten A. Both these tendencies will reinforce one another (Womack 2006:85). Unfortunately, in asymmetric relations, actions based on the misperceptions of each relational direction are likely to amplify one another (Womack 2003b:103). A is likely to respond to B with more pushing until A perceives a crisis. If B affronts (to) A's dignity or its alliances with others provoke a crisis, there will be little that B can do to avoid conflict, according to Womack. In the meantime, A will likely push harder on B to get them back in line; however B's sense of vulnerability will become stronger and its defensive measures will become more desperate (Womack 2006a:85). The stronger the urge of each country to 'do something,' the more likely their action will be misinterpreted by the other. Thus the misperceptions and countermoves of both countries are likely to produce a vicious circle, a negative complementarity of action and reaction leading to conflict (Womack 2006a:85).

The structure of the asymmetric relationship itself induces a pattern of misperceptions. Many common sources of misperception described by Jervis (1968) are both present and relevant in asymmetric relationships such as Jervis's original fourteen hypotheses regarding misperception. For example, hypothesis five states: 'when messages are sent from a different background of concerns and information than is possessed by the receiver, misunderstanding is likely (Jervis 1968 in Womack 2003b:100).' This misunderstanding does occur in symmetric relations, 'but the hypothesis would predict constant misunderstandings in an asymmetric relationship. After all, each can only act toward the other from a particular set of relative capacities that is contrary to the relative capacities of the other (Womack 2003b:100).' The relation A.....B will be set by A's concerns; the relation B.....A will be set by B's concerns. Without symmetry, interactions between the two are as likely to produce hardened and negative stereotypes of the other as they are to produce better understanding (Womack 2003b:100).

Womack explains that in normal conditions one could appeal to the ‘golden rule’ of understanding and treating the other as oneself, but in an asymmetric relationship the golden rule is precisely the root of the problem. B perceives A as a huge B, fully engaged in the relationship but with greater power. A thinks of B as a tiny A, 'with distance and discretion in the relationship and yet choosing to behave in challenging ways (Womack 2003b:94).'

As modern theorists like Boulding (in Womack 2003b:113) have noted, ‘behavior depends on the image.’ Womack (2003b:113) states that if images are distorted by misperception then behavior will be correspondingly misdirected. It is unfortunate in asymmetric relations that actions based on the misperceptions of each relational direction are likely to amplify one another.

## **6. Managing the asymmetric relationship**

### **6.1 Routinization**

Womack (2008b:20) states the assumption in international relations theory is that only the relations of great powers are of interest, and that the weak are simply dominated. This indeed is not the case. Asymmetric relationships, which most relationships are, are usually negotiated rather than forced. This task is easier said than done due to issues discussed such as misperception and the climate of the relationship. Establishing and managing asymmetric relations is a very difficult task.

One of the most crucial tasks in managing asymmetric relations is preventing and containing vicious circles of misperception. Womack (2001:135) explains that prevention is accomplished by neutralizing issue areas. This can be through inclusive rhetoric, such as a country announcing in a public space (orally or in written format) that the bilateral relationship is a positive one or its stances on a certain topic with the other country are similar. If A’s public posture on an issue is perceived to exclude the interests of B or vice versa, then it is likely to

become politically charged and create a counter-posture. Inclusive rhetoric on a particular issue can create a sheltered space in the relationship where cooperation rather than conflict is expected (Womack 2001:135). This is especially true regarding inclusive rhetoric that both countries endorse.

Analogously, the routinization, or the discussion of a certain topic on a frequent basis, can transform an arena of potentially troublesome high politics into one of low politics. Womack uses border commissions as an example. According to Womack, 'routinization does not require that a problem be solved by the experts, but that frictions in an issue area be handled first in a non-confrontational arena in which continuity with the relevant policy history will be a prime desideratum (Womack 2001:135).' Inclusive rhetoric and issue routinization combined assist in the creation and expansion of a neutralized core in an asymmetric relationship. This neutral core then stabilizes the relationship by removing 'fuel from the fire' and by creating an interest in a smoothly running relationship that can buffer the nervousness of B and the inattention of A (Womack 2001:135).

## **6.2 Diplomatic ritual**

Diplomatic leadership plays a key role assisting in the managing of the asymmetric relationship. Asymmetry theory dictates that interactive behavior can ultimately make the difference between war or friendship, with numerous way-stations of alienation or cooperation in between (Womack 2003c:539). Diplomatic ritual is a main component in which states can strengthen expectations of mutual benefit (Womack 2001:135). The common pronouncements of mutual respect and the exchange of official visits help establish a bilateral political atmosphere in which alarmist interpretations of the other's behavior will appear to be less likely. Womack (2001:135) believes the most important aspect of visits of state is the acknowledgment of the

importance and stability of the bilateral relationship and not the specific problems solved and contracts won through the meetings. Personal friendship among leaders, although important, may only be a temporary advantage. Womack (2001:136) writes:

Personal friendship among leaders is offset on the one hand by the risk of them not liking each other and on the other by the inevitable change of personnel. Precisely because it does not stress concrete accomplishments or personal friendships, diplomatic ritual confirms the stabilizing effect of historical continuity by involving both leaderships in an explicit, though general, commitment to stability.

### **6.3 Neutralization**

There are numerous ways to neutralize the situation if an issue arises that can cause potential disagreement or conflict, hence Womack's term neutralization. However, Womack (2006b:8) highlights two key techniques. First, the positions of both countries should be articulated in inclusive terms. For example, it is important to convey the problem in the framework of common interest. If one country devises the issue in an exclusive manner, then the other country would be admitting guilt if it began serious negotiations. This situation is likely to deteriorate into a shouting match.

The second technique put forth by Womack (2006b:8) is to refer issues to expert commissions. The creation of a commission presupposes that both sides have legitimate interests. The major benefit of a bilateral commission is not problem solving, but to remove problematic issues from the spotlight of bilateral politics. Yet, 'of course no issue is permanently safe from the political spotlight,' according to Womack (2006b:8).

### **6.4 Societies and history**

Besides diplomatic ritual and techniques to neutralize the situation, general contact of the two societies, which could be business, educational, or cultural, spreads a sense of sympathy and links interests that rejects extreme stereotypes and discourages hostility. More importantly, 'if a normal relationship has existed for a long time, then common sense tells the participants that the



current crisis, like previous crises, can be resolved (Womack 2006b:8).’ Womack uses the long history of peaceful relations between Brazil and Argentina as an example. Due to this history, both sides expect the continued peaceful resolution of crises. This would not be the case with India and Pakistan who have experienced conflict for decades and makes both sides more likely to extrapolate the possible risks of a current crisis (Womack 2006b:8).

### **6.5 Friendship to hostility**

If the situation does convert from friendship to hostility, this transition is also affected by asymmetry. If A perceives an unwelcome or even hostile policy trend on B’s part, A will be likely to move slowly in changing general policy even as its own signals and responses become starker (Womack 2003b:99). Womack explains that the change of A’s posture from irritable friendship to hostility would usually require an incident that is taken as an affront to the A’s status, honor and power. A fitting example provided by Womack (2003b:99) is the seizure of American hostages in Iran<sup>7</sup>. The change to hostility may also arise due to the reframing of relations with B as part of some larger crisis worthy of A’s attention, such as the American claim of Cuban and Soviet presence in Nicaragua in the early 1980s (Womack 2003b:99).

Asymmetry theory stipulates that if the general threshold of hostility is crossed it will trigger a flood of hostile acts, and once A moves into a general climate of hostility toward B, it will be at least as difficult for A to make the transition in the other direction back to friendship. A may be frustrated in attempts to compel B’s deference, but it will feel no obligation to accept B’s autonomy. After all, Womack (2003b:99) articulates that even passive hostility will hurt B worse than it hurts A, and ‘the pain of one’s enemy is the most tangible measure of satisfaction in a non-threatening hostile relationship.’ More importantly, the anticipated gain from normalization

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<sup>7</sup> Also known as the Iran Hostage Crisis. A group of Islamist students and militants seized the US embassy in Tehran in support of the Iranian revolution. They took 52 Americans hostage for 444 days (04 November 1979 to 20 January 1981).

of bilateral relations with B may not be perceived as worth the effort and the domestic costs of a major policy change. Womack (2003b:99) cites US relations with Iran under the Clinton Administration, which drifted toward and away from normalization several times, as a typical example<sup>8</sup>.

The various points of transition from friendship to hostility are not going to be prominent from B's perspective because they are always vulnerable to A's raw capacity. B's overall attitude toward A will likely be sensitive to small changes in the tension of the relationship and B will begin preparing for hostility with A long before B would finally declare hostility (Womack 2003b:99). Prior to hostility being declared, B's aggressive style may lead to relative gains with A. Rightfully so, they would likely continue probing, but if B crosses the line and A changes its general posture, then that action cannot be undone. Likewise, in a climate of hostility B could be expected to be more motivated and alert to signaling for limitations in mutual threat and eventually for normalization (Womack 2003b:100).

## **7. Perceived limitations of asymmetry theory**

Asymmetry theory encompasses cultural factors including the importance of two countries having similar or connected societies or history. It also touches on interaction between governments and its importance in managing the relationship such as 'diplomatic ritual.' These theoretical components will undoubtedly prove useful in this study. However, the author assumes that a relationship varies not only due to misperceptions based on asymmetry, but also due to simple misunderstandings of the perceptual aspects of a country's foreign policy and/or the individuals making the decisions. This is not only the perception one State has of another, but also the perception of itself. This appears to be a main limitation of asymmetry theory. If one is

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<sup>8</sup> One such incident includes President Clinton ordering a total embargo on dealings with Iran by US companies in 1995.

not familiar with concrete topical stances or beliefs, or that of its leaders, it is believed that this would influence the relationship no matter how asymmetric it is.

As mentioned earlier, asymmetry theory is a relatively new paradigm in International Relations. Womack has published two full-length books on the theory (2006a and 2010) with both focusing on Asia. It was found that most critiques of Womack's work come in the form of book reviews. Wah (2008:469) found the model of asymmetry an 'extremely informative and sophisticated approach, offering insightful perspectives for understanding a puzzling diplomatic relationship.' Kerkvliet (2007) found his approach 'immensely impressive are Womack's adroit synthesis and clear analysis.' Anderson (2006) also believes asymmetry theory provides clarity, but that "the application of a single 'internal asymmetry' model from the first century to the tenth century seems problematic, given the shifting regional spheres of political influence.' Therefore, it appears the academics that have read his work share the opinion that the theory helps researchers better understand relationships, but there are some foreseen problems.

Unfortunately, there has been limited work exclusively focused on asymmetry theory besides Womack's previous ten years of research and writing. Bai (2006), who focused on Sino-Indian relations, used asymmetry theory to help illuminate parts of the bilateral relationship. A March 2011 conference paper presented by Thayer (2011) on China and Vietnam employed asymmetry theory to assist in the examination of key bilateral and multilateral mechanisms that help manage Sino-Vietnamese relations.

All subsequent reviews and literature on asymmetry theory, although limited, make known that Womack's work is useful. However, due to the limited response and lack of further research, especially on other parts of the world such as South America and Europe, the theory's status could be classified in the International Relations community as 'relatively new and

unknown.’ It is important to remember that only a few years have passed since asymmetry theory’s formation. It is likely that more studies in the future, similar to this thesis, will determine if the theory will one day expand to become ‘accepted’ in the field or not.

## **8. Summary**

This chapter has elucidated that all disparities in this asymmetric relationship are in the stronger **countries’** favor. Additionally, asymmetry theory proposes that the disparities between states can create fundamental differences of perspective between the stronger and weaker country in a bilateral relationship. These differences can produce misperceptions of the other’s intentions, which can lead to a vicious circle of misunderstandings that can culminate in conflict.

Moreover, the theory also suggests that the structure of the international matrix is not rigid, as a theory of hierarchy based the stronger dominating the weak, nor is it simply mastering the art of diplomacy. The structure is resilient, according to Womack, because domination difficult to sustain, and the weak must learn to cope with their exposure to the greater capabilities of others.

Asymmetry theory points out the importance of location in an asymmetric relationship between a regional and global power. Regional powers are constantly bombarded with frequent interaction with countries in their regions, but at the same time are involved in more distant levels of interaction that may be beyond their control. Furthermore, the theory dictates that a regional power is less likely than a global power to envision that a unilateral action will solve its problems. In summary, the relationship according to asymmetry theory is negotiated.

Although it appears that asymmetry theory provides numerous tools and devices to dissect the subject matter, the candidate is also aware of its weaknesses. Therefore, the next

chapter takes a necessary step back to examine both America's and South Africa's foreign policy and the individuals' involved, before proceeding to look at the bilateral relationship itself.

### **CHAPTER THREE: OVERVIEW OF US AND SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THEIR DETERMINANTS**

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### **3. OVERVIEW OF US AND SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THEIR DETERMINANTS**

#### **1. Introduction**

In order to write a thesis on the relations between the US and South Africa, special attention needs to focus on how each state perceives themselves in the geo-political arena. This is a requirement due to the assumed limitation of asymmetry theory and the desire to use more than one structure in order to provide a complete examination of the subject matter.

In line with this thought, the thesis will provide a brief synopsis of both countries' foreign policy, as well as an abstract of the people that helped shape US and South African foreign policy during the relevant time period. This is a similar approach to that of Foreign Policy Analysis and Constructivism. It will not only address the perceived limitation, but will also ensure that the reader is fully acquainted with the necessary information before the evolution of the bilateral relationship is thoroughly drawn out in detail.

It is important to remember that asymmetry theory assumes the basic idea of classic realist theory that capacities matter and that states attempt to maximize their interests. It is also important to note that issues surrounding multilateralism, and topics specifically related to the bilateral relationship (i.e. US foreign policy towards Africa) are omitted or are only briefly discussed in this chapter. Later chapters will discuss these topics in much more detail, which is deemed necessary due to their relational importance.

#### **2. Overview of US foreign policy**

One of the first books dealing with America's self-perception and its influence on its foreign policy was Robert Osgood's (1953) influential work *Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign Relations*. Osgood reached the conclusion that there are a variety of factors influencing

the way in which the US defines its foreign policies, national self-interest being only one among them. Osgood suggested, in short, that in the creation of American foreign policy, ideas, values, and perceptions matter.

According to training documents provided to new members of the US State Department, and subsequently provided to the author by Source Four (2008), the purpose or ‘mission statement’ of US foreign policy is to create a more secure, prosperous and democratic world for the benefit of the American people. This policy encompasses various strategic goals/national interests such as:

- Ensuring the physical security of the nation by building and maintaining alliances and defusing and preventing crises;
- Advancing the economic interests of the American people by promoting free trade and assisting American business;
- Promoting democratic values and respect for human rights; and
- Providing protection and services to Americans abroad and controlling access to the United States.

Undoubtedly these four bullet points do not contain all of America’s national interests. In fact, the term *national interest* itself is a very vague term. When it comes to current US foreign policy, the US State Department divides America’s foreign policy into four broad categories of interests: (1) defense of the homeland; (2) economic well-being; (3) favorable world order; and (4) protection/promotion of core values (Document provided by Source Four 2008). However, often ‘national interest’ is a concept used to justify policy preferences. Ultimately, according to the State Department training document, ‘national interest’ is defined as whatever policy makers say it is under the circumstance at any given time.



These policy makers can and are influenced by a variety of sources. Most commonly it is by the political and economic power elite<sup>9</sup> that are widely understood to be predominant within American society, although their influence varies depending on the particular issue. Cunningham (2004:561) acknowledges this class-dominated view of US power and politics and suggests it should include a full range of military interests along with the economic, corporate and political. Furthermore, Professor Stephen Walt discusses a number of cases where the very powerful impact of some foreign policy oriented lobby groups<sup>10</sup> have led the US to adopt policies that were not in its interest (Kreiser 2005). Walt regards the impact of the Israel lobby as the most important. He argues that:

because American policy towards Israel and towards the Middle East, and American policy with respect to the Israel/Palestine conflict has such powerful repercussions in helping generate anti-American terrorism in the region, in helping undermine our stance with lots of other countries as well, and perhaps most tragically in my view, also leading the United States to undertake a number of policies which have not been in Israel's long-run interest, where in a sense we have acted as the "enabler" (Kreiser 2005).

Only a select few powerful elites are responsible for the final decision taken in US foreign policy. They are often influenced from a variety of sources such as the Israel Lobby. Both the elites and their influencers can vary from presidency to presidency. For example, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told the UN Security Council on 24 January 2000: 'Let me be clear. Only the President and the Executive Branch can speak for the United States (Linzer 2000 in Healy 2000:3).' That was the Clinton Administration's view of the president's role in the foreign relations arena: the Executive Branch alone determines America's international commitments and diplomatic posture with respect to other nations. And, although

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<sup>9</sup> Power elite in political theory can be summarized as a small group of people who control a vast amount of privilege, money, and access to decision-making of worldwide consequences. Charles Wright Mills, an American sociologist, originally coined the term in 1956.

<sup>10</sup> Lobby groups or interest groups are groups who are determined to encourage or prevent changes in public policy. They are sometimes also seen as another means to channel Americans' concerns to policy makers and administrators.

dissenting views from particular senators or executives in large multinational corporations are perhaps to be tolerated, those views certainly can have no impact on the president's unilateral authority to speak for the US (Healy 2000:3). Bush was also influenced by certain political and economic interests similar to Clinton, but as Cunningham (2004:561) argues, an aggressive, militaristic, imperialistic bloc predominated within the power elite of the Bush Administration and its allies.

Examining American written documents, and in theory, the US Constitution divides the foreign policy powers between the President and Congress. In reality, this is not in a definitive manner. One of the more significant powers bestowed on is found in Article II, which makes the President the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Archives 2009). However, Congress has certain other exclusive powers, such as the ability to declare war and appropriate money to support the war effort.

Whether Congress sides with the President on certain issues depends of factors such as party politics. The public plays a role as well. When the public disapproves of the President, members of the House and Senate tend to distance themselves from the President and his agenda. If the elected official is seen siding with an unpopular President, their constituents might not re-elect them.

Another difficulty in the division of powers relating to foreign policy is whereas only Congress may create legislation, it is difficult for them to pass a bill without the President's approval. When Congress passes a bill, it is sent to the White House. The President then has three options: sign the bill into law, veto the bill, or do nothing. If the President does veto a certain bill, Congress can override that decision with two-thirds majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Perhaps most critically, as the head of the executive branch the president appoints ambassadors and ministers, which is subject to confirmation by the Senate. He also receives foreign ambassadors and other officials. The President must also appoint the top officials for all of the federal agencies and his staff of aides, advisers, and assistants (no Senate approval required). In addition, the US constitution gives the President the ability to withhold information from the public, Congress, and the courts in matters of national security, known as executive privilege.

It might appear that the powers of Congress are more dominant when reading the US Constitution, but the reality is the president's power has grown in importance due to the everyday need for quick responses to foreign threats and due to the many-headed nature of Congress. This makes the President, and several key personnel around him, very powerful people when it comes to US foreign policy.

### **3. William J. Clinton: 1994-2001**

After Clinton's presidential victory in 1992, he began concerned with the fact that he would have to spend too much time on foreign policy, which is something he disapproved of. Clinton was more concerned with domestic issues than with international politics, as he was in the past. His most pressing task, as he perceived it (Cox et al 2000:223), was to build upon and extend his base of support at home. He recognized the fact that the American people knew the US was the only superpower with no remaining threat from the USSR's successor state, Russia, therefore they felt priority should be given to problems **within America's borders**. In addition, the Administration was keen on avoiding any unnecessary commitments, which included military casualties in conflicts in what seemed to be faraway places in the minds of the American public like Somalia. As Cox et al (2000:223) describes in great depth, always sensitive to public

opinion and determined not to sacrifice his presidency on the altar of foreign wars, Clinton's foreign policy inclinations were from the outset extraordinarily cautious, even minimalist.

In October 1993, the then Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake were on the verge of despair when in a memo they 'urged the president to give them one hour a week for the discussion of foreign affairs.' Clinton agreed, with the qualification 'when possible (Liber 1997:13 in David 2003:5).' 'Foreign policy is not what I came here to do,' he stated (Berman 2001:35 in David 2003:5).

Clinton's Vice President Al Gore was one of his (Clinton's) closest advisers on foreign policy; if not the closest in the entire Administration (Tumulty 1999). Secretary of State Christopher, who organized the vice-presidential search during Clinton's original campaign, states Gore's expertise on foreign policy was a major reason why he ended up on the ticket. Records indicate that Gore came from the hawkish wing of his party, having broken with most Democrats to vote in favor of the Gulf War of 1990/1991 (Tumulty 1999).

'Clinton consulted with him [Gore] at every turn,' Christopher recalls. 'The Vice President was usually the last person he talked to before reaching a foreign policy decision,' which is not a bad place to be when you are trying to persuade the ever persuadable Clinton, according to Christopher (Tumulty 1999). Bill Richardson, a former Energy Secretary and UN Ambassador said: 'He [Gore] comes in at the end, summarizes, and moves the President his way (Tumulty 1999).'

Several personnel changes took place during Clinton's second term. Madeleine Albright took over as Secretary of State with Senator William Cohen becoming Secretary of Defense. National Security Adviser Lake was replaced by his deputy Sandy Berger in early 1997. replaced. According to David (2004:14), by Clinton involving himself in the process and

changing his foreign policy team he changed the course of his presidency. Gore, however, continued to be a large presence in the foreign policy realm. 'Gore sometimes filled the traditional operational roles of the president, the secretary of state, and the national security adviser', writes Kengor (1997:26 in David 2004:15). It is reported that Clinton utilized the National Security Council<sup>11</sup> (NSC) to much more of an extent during his second term although it was undoubtedly an important instrument of presidential policy coordination throughout the full eight years of his presidency. David (2004:14) explains that it took Clinton time to see the benefits of using the NSC to shape policy. When he did, the NSC became instrumental in improving his Administration's efficiency and the message they wanted to send. At the end of his second term, the NSC employed more than a hundred 'substantive professionals' involved in policy-making.

Retrospectively, Clinton knew that America could not be everything to everyone. Proponents of the Clinton Administration's foreign policy like Walt (2000) argue that even faced with a partisan, isolationist Republican Congress and a disinterested American public, Clinton managed to engage Russia and China, fight nuclear proliferation, liberalize world trade, and save lives in Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. The Clinton Administration also saw definite advantages in supporting the cause of democracy. Cox (2000) argues that 'Clinton was hardly a liberal Rambo in search of new frontiers to conquer.' Cox maintains that Clinton always viewed democracy promotion as a policy instrument to advance American power rather than as a moral duty. 'Thus, if he supported the cause of democracy, he did not do so for classically liberal reasons, but because he felt this supported US national security and America's economic goals in the wider

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<sup>11</sup> The NSC is the forum used by the President for considering national security and international affairs matters. Members of the NSC usually consist of senior advisers and cabinet officials. It is an official part of the Executive Branch of the US.

international system (Cox 2000).’ Clinton strongly believed that US security and strength was dependent upon its presence in the global economy.

The economic success of Clinton’s time in office is very difficult to argue with. The Clinton Administration Cabinet (2001) reports that opening global markets to American goods, as well as providing leadership on globalization was a priority for the White House at the time. Clinton grew US exports through nearly 300 free and fair trade agreements, which included the ratification of the North America Free Trade Agreement in 1993. Between 1992 and 2000, American exports of goods and services grew by seventy-four percent, or nearly US\$500 billion (The Clinton Administration Cabinet, 2001).

What can also hardly be argued with is the fact that Clinton was a first-class politician. He was an outstanding public communicator who possessed of impressive political skills, the ability to adapt policies, an understanding of complexity, and sheer intelligence (David 2003:11). Nevertheless, was he too political<sup>12</sup>? Naim (1998:35) writes:

Accusing any president of being too political is like criticizing a ballerina for being too skinny. It comes with the job, the training, and, perhaps, the genes. But just as ballerinas can become dangerously thin, presidents can take the political nature of their jobs too far.

After analyzing Clinton's presidency, it appears two primary factors affected his foreign policy. First, Clinton was too keen to let domestic influences affect his foreign policy focus. Even centrists found him wanting, deriding his foreign policy as 'social work' that is too easily swayed by ethnic lobbies, public opinion polls, and media buzz (Walt 2000). This notion of pleasing Americans gave what some people refer to as Clinton’s flexibility. According to Crabb, Saredidine and Antizzo (2001:128), Clinton's pragmatic approach allowed for contradictory

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<sup>12</sup> In the American context, being too political has a negative connotation. This is different in the South African sense of the word, where being ‘political’ is expected of their Presidents and is considered a ‘positive’ trait or acceptable.

policies, which led him to pick and choose issues and selectively focus on those which would yield the biggest domestic payoff. Additionally, Clinton placed a large emphasis on political calculations. Berke and Stevenson (1997) in the *New York Times* reports that even 'senior [Administration] officials concede that political considerations often eclipse policy commitments' - a perception shared by some of the president's peers. As reported by CNN, former Canadian Prime Minister, Jean Chretien, told two fellow prime ministers that Clinton's commitment to NATO expansion had less to do with reasons of state than 'short-term political reasons, to win elections (Naim 1998:35).'

Clinton also avoided unnecessary conflict within his Administration and with Congress by reconciling positions. 'The President is quite skillful at discarding one identity for its opposite,' Republican Senator and Vietnam War veteran John McCain aptly observed, acknowledging 'the astonishing ease with which [Clinton] appropriates the arguments of his critics (McCain 1996:20).' The downside to this approach was a certain lack of consistency and cogency in priorities, which were constantly shifting. This led to Clinton's foreign policy being viewed as an unwillingness to make clear choices or to provide a coherent vision. According to the results of a study by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, most opinion leaders identified a lack of direction as the president's greatest failing in handling US relations abroad (Naim 1998:35).

The second factor on Clinton's foreign policy and which also contributed to the perceived sporadic nature was the weak NSC system. According to Colin Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, NSC meetings 'meandered like graduate-student bull sessions'<sup>13</sup> (Hyland

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<sup>13</sup> For Americans, it is common practice for graduate students to get together in small groups (usually over coffee or alcoholic beverages and typically at night) to discuss or debate certain topics of interest such as politics or professors. They usually end up with various people voicing differences of opinion, but with nothing really getting accomplished.

1996:70).’ Although the NSC system and effectiveness improved over time, it also contributed to perception of a sporadic foreign policy due to the various different beliefs and perceptions of its dozens of members.

#### **4. George W. Bush: 2001-2008**

The tragic events of 9/11 put in motion a monumental change in American foreign policy. The events of that day affected all Americans, especially the individuals who drove US foreign policy at the time. The vulnerability felt from 9/11 seem to reawaken this sense of power in America (Gordon 2006). Wickham (2003) writes that the psychological shock of America's vulnerability began intense national introspection and profound change to self-perceptions.

The event greatly affected President Bush and the key personnel in his Administration who played a strong role in the foreign policy decisions. In times of national insecurity, the normal process of making foreign policy tilts toward presidential power, which gives the individuals closest to the President immense power. There was no shortage of people who would be classified under the neoconservative<sup>14</sup> category in Bush's first term as president. This list included Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, and Undersecretary of State John Bolton who also later served as the US Ambassador to the UN. These gentlemen all believed in the idea of promotion of democracy in other countries. Some of the other fundamental players included Vice President Dick Cheney, who is considered one of the most powerful vice presidents in US history. Cheney, having played an instrumental role in everything from highlighting the importance of energy resources to expanding presidential war powers, was closely aligned with the neoconservative political faction. Cheney, along with former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, supported advocacy

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<sup>14</sup> Neoconservatives in regards to foreign policy are individuals who usually define national interests to include ideological interests. Historically these were individuals who supported a militant anticommunism. A more current example would be the belief in using American economic and military power to bring democracy to other countries.



efforts to invade Iraq long before the 9/11 terror attacks occurred (Lobe 2005). After 9/11, the vice president and his coterie of neoconservative advisers (sometimes termed a "cabal") helped implement an aggressive WOT that had ousting Saddam Hussein from power as its main priority.

Boot (2005) feels that the emergence of neoconservative thinking is very significant and that neoconservatives combine the better of the two dominant strains of US foreign policy thinking: Wilsonian idealism<sup>15</sup> and Kissingerian realpolitik<sup>16</sup>. Boot (2005) writes: 'they have Wilson's devotion to promoting democracy while at the same time recognizing as Wilson did not – that this often requires force and that the US cannot rely on international treaties alone. Many presidents have embodied this thinking: both Roosevelts, Truman, Reagan, George W. Bush.'

Cheney, and others close to Bush, did play a substantial role in foreign policy decisions, but as Daalder and Lindsay (2003:199) assert, one must dismiss the notion that Bush was a mere tool in the hands of his advisers. On the contrary, he was very much his own man. He had strong beliefs—based on gut reactions rather than on knowledge. As Bush said: 'I don't spend a lot of time theorizing and agonizing. I get things done (Daalder & Lindsay 2003:199).' This is a very strong contrast compared to Clinton.

Many analysts feel that the assumptions underlying Bush's foreign policy are those of the 'realist' school: the world is a dangerous place made up of nation-states pursuing their own interests. What counts the most in the international arena is power with emphasis on military power and the will to use it. It is believed that multilateral agreements often hold little clout

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<sup>15</sup> Wilsonian idealism is the term applied to the foreign policy of Woodrow Wilson, U.S. president during the early twentieth century. It particularly emphasized the ideal of collective security and peace, but also emphasized American exceptionalism and the spreading of its ideals, such as democracy.

<sup>16</sup> Kissingerian realpolitik is a political theory focusing on power and not on morals or principles. Named after former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger under President Richard Nixon who first formally introduced it to the White House, it promotes the most practical means of securing national interests.

because they constrain the power of the US. Daalder and Lindsay (2003) provide evidence of the rejection of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change and the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the abrogation of the Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty to support this argument.

Overall Jervis (2003) writes that the Bush Doctrine had four elements:

A strong belief in the importance of a state's domestic regime in determining its foreign policy and the related judgment that this is an opportune time to transform international politics; the perception of great threats that can be defeated only by new and vigorous policies, most notably preventive war; a willingness to act unilaterally when necessary; and, as both a cause and a summary of these beliefs, an overriding sense that peace and stability require the United States to assert its primacy in world politics.

Asserting America's power for Bush not only meant militarily, but economically as well. He was labeled a free-market conservative and continued Clinton's free trade system. He signed several bilateral trade agreements, as well as multilateral agreements via the World Trade Organization. Bush's main economic down fall was his spending. The total American debt ballooned from US\$5.6 to US\$10.7 trillion Dollars during his presidency (US Department of Treasury, 2011).

In the end, former senior US officials in private expressed anger, denounced the 'cabals' and had deep contempt for the White House (Golub 2007). A former official of the NSC compared the President and his staff to the Corleone mafia family in *The Godfather* (Golub 2007). An unidentified senior foreign policy expert said: 'Due to an incompetent, arrogant and corrupt clique we are about to lose our hegemonic position in the Middle East and Gulf.' 'The White House has broken the army and trampled its honor,' added a Republican senator and former Vietnam veteran (Golub 2007).

It has been uncovered here that the President has substantial power when it comes to the world of US foreign policy. However, he or she will typically maintain or uphold America's strategic goals and national interests. It is the latter that the President has immense control over.

Often he or she will dictate what these interests actually are. The President himself and his closest advisers become very powerful people because of this fact.

The information previously presented also contributes to the thesis by depicting some of the more influential foreign policy personnel in both the Clinton and Bush Administrations. This will add value to the thesis in later chapters when it is determined who the major players in the US-South Africa bilateral relationship were during the same time period.

## **5. Overview of South African foreign policy**

The West pondered even prior to 1994 if the new South African government, given the ANC's more leftist ideological stance<sup>17</sup>, would align itself with the West or the rest of Africa. Both President Mandela (1993) and his Deputy President Mbeki (1994 and 1996) were clear on their foreign policy orientation and the roles they envisaged for South Africa. Both illustrated that Pretoria **felt** a great responsibility and loyalty towards Africa with a particular focus on the Southern African region. Other writers on the topic such as Carlsnaes and Nel (2006:18) maintain that the greatest feature and strength of the country's foreign policy has been its identification and engagement with the rest of continent and with issues important to the Africa's leaders and its citizens. A 1994 article by Mandela entitled 'The Future of South Africa' further displays South Africa's leaning towards Africa:

South Africa cannot escape its African destiny. If we do not devote our energies to this continent, we too could fall victim to the forces that have brought ruin to its various parts. [...]Southern Africa commands a special priority in our foreign policy. We are inextricably part of southern Africa and our destiny is linked to that of a region, which is much more than a mere geographical concept (Mandela 1994).

Since 1994, South Africa has struggled to balance this alignment with the rest of Africa along with serving as the 'gateway' on the continent between the North and South. In a 1997

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<sup>17</sup> Your ideological stance is where your beliefs lie on the political spectrum. According to the simplest international spectrum, the left commonly refers to socialism or communism, and the right is associated with conservatism.

speech to the DFA, Mbeki referred to the need for South Africa to 'walk on two legs' in its foreign policy, to cultivate strong relations with the 'South,' as well as strategic relations with the industrialized countries of the North (Mbeki 1997).

South Africa has a desire to represent Africa to the western world. This can be seen through programs such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the G-8 Africa Action Plan. South Africa wants to be viewed by the rest of the Southern Africa neighborhood as simply part of the group; however they are the leader and promoter of a stable, prosperous and democratic Africa, which in turn carries certain roles and responsibilities. Moreover, they have tried to align themselves more closely with the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China), which provides them with more leverage with the West as their influence on the global stage rises. At the same time, they are constantly trying to avoid creating the perception of being the deciding influence on African affairs or as former Director-General of Foreign Affairs Dusty Evans nearly said and then joked about in 1996: 'we don't want to be the US of Africa (McNeil 1997a).' South Africa's preference for multilateralism is also a testament of this.

This has often put South Africa in an uncomfortable position. The 1996 DFA Discussion Document captures this feeling of their role in global affairs:

The International Community is expecting South Africa to assume an important role in some organisations and there is the perception that South Africa has the necessary power, capacity and prestige to fulfill this role. The country is expected to play a bridging role in ensuring that North-South relations are non-antagonistic and are more equitable (DFA 1996).

Inside South Africa, the ANC continues to maintain a strong grip on the reins of power with its leadership support coalition and the overall immense strength of the Tripartite Alliance: the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African

Communist Party (SACP). In the beginning of 2009, the ANC held 293 of the 400 seats in South Africa's National Assembly (Parliament of South Africa 2009).

Examining South African foreign policy during the respective time period, with a predominant focus on the Mbeki era, it becomes clear that the world of foreign policy making in South Africa is extremely small. It is mostly limited to a minuet group of government personnel, but does include the academic and business community to a small extent. For the most part, the country's general public has no input when it comes to issues outside of their border.

The 1993 ANC discussion document entitled 'Foreign Policy in a Democratic South Africa' further raised the concept that foreign policy would belong to the South African people. However, since 1994 there has been tension, misunderstanding and downright exclusions in the formulating and implementation of South African foreign policy. Ironically, Philip Nel, Jo-Ansie van Wyk and Karen Johnsen (2004:48) found that public participation in foreign policy making in South Africa declined since 1996 despite the ANC's commitment to institutionalize it among others through a vibrant parliamentary committee system. By in large there are three main actors that deal with the foreign policy: Presidency/Deputy Presidency; the DFA and the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs (PCFA).

The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) in partnership with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in South Africa have in recent years produced two studies examining post apartheid South African foreign policy. The first, 'Apartheid Past, Renaissance Future' (SAIIA 2004), is a collection of scholarly analyses of aspects of foreign policy over the past decade. The second was more concerned with the formulation of foreign policy and examined the role and input of actors (Hughes 2004:v). One of the key challenges of the latter was to identify the institutional inputs into foreign policy making in South Africa. According to

Hughes (2004:4) there are at least three elements to this. First, the relationship between the Presidency, which is increasingly perceived as the originator and prioritizer of foreign policy, and the DFA, which is increasingly viewed as the implementer of foreign policy. Second, the relationship between the DFA and other government departments such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Defense, Safety and Security, Home Affairs, and others. The third element of inquiry was whether or not, and to what degree, NGOs provide input into the foreign policy process.

The 1996 Constitution of South Africa does cover foreign policy matters. The Constitution provides for the President to: 'receive and recognise foreign diplomatic and consular representatives and to appoint ambassadors, plenipotentiaries and diplomatic and consular representatives; and for the national executive (including the President) to:

negotiate and sign international agreements, but only requires parliamentary ratification in the case of agreements of a technical, administrative and executive nature. It is, however, a requirement that all international agreements be tabled in both houses of Parliament, even if ratification of a specific agreement is not required by the Constitution; and develop and implement national policy and to co-ordinate the functions of state departments and administrations (Republic of South Africa 1996).

Henwood (1995/96:247-249) argues that the South African Constitution seemingly strengthens the role of the Executive at the cost of the Legislature thereby making it extremely difficult for Parliament to be more than an ex post facto role player in matters of foreign affairs. So far, Parliament and South African political parties have remained substantially absent in the discussion on foreign policy with the exception of the stance on Robert Mugabe's regime in Zimbabwe. Hughes (2004:iii) notes: 'Parliament has not become polarised nor have the political parties faced deep divisions over other substantial issues of foreign policy.' Elaborating on the institutional relationship between the Presidency and the DFA, Hughes (2004:3) writes that it has

been, and remains, a relationship of opaqueness. In 1996, the then Chair of the PCFA, Raymond Suttner commented:

It is not clear that the Presidency relates on a regular and coordinated basis with other foreign policy structures when it makes interventions on foreign policy questions. Nor is it clear that there is a structure that relates to the President on an advisory basis, as one finds with other presidencies in other parts of the world (Suttner 1996:193 in Hughes 2004:3).

Additionally, Hughes (2004:189) showed that South Africa has a number of internationally recognized think tanks in the field of foreign policy, international relations, peace, security and conflict studies, but that the PCFA is hardly making use of them. Primarily, their use largely depends of the think tank's level of expertise, areas of specialization, funding base, political bias as well as their orientation (Hughes 2004: 31).

The real 'drivers' of South African foreign policy consist of a relatively small group of decision-makers. This includes the President, Deputy President, and the Minister/Deputy Minister/Director-General of Foreign Affairs. Fadl Nacerodien (2008), the then Director of the US desk at the DFA, helped shed some of the light on 'official' avenues where foreign policy is discussed. There are various individuals and small groups of people that meet with the president on a frequent basis to discuss foreign policy. This includes the Minister of Foreign Affairs who has weekly meetings with the President. More simplistically, Nacerodien explained that South African foreign policy is getting more and more complex as time evolves and that, pure work wise, the DFA still holds the overall 'brunt of it.'

When Mbeki took office he formed the President's International Advisory Council and the Big Business Working Group to help deal with international trade issues. In the past, the International Advisory Council consisted of very well known and influential individuals such as Unilever's Niall Fitzgerald. Mbeki also held regular meetings with global IT business leaders to deal with South Africa in the new digital age. Mbeki also frequently met with South Africa's

black business leaders, which played a role in culminating in the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, 2003 (No. 53 of 2003).

Nacerodien (2008) demonstrates, however, that this process and South Africa's entire foreign policy in general has gone through monumental changes since 1994. For example, pre-1994 South Africa had bilateral relations with approximately 20 to 30 countries and this quickly grew to well over 100 in the post-1994 environment. This expansion was only one issue of dozens that the country quickly had to deal with, which also included constructing and changing policy itself to adding new branches, sections and personnel to the DFA. Nacerodien said the best way to describe it is 'like renovating a house while living in it.' This 'renovating' is still taking place.

In a reply to a question about any strategic documents that are used in determining South African foreign policy and if any fundamental principles and guidelines are listed and used in such a document, Foreign Affairs Minister Dlamini-Zuma referred to the DFA document with the title, 'Strategic Plan, 2005/2008 (DFA 2005).' She explains that it helps provide the framework, priorities, as well as strategic objectives of our foreign policy. The priorities of South African foreign policy according to the document are:

- Consolidation of the African Agenda;
- Promotion of South-South Co-operation;
- North-South Dialogue; and
- Global Governance

The operational functions of South African foreign policy are:

- Through bilateral and multilateral interactions, to protect and promote South African national interests and values;
- Conduct and co-ordinate South Africa's international relations and promote its foreign



policy objectives;

- Monitor international developments and advise government on foreign policy and related domestic matters;
- Protect South Africa's sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- Contribute to the formulation of international law and enhance respect for its provisions;
- Promote multilateralism in order to secure a rules-based international system;
- Maintain a modern, effective and excellence-driven department;
- Provide consular services to South African nationals abroad; and
- Provide a world-class and uniquely South African State Protocol service.

In addition, Dlamini-Zuma revealed that South Africa's international engagements are guided by the following principles (DFA 2005) contained in the DFA's Annual Report of 2003/04, which were also echoed in the DFA's Strategic Plan 2008-2011:

- A commitment to the promotion of human rights;
- A commitment to the promotion of democracy;
- A commitment to justice and international law in the conduct of relations between states;
- A commitment to international peace and to internationally agreed upon mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts;
- A commitment to Africa in world affairs; and
- A commitment to economic development through regional and international co-operation in an interdependent (and globalised) world.

In addition to the above principles, Dlamini-Zuma (in DFA 2005) explains that some of the tenets that serve as guidelines to inform South Africa's approach to foreign policy are:

- Foreign policy is an integrated part of government policy, aimed at promoting security and improving the quality of life of all South Africans;
- Commitment to the African Renaissance through the African Union and its programme

for Africa's development, namely the New Partnership for Africa's Development;

- Commitment to economic development through regional integration and development in the Southern African Development Community and the Southern African Customs Union;
- Interact with African partners as equals;
- Pursue friendly relations with all peoples and nations of the world; and
- Safeguard South Africa's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Perhaps due to the atrocities<sup>18</sup> committed during apartheid, South Africans and the ANC also tend to view their country as unique or exceptional (Klotz 2004). While the ANC was in exile, it demanded a moral stand from the international community against the apartheid government. It was therefore expected to apply similar principles in South Africa's new foreign policy. Gelb (2001 in Mbaob 2003:7) terms this foreign policy approach as the 'moralist view' rooted in South Africa's liberation tradition and its success in achieving democracy. Gelb notes that the ANC's struggle for liberation received financial and logistical support over more than thirty years from a variety of countries around the world, but they also succeeded in demanding countries to impose official sanctions against South Africa. Due to these factors, the 1994 ANC National Conference, its main decision-making institution, emphasized as the central goals for foreign policy the promotion of human rights and democracy, a commitment to development in Africa and a just order (ANC 1997).

## **6. Nelson Mandela: 1994-1999**

After decades of white minority rule, foreign policy could not automatically change. The ANC while in exile had the one main goal of ending apartheid. The party coming to power now

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<sup>18</sup> Such atrocities committed against the racially segregated population included the limiting or eliminating of certain freedoms such as speech, as well as almost no due process of law, which sometimes included torture and of other inhuman punishments such as abduction.

brought with vast challenges of the post Cold War international order. The DFA had to transform itself, which was easier said than done. Mills (1996) points out that:

The 'old' DFA comprised 1 917 staff. Following the election in 1994, 139 'overseas trained officials' (including ANC cadres) as well as 415 former TBVC (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) 'homeland' diplomats joined the DFA. Prior to 30 April 1996, 259 redundancy packages were approved, and from July 1996 to date, 112 applications for severance packages were received. Of the eighty ambassadors currently abroad, twenty are political appointees, 42 are from 'previously disadvantaged' communities, and ten are women. Such an inevitably turbulent process could not have been improved by the temporary nature of leadership in the DFA. The appointment of its Director-General, Rusty Evans, expires at the end of September 1997.

Although the aim was to have the DFA become the central locus in South African's foreign policy, it was common to have others fill the void. This included Mandela, Mbeki and others such as Cyril Ramaphosa. The DFA did attempt to rectify what was seen as a lack of policy consistency and coordination through the South African Foreign Policy Discussion Document of June 1996. As a result, emphasis began to slowly shift towards the DFA dealing with foreign policy, but Mandela's international stature and profile in the mid 1990s often became his country's image, and in some cases, its foreign policy.

When Mandela became South Africa's first black president, he and South Africa as a nation became a symbol for reconciliation and bringing peace for having overcome apartheid. Speaking at Harvard University after receiving his honorary doctorate in 1998, Mandela stated that Harvard embodies that spirit of universality, which marks a great university. 'To join the ranks of its alumni is to be reminded of the oneness of our global world... Hence our universal obligation towards the building of a world in which there shall be greater equality amongst nations and amongst citizens of nations,' Mandela reiterated (Mandela 1998). He adopted this principle of universality under similar lines in South Africa's foreign policy. It was a view that encompassed universal liberal ideals and human rights and became evident with South Africa

assisting in mediating incidents in Asia and Europe<sup>19</sup>. Mandela used diplomacy as his tool to help solve other countries conflicts and indeed he did use his saint like persona in places like Zaire<sup>20</sup> and in issues such as the Lockerbie bombing<sup>21</sup>, which occurred in 1988 but whose implications lasted much longer. Even after his presidential term ended, he was still busy pursuing peace in nations like Burundi.

Anand (2004:146) argues that the principle of universality applied by South Africa (to its foreign policy (i.e. friends to all nations) offers a good solution to the problem of values. However, it is not the ultimate solution because if values are identified and applied as a basis of foreign policy, the country's national interest will be difficult to identify. In practice, Mandela and South African foreign policy was quickly criticized in various incidents like Nigeria in 1995<sup>22</sup> and the intervention in Lesotho in 1998<sup>23</sup>.

Mandela took the moral high road in dealing with Nigeria. He recalled the South African High Commissioner from Nigeria, urged the United Kingdom (UK) and US to impose oil sanctions, requested UN action and called a special Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) meeting to discuss the issue. Unfortunately for Sara Wiwo and the other political activists, Mandela's actions proved to be fruitless. Mandela was criticized for not learning the unwritten continental code that 'African states do not turn against each other in international

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<sup>19</sup> This included Northern Ireland and East Timor. Regarding the latter, Mandela helped make headway by meeting with imprisoned East Timorese leader Xanana Gusmao in July 1997 and called for his release.

<sup>20</sup> Mandela assisted in ending the civil war in Zaire in 1997. At the time, he was the first head of state to make a public appearance with rebel leader Laurent-Desire Kabila.

<sup>21</sup> Mandela was highly praised for his help in persuading Libya to hand over two suspects wanted in connection with the Lockerbie airplane disaster, where two Libyan intelligence agents bombed Pan Am flight 103 (270 people died).

<sup>22</sup> In 1995, Nigerian president Abacha executed the Nigerian activist-poet, Ken Saro-wiwa, and eight other environmentalists for calling oil multinationals accountable for destroying the ecosystem in the Niger Delta, undercutting the food security of millions of people and creating the context for ethnic cleavages and social tensions.

<sup>23</sup> Parliamentary elections in Lesotho in March 1998 resulted in the ruling party winning 79 out of 80 seats. Voter fraud allegations surfaced, and soon after, widespread rioting began. South African troops were deployed Lesotho on 22 September 1998 to help stop the rioting and maintain order.

fora,' and was reminded by his own party members of Nigeria's contribution to its liberation struggle (Van Wyk 2002:182). In addition, according to Van Wyk (2002:182), 'DFA officials attempted to avoid international isolation in a time when South Africa was seeking African support for a seat on the UN Security Council [South Africa only got a seat in 2007].'

South Africa's operation in Lesotho – Operation Boleas – involved millions of Rands and resulted in several deaths. South Africa, acting with Botswana and formally on behalf of the SADC, had sent in the military to impose peace and to attempt a resolution of the differences between the various political parties (Southall 2003:270). It was post apartheid South Africa's first foreign intervention using armed force and was condemned by many in the South African media. However, SADC played in a large role in the international response to South Africa's actions. It was because of their endorsement, as well as the acceptance by the OAU that the UN did not criticize the operation and the international response was minimized. What SADC did learn was that it needed to be more transparent in its operations to ensure that it deals with its members on equal basis.

Another vital lesson learned during the Lesotho 'intervention' was that the state of readiness of the newly integrated South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was highly questionable. The actual implementation of the military operation by the SANDF was a 'disaster,' according to former South African Air Force member Will Morris (2008). One of the main problems was with intelligence. The force South Africa sent in was too small and therefore too weak to engage with the resistance met. Overall, Lesotho served as an important wake-up call as the problems experienced by the SANDF prior to and during Operation Boleas 'raised alarm bells with regard to the ability of the SANDF to participate competently in peace missions (Cillers 1999).'

Other questions were also raised about South Africa's support of universal human rights; If South Africa supports universal human rights, how could they maintain relations with known human rights abusers like Qaddafi and Castro?

However, Mandela was frowned upon by many leaders from the West due to South Africa's positive relations with certain individuals and countries that formerly supported the ANC while they were in exile. This included Fidel Castro of Cuba, Muammar Qaddafi of Libya and Yasser Arafat of Palestine. In fact, South Africa received 65 percent of its oil from Iran and in the period between 1994 and 1997, the value of imports from Iran had almost tripled and exports doubled (McNeil 1997a). It appeared that Mandela seemed to ignore the fact that those individuals and countries had employed questionable methods or what 'Western countries' would refer to as terrorist tactics and treated their critics much as the apartheid state had.

Nevertheless, Mandela and then Deputy President Mbeki spent most of their time out of the country establishing and furthering diplomatic relations. The President and Deputy Presidents combined paid 46 foreign visits in the period of 18 months from January 1996 to June 1997 and another 40 in the period of 13 months from July 1997 to July 1998 (SAIIA 2000/01:471 in Muller 1999:605).

In the 1997 ANC Discussion Document entitled, 'Developing a Strategic Perspective on South African Foreign Policy,' it observes that globalization is at the heart of international relations and 'the most serious outcome of this is that it undermines national sovereignty of countries, even more so in the developing world (ANC 1997).' According to the Discussion Document, globalization is contradictory, two-sided process that offers opportunities for growth; however, its overall impact is tremendously uneven both within and between nations.

Hesse (2001:178) saw this as a shift away from traditional diplomacy to a country's foreign policy that was to be more about foreign economic policy. Only two weeks after Mbeki became the President of the ANC, Mandela made the announcement that South Africa would normalize relations with mainland China, even though Taiwan was South Africa's long time ally and significant foreign investor (Hesse 2001:178).

Analysts such as Olivier and Geldenhuys (1997:366) believe that South Africa's real foreign policy is more pragmatic and more nostalgic than what was explained in the DFA foreign policy documents. According to McNeil, the pragmatism shows in the hunger for investment. 'Do you think this Government would push human rights in Indonesia if it turned out to be one of our major trading partners?' asked Landsberg (McNeil 1997b). The 'nostalgia' criticism comes from South Africa's relations with countries that assisted them during the anti-apartheid struggle like Libya, Iran and Iraq.

Hamill and Lee (in Judson 2005:84) believe the two strongest criticisms were that South African foreign policy had descended into an inexcusable 'ad hocery' of case by case decision making without any discernible framework, and that South Africa's foreign policy 'was too driven by the whims' of President Mandela. Moreover, as one observer commented in 1999:

Mandela will leave a South Africa full of contradictions, with enormous social and political challenges to overcome, a South Africa still in the process of transformation, a South Africa not yet out of the woods, not yet one in which democracy has fully taken root, although the vine is ripening (O'Malley 1999:117 in Lyman 2006).

South African foreign policy during Mandela's term could be seen as 'idealism' or the importance of moral values and universalism as apposed to national interest and power. This was evident by his attempt to peaceful settlement in Nigeria, for example. However, other events that took place during his presidency seem to show more of a realist or even neorealist stance. South Africa's military intervention in Lesotho in 1998 is one case where national interest took priority.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad was regarded as the driving force at this time (Muller 1999:587). Then Director General of the DFA Rusty Evans was once asked if Mandela often caught him off guard in regards to foreign policy and he replied, 'He's a major actor in foreign policy. I'm never surprised by anything Mr. Mandela does (McNeil 1997b).' However, although both Mandela and Pahad were major influences in the **country's** foreign affairs, the 'king of foreign policy' of whom he has been called, was undoubtedly Mbeki.

## **7. Thabo Mbeki: 1999-2008**

International affairs have always been a long-term interest of Mbeki's. Like Mandela, becoming an ANC freedom fighter was just as much destiny as it was choice. Mbeki's parents were part of the social, intellectual and political elite of the Transkei, the southeastern region of the country that gave birth to many major activists, including Mandela and the late ANC president Oliver Tambo (Hunter-Gault 1999:45). In an interview with Joseph Mugore of the UN Development Program (UNDP) and former member of the Zimbabwean government, Mugore explained that Mbeki's upbringing in the 'elite' was very unusual in Africa as most are brought up very poor<sup>24</sup>.

It was obvious from the beginning that Mbeki did not have the same charismatic aura as Mandela. Nonetheless, he appeared to have a bolder, more ambitious vision of South Africa's ability to change the world. He wanted his country to lead the continent into an era of stability and prosperity, or what is referred to as an 'African Renaissance.' Dlamini Zuma and numerous South African foreign policy documents refer to South Africa's role in the African Renaissance.

Landsberg and Hlophe (1999:1) describe the African Renaissance as both a foreign policy culture and an emerging foreign policy doctrine; a sort of belief and a dogma. It combines

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<sup>24</sup> However, study of African nationalist movements has revealed that most were led by what were considered elites and not the 'poor' majority.



a philosophy with a set of foreign policy goals. It was in April 1997 that Mbeki started to promote the idea of an African Renaissance. During his address to the Corporate Council on Africa in the US he said: ‘...outside our continent, the perception persists that Africa remains, as of old, torn by interminable conflict, unable to solve its problems, condemned to the netherworld.’ He continued: ‘Those who have eyes to see, let them see. The African Renaissance is upon us. As we peer through the looking glass darkly, this may not be obvious. But it is upon us (Mbeki 1997 in Landsberg 1999:13).’

Landsberg and Hlophe (1999:16) conclude that the African Renaissance represents an attempt for the new South Africa to depart from the hostile foreign policy of the apartheid regime and signaled a new neighborly policy posture towards the rest of the continent. Furthermore, some within the Africa believed that liberation in South Africa would serve as a catalyst to unleash prosperity in the rest of the continent (Landsberg & Hlophe 1999:16). Moreover, Landsberg and Hlophe assert that the African Renaissance grew out of a realization that South Africa cannot by itself succeed in its plans to become a global player if it remains surrounded by poor undeveloped countries. These reasons are why a multifaceted continental approach became necessary. In essence, the African Renaissance provides the continent with a tool for continental consciousness through which matters of democratization, peace, stability and an economic environment for investment (Landsberg & Hlophe 1999:16). Evans (1999: 621) states that

Mbeki's African Renaissance can be seen as a grand design to re-invent South Africa as a global trading state with strong regional and continental interests. In fact, the DFA's Mission as displayed on their website reads: 'Mission of the DFA: We are committed to promoting South Africa's national interests and values, the African Renaissance and the creation of a better world for all (DFA 2008a).’

Mbeki gave a large priority to South Africa's 'economic' foreign policy. It was also believed that he saw himself as an unofficial spokesman for developing countries in general (The Economist 2000). Mbeki maintained relations with countries like Libya, as evident by the roaring welcome given to Qaddafi at Mbeki's presidential inauguration (Mills 1999:44). Overall, wealth and security were perceived as being the two main components of South Africa's foreign policy.

During Mbeki's time in power, Masland (2002) exposes that after office hours, Mbeki used to summon his close companions for a sundowner. The group did change, according to Masland, but most often it included one or both of the Pahad brothers, Essop, who served as his Minister in the Presidency from 1999 to September 2008 and Aziz, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1994 to 2008, which were Mbeki's college friends from his exile years in Britain. Once everybody had arrived, the President would try out a foreign policy idea, then it was debated by the other individuals in the room.

Mbeki increased South Africa's military role in peacekeeping and other missions. However, he still relied heavily on diplomacy. South African leadership would continuously attempt to bring rival groups together to end conflict and promote peace in various African countries and throughout the world. Mbeki believed that the model of peace, power-sharing and reconciliation that worked in South Africa between blacks and whites in the early 1990's can be applied elsewhere (Cillers 1999). Throughout his two terms, Mbeki was involved in numerous African countries such as Somalia, but also in places half way across the globe such as Haiti (Balageas 2007).

Another mechanism that South Africa and Mbeki strongly promoted is trilateralism and the joining of groups associated to the world's growing economies. In June 2003, the Declaration

of Brasilia was signed in by the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, South Africa and India following talks held by the three heads of state during the G-8 meeting in Evian. This declaration created the India –Brazil– South Africa Dialogue Forum or what is now commonly referred to as IBSA. The aim of IBSA is to share views on relevant regional and international issues of mutual interest as well as promote cooperation in international trade, technology, social development, environment, areas of defense and so on (Alden & Vieria 2005:1088). Flandes (2007:6) points out that trade, energy security and transport are the most prominent issues of IBSA's sector collaboration. IBSA is basically a strategic alliance for the pursuit of common interests of developing countries but also serves as a platform for bi-, tri-lateral and interregional South-South cooperation.

Balancing power on the world stage has been a goal of South Africa's since 1994. **It has been** pursuing a permanent seat at the UNSC. They have also been an influential member of the G-77, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the African Group. In 2007, South Africa had the opportunity to serve on the UNSC as a non-permanent member (from January 2007 to the end of 2008) and also to be a part of the Human Rights Council (HRC), which was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2006.

It is evident by analyzing Mbeki's two presidential terms that the Cabinet lekgotlas (workshops) and cabinet meetings became one of the most important theaters for decision making and for crafting coordinating strategies (Landsberg 2005:750). According to Landsberg (2005), these workshops and meetings involved the Presidency, Ministers and Deputy Ministers and Directors-General, similar to their late night discussions. It was in these sessions that foreign affairs strategists had to link their programs and activities with domestic policy priorities.

Mbeki's almost two-term presidency was in fact been an unqualified economic success. Mbeki himself stated in his 2007 budget speech that South Africa had been growing for eight solid years, longer than ever before in the recorded economic history of our country (Mbeki 2007). Mbeki also said investment had risen steadily from 14.7% GDP in the first quarter of 2002 to 19.2% of GDP in the final quarter of 2006. Even his detractors have to concede that he has presided over years of years of economic growth. However, it is most likely that it is not for this accomplishment that he will be best remembered. Mbeki's legacy will rather be one of stubbornness – an intellectual inability to accept he might be wrong, with Zimbabwe and his stance on HIV/AIDS as examples<sup>25</sup>.

According to Nathan (2005), Mbeki himself was an Africanist, but also an 'anti imperialist.' With the former, Mbeki followed traditions such as ubuntu, which puts the collective over the individual and has a preference for persuasion over coercion. The latter became clear through Nathan's analysis of Mbeki's speeches:

The anti-imperialist thrust revolves around the following themes: the political and economic power imbalance between the North and the South, to the great detriment of the poor; the need to transform the UN and other international bodies in order to address global inequities; the domineering, hypocritical and self-serving approach of Western countries that chide and bully developing states; South-South co-operation and solidarity; and multilateralism and respect for international law in the conduct of international affairs. In the UN General Assembly, Mbeki has repeatedly raised these issues with a marked sense of anger and frustration (Nathan 2008:5).

There was also a discontent about Mbeki's high-handed leadership style. It became common that government officials often felt excluded from the president's inner circle. This was

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<sup>25</sup> Both of these topics will be discussed in detail in later chapters. However, Mbeki's skepticism about conventional thinking on what causes HIV/AIDS was believed to have a negative impact on his government's response to the pandemic that affects millions of South Africans. No one in his cabinet was strong enough to speak out against this. It took the entire ANC to firmly instruct him to take himself out of the HIV/AIDS debate before he did so. He will probably also be marked as the man who has squandered the moral high ground Mandela won for South Africa by allowing his silent diplomacy approach to fail in Zimbabwe. The West mostly viewed the situation as Mbeki appeasing Mugabe as South Africa's northern neighbor deteriorated.

certainly the case when it came to South African foreign policy, which consisted of a small group of individuals relatively close to Mbeki.

Perhaps Mbeki spent too much of his time of foreign affairs. By not exercising the required degree of political will effectively to address South Africa's plague of violent crime, poverty, HIV/AIDS and another half of dozen problems, his souvenir may be in fact one of putting Africa's problems over his people's own safety and well being.

South African foreign policy throughout the time period showed its realist tenets, but was based around Mbeki's African Renaissance ideology.

## **8. Summary**

Both American and South African foreign policy were analyzed in this chapter under the same criteria. It began with a discussion of the broad factors and principles guiding foreign policy, and the people/organizations involved in the decision making process. This was followed by an in-depth analysis of foreign policy by presidential Administrations. The focus here laid on determining the key actors in foreign policy, as well as their geo-political views.

It was discovered that the US and South Africa do share various commonalities relating to foreign policy and its surrounding issues. Like South Africa, the US foreign policy community is relatively small. It consists of a limited number of individuals and groups that have a majority say over the country's actions overseas. Members of both countries' governments complained about their respective President's [Bush and Mbeki] inner circles. However, unlike in the US where dozens of factors from lobby groups and think tanks to large multinational corporations can help influence a foreign policy decision-makers choice, South Africa's actions usually emanates from a decision fashioned by a handful of people close to the President and the

President himself. This was especially true during Mbeki's time in office, as the locus of foreign policy shifted away from the DFA towards the presidency.

With Mbeki having a strong control over foreign policy, he put a considerable priority on South Africa's 'economic' foreign policy. He put a large emphasis on growing and expanding South Africa's economy, as expected, but also on growing the economies of his neighbors and the continent as a whole. This goal coincided with both Clinton's and Bush's promotion of free trade. However, it can be argued that the former took America's economic goals into account more often than the latter.

The promotion of democracy is another commonality shared by South Africa and the US. They both agree that all should be free and be allowed to elect the people that govern them. Many US presidents have had a strong devotion to promoting democracy. Nevertheless, most also understood that this often requires force. Clinton, for example, supported the cause of democracy because he felt this supported US national security and America's overall economic goals. Since 1994, the ANC government emphasized the promotion of human rights and democracy as one of their central goals for foreign policy. Undoubtedly, Mbeki with his strong commitment to South African economic growth shared a similar line of thought to Clinton's in regards to democracy promotion.

One of the more evident similarities between both countries is a surrounding sense of exceptionalism. The special position of the US is suggested by traditional notions of 'the city on the hill' and other tropes of American exceptionalism (Womack 2003:97). Americans and their leaders tend to believe that their way of life is superior like other dominant nations in the past. Unfortunately this impression created by Americans and their country, which is meant to be positive, is coming across as anything but. The growth of American corporations' worldwide

combined with numerous unilateral actions in the recent past has lead to a wide perception that American exceptionalism is deafeningly hostile.

South African exceptionalism, especially among Mbeki and his inner circle, is in some ways similar to American exceptionalism. By overcoming apartheid, the ANC tend to view their country as unique. They know they are the regional leaders and believe it is their duty to assist other African countries to overcome their challenges just as they did. Similar to the situations with US corporations, South African companies have been criticized for infiltrating the entire African continent leading some to call South Africa a neo-colonial power. One other similarity shared between American expectionalism and South African exceptionalism remain; the US and South Africa are willing to take unilateral action, which is often forceful. However, this was more so during Mandela's years, as South Africa took what was perceived as action on Lesotho (1998), against Nigeria (1995) and Zimbabwe (1994). Mbeki was careful to make sure he used the appropriate multilateral flora when it came to military issues such as African peacekeeping.

The US has frequently used military force to bring about democracy and free economies. These actions include liberating Iraq and Afghanistan, amongst others, and are often the reason why Americans are labeled as imperialists. South Africa, on the other hand, believes that using diplomacy and multilateral institutions are almost the only options. Again, incidents in Nigeria (non force) and Lesotho (force) are two experiences where South Africa learnt the lesson of what can happen if they 'go at it alone.' Mbeki himself was an 'anti imperialist' and followed traditions such as ubuntu, so force would be used if only absolutely necessary.

Both countries' foreign policy actions could definitely be labeled as 'realist' in the majority of cases. Again, Asymmetry theory takes realism for granted. Regardless, there were differences in the geopolitical thinking of the countries' foreign policy makers. This was

unmistakable during the Bush-Mbeki years. Bush's doctrine of preventative war did not coincide with the Mbeki's African Renaissance ideology. Additionally, America's sometimes imperious emphasis on their own national interest doesn't appear combatable with South Africa's foreign policy guideline of pursuing friendly relations with all peoples and nations of the world.

With the overview of both countries' foreign policy complete, this thesis can now begin to examine the US-South African relationship itself. This will help discover if this relationship fits and evolves as dictated by Womack's model of asymmetric relations, and more importantly answer the question, why or why not?

The purpose of the next four chapters is to utilize the vast amount of data uncovered by the author that deals with the US-South Africa bilateral relationship to uncover the key issues encountered from 1994 to 2008. These issues are then summarized and scrutinized from both the American perspective and the South African perspective. Thereafter, the analysis will be further dissected to develop academic dialogue on asymmetry theory's relevance in understanding international relations theory.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: MONEY AND POWER: ECONOMIC AND DEFENSE PERSPECTIVES**

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## **4. MONEY AND POWER: ECONOMIC AND DEFENSE PERSPECTIVES**

### **1. Introduction**

Interviews, official documents and media reports revealed that several topics were of a higher significance compared to others in the US-South African relationship during the time period. The purpose of this chapter is to present the research findings regarding the key economic and defense issues in the bilateral relationship. This will provide the necessary background information in order to assess the validity of asymmetry theory, the universal applicability of Womack's theory, and to extend the academic knowledge base of the bilateral relationship between the two nations.

It is first necessary to deliberate on the broad-spectrum of conditions affecting the relationship before analyzing its development. More importantly, this thesis shares a similar argument as Womack (2006a:3) when he writes, 'the case is the reality to which the theory is secondary.'

These summaries are presented in a timeline-like fashion, mentioning key events that occurred, with the goal of better understanding the evolution of the topics discussed. The summaries are further elucidated by analyzing the issue from both the American and South African perspectives. The information presented does not encompass every person's point of view. Instead, this chapter will try to accurately depict the general perceptions of both sides through a wide variety of sources including official statements, speeches, documents and media briefings, as well as personal interviews with various individuals in South Africa and the US.

## 2. Economic relations

Economic relations between the US and South Africa has to be divided into two separate categories; bilateral trade and regional trade. It is crucial to comprehend the relevance of the issue regarding the failed negotiations between the US and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). This will be discussed in more detail below.

### 2.1. Bilateral trade

Analyzing the self-perception of the US and South Africa, one sees that positive trade relations bodes well for both sides, although this has been more so for South Africa since 1999, as table 4.1 indicates. Nevertheless, trade between the two countries has expanded exponentially since 1994. In 2007, the US was the largest market for South African goods (DTI 2008). Overall trade was in the multi billion-Dollar bracket and consisted of a wide range of products.

**Table 4.1 US Trade in Goods (Imports, Exports and Trade Balance) with South Africa 1994-2008**

*NOTE: All figures are in millions of U.S. Dollars.*

Year	Exports	Imports	Balance
2008	6,494.7	9,974.2	-3,479.5
2007	5,521.4	9,054.1	-3,532.7
2006	4,461.7	7,500.8	-3,039.1
2005	3,906.9	5,885.6	-1,978.7
2004	3,178.5	5,944.8	-2,766.3
2003	2,819.3	4,624.4	-1,805.1
2002	2,525.7	4,034.1	-1,508.4
2001	2,959.4	4,432.5	-1,473.1
2000	3,089.4	4,210.0	-1,120.6
1999	2,585.3	3,194.4	-609.1
1998	3,628.2	3,049.0	579.2
1997	2,997.4	2,510.1	487.3
1996	3,112.0	2,323.3	788.7
1995	2,750.5	2,208.0	542.5
1994	2,172.4	2,030.7	141.7

Source: US Foreign Trade (2009)

According to Amcham figures, US companies provided direct and indirect employment for more than 227 000 people, and 105 companies contributed more than R583 million each year in corporate social investment in 2006 (American Chamber of Commerce 2008).

It was obvious back in 1994 that economic relations would play a large role in the bilateral relationship. A National Intelligence Estimate by the US Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) from 2 February 1994 revealed that the West's most effective source of leverage against South Africa would continue to be the perception held by most of their leaders that American and other foreign investment aid can help a new interim government survive formidable challenges. However, countries that support terrorism, such as Libya and Iran might pose a problem. The intelligence report listed the following:

- Several major foreign – including US - companies have announced new investments in South African plant and equipment in recent months.
- An ANC government almost certainly would accept assistance from countries such as Libya and Iran, but the influence of such potential benefactors will be greatly limited by the importance the ANC places not only on ties to Washington, but also to the Commonwealth, the EC, the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Frontline States (DCI 1994).

The report also showed that the US believed it was recognized by all of South Africa's parties as the most important external actor, which was a perception Washington could use to affect the thinking of rightist and conservative leaders. Moreover: 'Washington will continue to have good access to these leaders, allowing it to suggest options to them during the enviably stormy period ahead (DCI 1994:vi).'

Under the table of Likely Policies of an ANC led government in the report, the foreign policy section states: 'Cultivate ties to states best positioned to offer financial and development aid, which would strongly favor the West...trend toward pragmatism in choosing allies and business partners will continue...will not, however, break bonds to longtime supporters hostile to the West, such as Cuba and Libya (DCI 1994:10).'

President Clinton previewed a plan just prior to the 1994 elections to reward South Africa with up to US\$200 million for holding their first-ever all-race elections. An American official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said Clinton had already lobbied House and Senate members on the aid package and won their support to shift some money out of other aid accounts to pay the initial tab - a move that wouldn't require a congressional vote (Bedard 1994:A1).

Most US foreign policy makers viewed South Africa within Southern Africa as the crown jewel example of democratic governance and economic practice; Mandela's reconciliation government had set an inspiring example of respect for ethnic differences and transparent, representative democracy (Hesse 2001:110). Likewise, the South African government had continued to support the country's economic potential. Hesse (2001:110) states that what those in Washington could tell, and from what they were telling the international community, South Africa's democratic and economic foundation was solid. With this, the Clinton Administration announced on 06 May 1994 the US\$600 million, three-year aid, trade, and investment package for South Africa and promised to support the participation of international lending institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The US felt that South Africa could serve as bridge between the West and Third World countries along with promoting economic growth especially in Southern Africa. Clinton described the nature of US interests in South Africa when he said: 'We have an economic interest in a thriving South Africa that will seek our exports and generate prosperity throughout the region. We have a security interest in a stable democratic South Africa working with its neighbors to restore and secure peace.' Lastly, America has a 'clear moral interest in the development of democracy in South Africa (Cochran 1998:61).'

Strains began to emerge in US-South African relations despite positive comments by Clinton and other US officials. Mandela was seen as critical of the US due to the perceived level of economic assistance offered to recover from apartheid. A former US diplomat (Source Nine 2008) recalls that Mandela was 'livid' when Clinton announced America's package of US\$600 million to South Africa. 'Mandela was expecting Camp David type numbers<sup>26</sup>. He was expecting billions and he was livid. I mean absolutely livid,' states the source. Bond (2001:25) quotes Mandela as saying: 'It's peanuts. We would have expected from the United States far more than that.'

One former high level US diplomat (Source Eight 2008) said that South Africa and members of the ANC thought they were a 'special country' and that they deserved 'special rules.' 'They came across as having this sense of being 'anointed' said the source. Nevertheless, the formation of the US-South Africa Business Development Committee (BDC) was announced in early June 1994 at the US-sponsored Investing in People conference in Atlanta, Georgia. This conference took place just weeks before a White House Conference on Africa where US policy towards the continent focused solely on South Africa with emphasis on how America could participate in the realization of South Africa's political and economic promise (Bridgman 1999:113). At the signing ceremony inaugurating the BDC, Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown announced that he and his counterpart in South Africa, Trevor Manuel, would co-chair this new entity (Bridgman 1999:113).

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<sup>26</sup> This expression refers the 1979 Camp David Accords signed by Egypt and Israel. Camp David is a military camp in Maryland, USA commonly used by the US President and his guests. The agreement resulted in America committing several billion dollars worth of annual subsidies to both the Israeli and Egyptian governments. According to the US State Department, From 1979 to 1997, Egypt received military aid of US\$1.3 billion annually (US Department of State 2010). In addition, the USAID has provided over US\$28 billion in economic and development assistance to Egypt since 1975. Israel is believed to receive much more than that (approximately 3 to 5 billion US dollars a year).

Another positive indication for the bilateral relationship came in July 1995 when the 'Big Emerging Market' (BEM) initiative, an outgrowth of the Clinton Administration's National Export Strategy, was launched. Secretary of Commerce Brown included South Africa as one of the ten economies holding particularly great potential as markets and investments destinations for US businesses. These ten economies were seen as vital as the post-Cold War period was described by then US Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Jeffery Garten, as 'an era when US foreign policy and national security will increasingly revolve around [its] commercial interests, and when economic diplomacy will be essential to resolving the great issues of our age (Stremlau 1994/5 in Bridgman 1999:117).' Brown pointed out at the time that US exports to the BEMs exceeded exports to Europe and Japan, and that BEM GDP was 25 percent of that of the industrialized world (Bridgman 1999:117).

There were several events during the mid 1990s involving economic concerns that generated political tension between the two countries. One key incident took place in 1995 and was later labeled as 'the chicken wars' in South Africa. US House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Donald Payne, the chairman of Congressional Black Caucus, protested the South African government's sudden change in tariffs for chicken parts. The day after a shipment of chicken left from Tampa, Florida, South Africa closed a tariff loophole that previously allowed lower import duties on such chicken products (Erasmus 1995:4a). The US Seaboard Farms Corporation vociferously complained. The American frozen chicken parts were still stranded in Cape Town's Table Bay Harbor, when Payne arrived in South Africa and raised the issue with government officials.

Payne was quoted in the South African media prior to his arrival as saying the dispute was unfortunate and causing 'unnecessary anguish' at a time when US and South Africa were

developing closer ties. South Africa appeared to have stuck to their stance and behind their change in tariffs as spokesman for Industry Minister Trevor Manuel saying that a one-time exemption, which had been requested, was neither possible, under existing trade agreements, nor desirable (Erasmus 1995:4a).

Another real concern was several US-South Africa trade commercial disputes with the most prevalent being a publicized lawsuit by McDonalds against a Durban businessman for trademark infringement. There were similar cases with 'Burger King' and 'Toys R US' as well, which led to the US trade representative (USTR) putting South Africa on a 'trade watch' list of countries deemed insufficiently respectful of US intellectual property (Bridgman 1999:133). McDonalds later received a favorable judgment and South Africa was provisionally removed from the watch list. The USTR fully dropped South Africa from its trade list the following year on the basis that they adjust intellectual property laws along the lines of World Trade Organization (WTO) standards (Bridgman 1999:133).

The US was objecting to a South African plan to legalize the import of cheap foreign drugs in apparent breach of international patent law while these laws were being discussed. This threatened to undermine millions of Dollars worth of sales of US propriety medicines in South Africa. The drugs controversy came from a law initiated by South African health minister Dr. Nkosazana Zuma and provoked reaction not only from the Clinton Administration and American pharmaceutical companies, but also from European countries, particularly France and Switzerland (Lewthwaite 1997). The bill was part of the South African effort to make health care more accessible and more importantly, more affordable. The **bill** would allow the South African minister of health – 'notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the 1978 Patents Act' - to import cheap, substitute medicines and register them in the country (Lewthwaite 1997).



US Ambassador Joseph was involved in both disputes. In a letter to Abe Nkomo, a member of the ruling ANC and chairman of the parliament's health committee, Ambassador Joseph said the Clinton Administration was concerned over 'the apparent infringement of intellectual property rights (Lewthwaite 1997).' Echoing Joseph's words, executives of US pharmaceutical companies in South Africa warned Nkomo's committee that the law could provoke 'factory closures, job losses, and a drop in foreign investments on which the government here is banking for economic growth (Lewthwaite 1997).'

Several other disputes, mainly commercial, occurred between the US and South Africa in 1997. These included incidents between Dow Chemical Co.'s and their purchase of a controlling stake in one of South Africa's largest chemical producers, Sentrachem<sup>27</sup>, and the two countries trying to come to an agreement over a dispute over dumping steel (Duke 1998:A30).

Despite the blunt opinions and failure to find common ground on some the key commercial questions such as the pharmaceutical and steel disputes, there were some very positive signs from the four-day visit of Clinton's to South Africa in 1998. US officials felt Clinton had dispelled some of the 'misconceptions' Mandela had raised over the new US-Africa trade bill and policy, later known as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)<sup>28</sup>. The promotion of the bill was seen as an important aim of the visit.

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<sup>27</sup> There was a proposed US Federal Trade Commission complaint detailing the charges in the case, which alleged that the merger may substantially lessen competition in the research, development, manufacture, and sale of chelants (used to neutralize and inactivate metal ions) and would likely lead to a unilateral price increase for this product.

<sup>28</sup> The US Government defines AGOA as an 'Act that offers incentives for African countries to continue their efforts to open their economies and build free markets. AGOA provides reforming African countries with the most liberal access to the US market available to any country or region with which the US does not have a Free Trade Agreement. It supports US business by encouraging reform of Africa's economic and commercial regimes, which will build stronger markets and more effective partners for US firms. AGOA expands the list of products which eligible Sub-Saharan African countries may export to the US subject to zero import duty under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). While general GSP covers approximately 4,600 items, AGOA GSP applies to more than 6,400 items. AGOA GSP provisions are in effect until 30 September 2015 (AGOA 2010).'

Everything else aside, it was clear that significant South African policy makers (including Mandela and Mbeki) were 'convinced that the best way to serve South African interests specifically, and African interests, generally, was to participate fully in the international economic order which was exactly what key US officials were advocating (Hesse 2001:179).' South Africa was also pleased that it received millions of Dollars' worth of free publicity from the White House press corps traveling with Clinton due to them showing South Africa in a positive light throughout the world. But again, as it had happened in the past, the US policy makers asked the question: 'What can we do for Africa or about Africa?' That is the wrong question as perceived by Africans; the right question today is what can we do with Africa, according to a South African diplomat (Newsweek 1998:28 in Hesse 2001:165)?'

A letter became known just over a month later (dated 30 April 1998) sent from South African Ambassador Franklin Sonn to all 100 US senators. In the letter, Sonn wrote:

South Africa supports passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (HR 1432), particularly the provisions relating to duty free treatment for textiles and apparel, and further extension of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), debt relief initiatives, and the provision of Overseas Private Investment Corporation funds.

For the first time, there has been a real attempt by the US Congress to bring legislative focus onto Africa and to recognise Africa as an important part of the global economy. This is significant and it is appreciated (Embassy of South Africa 1998).

In July 1998, South Africa named Jackie Selebi their new director-general of the DFA. Selebi returned from the UN in Geneva to take up the new post. Selebi admitted that South Africa was enjoying a 'honeymoon' period with the rest of the world that opened doors and ensured that South Africa's voice was heard, but in the long term he understood that diplomatic relations would become more difficult (Chetty 1998). He also wanted South Africa's Foreign Service employees to be better-rounded by placing more emphasis on training. 'Everyone must show that they understand trade policy. This world is about trade,' Selebi said. He also reiterated

that diplomatic relations with a country did not mean South Africa agrees with all of its policies. 'We have many relations with countries where we don't agree on everything says... With the United States, for example, we don't agree with their nuclear policy. Other countries may not like a lot about us.' Foreign policy is 'like football,' Selebi said, and the aim is always to score (Chetty 1998).

In February 1999, a Trade Investment Framework Agreement (Tifa) was signed that offered 'the promise of expanded trade' and more effective mechanisms to resolve trade disputes, according to Mbeki and Gore (Morris 1999). The Tifa was the key outcome of the meeting as Mbeki emphasized that it covered 'the most important area of co-operation', would help to deal 'systematically' with trade-related problems, and 'plan the way forward on strengthening relations (Morris 1999).'

US Department of Commerce Secretary William Daley was also present in South Africa. Daley had eased the **concerns** after the passing of Ron Brown in late 1996. US South Africa policy had been maintained under Daley and according to one Cape Town embassy official, he was the most frequent visitor to South Africa since his appointment in 1997. In 1998 alone, Daley visited South Africa in March, September and December and in February 1999 as well (Bridgman 1999:130).

In September 1999, the US and South Africa ended the disputes over intellectual property related to the pharmaceutical industry. The deal allowed South Africa to import cheaper drugs from licensed producers of pharmaceuticals in other countries if their price is cheaper than that of local companies. Previously, local subsidiaries of international drug companies held exclusive sales rights. The US initially stated that the Article 15(c) of the December 1997 amendments to the South African Medicines and Related Substances Act of 1965 (Medicines Act), if changed to

allow parallel imports, would represent a violation of the WTO's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) (Love 1999). 'South Africa will be removed from the US section 301 watch-list now that the agreement has been reached,' according to South African government officials (SAPA 1999)

In mid 2002, Dlamini-Zuma was in Washington to lead the South African delegation at the first Africa Ministerial Meeting of the Africa Economic Forum convened to examine the benefits of the AGOA. The AGOA immediately start to show results with beneficiary country exports, including oil to the US up 24 percent in the first three months of this year compared with the corresponding period last year (PANA 2002). South Africa was taking the greatest advantage of the non-oil beneficiaries with US trade statistics indicating that South African benefits from AGOA totaled US\$135.5 million between January and June 2001. AGOA also added around 1800 additional items to the 4,600 items already on the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) list that qualify for zero import duty to the US (PANA 2002).

In April 2004, as South African's celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first democratic elections, South Africa was selected as 'Market of the Month' by the US Department of Commerce to highlight the wide range of business opportunities in the country. The US embassy in Pretoria said in a statement that given the lack of awareness and understanding of commercial opportunities in Africa, the new e-marketing initiative would help US clients understand the depth and breadth of potential business prospects in the southern African region (PANA 2004a).

In August 2004, the new US ambassador to South Africa, Dr. Jendayi Frazer began her term of office. In a later meeting Frazer said she was looking to strengthen the 'strategic partnership' between the two countries during her term (Brown 2004). 'The US and South Africa's bilateral relationship will only grow stronger as US commercial ties are strengthened.

The US Administration views South Africa as a strategic partner in Africa,' Frazer said at an American Chamber of Commerce in South Africa meeting. She went on to say that 'America is critical to South Africa's growth and development and South Africa's global posture (Brown 2004).'

Frazer signed one of her first major agreements soon after, as the US government granted US\$35 million Dollars to South Africa under a development co-operation agreement. The funds were channeled through the US Agency for International Development (USAID) bilateral assistance to South Africa. South Africa said USAID's support since 1994 had contributed greatly to South Africa's social-economic and democratic transformation. USAID and the South African government jointly implement programs covered under democracy and good governance, education, HIV/AIDS and health, economic analysis capacity, sustainable employment, housing and urban development (PANA 2004b).

US-South African trade was on the top of the agenda when Bush and Mbeki met in December 2006. Shortly after, deputy foreign minister Pahad revealed that US-South Africa trade exceeded R60-billion and is increasing at a rate of 11% a year (Cobb 2006). But multilateral - rather than bilateral -trade issues appeared to take precedence at this particular meeting. In regards to the failed WTO Doha round of talks, Mbeki asked for and got a 'commitment' from Bush for assistance in reviving the deadlocked talks. Nevertheless, Mbeki still insisted that poor countries need greater access to the markets of rich countries.

At the same time as the Bush-Mbeki meeting, South African Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs Lulu Xingwana called on US Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns to discuss means of bolstering agriculture trade and cooperation between the two countries. The following week, the American Chamber of Commerce (Amcham) in South Africa released the results of its

annual membership survey, which aimed to quantify the extent of US business activity in South Africa in terms of employment, turnover and corporate social investment. This was the first time that Amcham conducted a quantitative survey on aspects of its members' business. The report revealed: 'Quantifying the impact of US business in South Africa, 120 companies surveyed achieve a collective R86.8 billion (US\$12.4 billion) in turnover; 147 companies provide direct and indirect employment for more than 227 000 people, and 105 companies contribute more than R583 million (US\$83 million) each year in corporate social investment (Embassy of South Africa 2006).'

On 19 September 2007, the DFA's acting deputy director-general at the time, Gert Grobler briefed the PCFA in Cape Town on the status of US-South African relations. 'South Africa's relationship with the US is crucial,' Grobler noted, pointing out the following:

- The US is the second-largest market for South African goods, with exports reaching R41-billion in 2006 - an R11-billion increase from 10 years ago.
- The value of imports from the US in 2006 amounted to R35-billion, leading to a balance of trade approximately R5-billion in South Africa's favor.
- The US is also the second-largest foreign direct investor in South Africa after the UK.
- US investments had reached approximately US\$5-billion (R35-billion) by December 2004, Grobler said, while there were between 120 and 130 US companies operating in the country.
- The number of US tourists visiting South Africa increased by 7.4% between 2005 and 2006, from 68 000 to over 73 000 visitors.
- South Africa has received about \$255-million from PEPFAR to fund projects in all nine provinces over the current financial year.
- The US is spending about \$5-billion annually out of its Millennium Challenge Account, which was making a 'huge contribution' to development and technical assistance for a number of African countries.
- The US also spends \$1-billion on the African Fund, the \$55-million Woman Empowerment Initiative in Africa, and the AGOA (Benton 2007).

South Africa's relations with the US have reached a point where the two countries can 'agree to disagree' while still working together on common programs, Grobler told Parliament.

However, this did not imply that ‘differences of opinion in certain areas,’ Grobler said. ‘Our relationship is a constructive one, but remains a complicated and complex one that we have to work on all the time (Benton 2007).’

A South African delegation embarked on a mission to attract foreign investment in the US in mid-July. The delegation was led by Trade and Industry Deputy Director-General Igbal Sharma together with the International Marketing Council of South Africa. Their objective was to support the activities that are currently gaining momentum in the US and to strengthen the relationship between the two countries (BuaNews 2008). More specifically, the mission reached out to small, medium and macro companies with a view to expanding their businesses in South Africa. ‘The US is South Africa’s largest trade partner and we hope to take advantage of opportunities in there,’ Sharma said ahead of the mission (BuaNews 2008).

There have been some ‘hiccups’ in US-South African bilateral trade relations since 1994. However, through AGOA and other economic avenues, where South Africa itself did very well from, trade between the two countries increased on a yearly basis. Due to the importance of economic prosperity for both countries, it appears likely that this trend will continue.

## **2.2 Multilateral trade**

One of the main contributors to the growth in trade between the two countries was the AGOA. Signed into law by President Clinton in 2000, other amendments signed into law in July 2004 extended AGOA to 2015. US exports to South Africa were much larger in size than any other Southern African country. In light of this, South Africa supported the free trade negotiations between the US and the SACU<sup>29</sup>, which began in 2003. This came after the

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<sup>29</sup> SACU is a regional body comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. It is the oldest Customs Union in the world, which meets annually to discuss matters related to various agreements. Its aim is to maintain the free interchange of goods between member countries.

conclusion in 1999 of a free trade agreement (FTA) between South Africa and the European Union (EU).

The US was looking for a similar agreement to their EU counterparts with a view to leveling the trade concessions playing field. Some of the third parties were thus determined to negotiate similar pacts such as with the SACU (Lehloenya 2009:117). This was a significant shift in trade policy for South Africa. It now meant that all FTAs completed by South Africa would have to be done through SACU as a regional grouping (Gonzalez-Nunez 2008: 37). Due to this switch, political sensitivity became a large concern. Gonzazlez-Nunez (2008:39) maintains that it created the perception of South Africa as a nation influencing regional economic and political outcome (i.e. South Africa is seen by many as a regional hegemon).

There were worries that Bush's election victory in November 2004 would not change the complexion of the free trade talks between the SACU and the US after negotiations between the two were suspended and after the two camps failed to reach consensus on a number of issues approximately two months earlier. The DFA responded by saying the Republicans were the proponents of liberal trade, meaning that one should not worry. Trade experts at the Institute for Global Dialogue, a South African think tank, said the Republicans' victory would not change the US's trade policy towards Africa as the Americans would continue to enter into bilateral agreements with countries with which they had a strategic objective (Ntingi 2004).

Due to a variety of reasons that include, amongst others, insufficient policies in SACU such as new generation trade issues, and a sense of resentment, which are mentioned and explained below, the US and SACU negotiations failed to reach a consensus in 2006. The US did eventually offer SACU a Trade, Investment and Development Co-operation Agreement (Tidca)



that was signed in mid-2008. It provided a framework for the two to create the building blocks that could eventually lead to FTA. A FTA had yet to be reached at the end of 2008.

### **2.3 US perspective**

One of the main goals of US foreign policy is to advance the economic interests of the American people by promoting free trade and assisting American businesses. We saw this under both Clinton and Bush. What Jeffrey Garten, then US Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, said in 1995 still holds true till this day: the post-Cold War period would be ‘an era when US foreign policy and national security will increasingly revolve around [its] commercial interests, and when economic diplomacy will be essential to resolving the great issues of our age (Stremlau 1994/5 in Bridgman 1999:117).’

Lawrence Wilkerson (2008), former Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Powell, comments that since the end of apartheid and the beginning of the rule of the ANC, South African foreign policy had seemed more focused on increasing trade and economic prosperity than any other objective—almost to the exclusion of other matters. ‘While this is understandable—and praiseworthy in some regards—it is nonetheless disturbing when, for example, one watches as President Thabo Mbeki allows his fellow leader in Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, to inflict economic collapse and virtual tyranny on the people of that country,’ writes Wilkerson (2008).

Although AGOA was criticized for linking trade preferences with political and economic reforms, these reforms share some of America’s core values and are necessary to promote economic well being and a more secure, prosperous and democratic world. The thinking behind the SACU FTA was similar to the AGOA. America attributed the failure of the talks to two reasons; the absence of harmonized trade and investment policies within the SACU and a feeling

of resentment towards the US. In regards to the former, the US wanted a more detailed agreement that covered new generation issues such as intellectual property rights. This could not be agreed upon so the US had to back down for the time being.

There were other disagreements regarding trade between the US and South Africa. Some members of the US Government felt as if South Africa did not care about vital trade issues like intellectual property rights (IPRs). In the 1990s there were numerous arguments. Grant (2008) states it was only after the South African movie *Tsotsi* won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 2006 and the streets were flooded with counterfeit DVDs within forty-eight hours that South Africa realized the implications. 'They [South Africa] saw that *Tsotsi* could boost the filmmaking industry in their country, but South Africa had paid the price due to their feelings on IP rights,' Grant said. Since that occurrence, South Africa had changed their mind.

On the whole, the US perceives South Africa as a strategic country because its economy is a critical component to an economically and politically stable Africa. The US is willing to reengage with SACU and establish a FTA. However, if the US senses more resentment from SACU member states, as it did in the past, it is likely that the discussions between America and SACU will be delayed even further.

## **2.4 SA perspective**

The self-perception of South Africa was that it needed an 'economic foreign policy' that provided economic growth for not only its country, but for its surrounding countries as well. This **viewpoint** represented an attempt for the new South Africa to enact a new neighborly policy posture towards the rest of the continent under the spirit of ubuntu<sup>30</sup>. This in turn would serve as

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<sup>30</sup> Ubuntu is a philosophy focusing on people's allegiances and relations with one another. At a minimum, ubuntu connotes the prevalence of the collective over the individual and a preference for persuasion over coercion.

a catalyst to unleash prosperity in the rest of Africa and eventually reduce the very high unemployment rate in South Africa.

In order to accomplish this task, South Africa had to secure access to economic resources and argue for preferential trade and investment/aid terms. It accomplished this with the US. Since 2000, USAID provided over US\$4.5 billion to SADC countries for bilateral and regional programs, HIV/AIDS, and food aid. This amount does not include disaster assistance, i.e, for example, US\$137 million provided to Mozambique following the floods of 2000-2001. Of that total, US\$842 million was provided to South Africa (Brown, R. 2007). In addition, during the first decade of the New South Africa, the US was this country's largest bilateral partner, donating nearly 5 billion Rand between 1994 and 2003. The US continues to be South Africa's single largest contributing partner (Brown, R. 2007).

The AGOA was another economic diplomatic accomplishment, but South Africa feels the US can do better. One of the main flaws perceived by South Africa is that a large majority of exports to the US are minerals or oil. They feel they failed in getting the US to assist Africa in diversifying their economies and to further assist in their developing economies through what AGOA has to offer. South Africa feels that exporting oil is not going to broaden Africa's economic base and bring it out of poverty (Source One 2007). They want the US to help transfer technology to Africa so they can process raw materials and make products rather than countries just exporting. In September 2007, South African Ambassador Gert Grobler stated that South Africa would prefer a broadening of the agreement that would include the US in assisting in creating productive capacity (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:5). At the end of 2008, South Africa was not happy about how the AGOA was functioning. The oil factor is important as

South Africa perceives this as one or if not the top driving factors of US foreign policy (Source Four 2008).

US business is also viewed as difficult and lengthy due to their international laws and oversight and the extensive paperwork that comes with that process. Port accreditation is one example where it takes America a long period of time to finalize issues, as Durban was only port accredited for years (Grant 2008). In South Africa's mind, it is easier to do business with Europe that can bend here and there, and China who can bend even more. Trade with the US is also viewed as costing the developing countries a substantial amount of money with their numerous procedures and documentation. It is much easier to trade with other countries because they have nowhere near the amount of conditions attached like the Americans (Grant 2008).

South Africa also has the perception that the US violates intellectual property rights from time to time. The most common example cited involved South African composer Solomon Linda, a Zulu migrant worker who died in 1962, who composed the song *Mbube* (lion) in Johannesburg in 1939. The use of Mbube, more commonly known as *The Lion Sleeps Tonight* led to a lawsuit in 2003, after the song was used in Walt Disney's international hit *The Lion King*, released in 1994, which later turned into a successful Broadway musical. *The Lion Sleeps Tonight* reportedly earned more than US\$15 million worldwide for Disney (Bargar 2006). In the lawsuit, the family of Linda claimed more than 10 million Rand in damages from New Jersey-based Abilene Music, which holds the copyright to *The Lion Sleeps Tonight*, which in turn licensed it to the Walt Disney Corporation. A settlement was eventually reached in February 2006 for an undisclosed amount of money.

In the FTA talks, South Africa and the SACU blamed the US for being inflexible. Most SACU countries did not understand the terminology and jargon the US used such as new

generation issues (Grant 2008). In fact, some African countries do not even have legislation on their books to cover such matters. South Africa took the lead in the negotiations because they had some experience dealing in the free trade talks with the EU.

More importantly, the US came in and started the negotiations with their documents ready to be signed, which does not bode well with African culture. Grant (2008) reveals that the US had signed so many FTA's in the past that had a basic template, and simply made a few changes for SACU. 'The Africans felt that the US was just trying to say sign here, here and here and it will be done. However, in Africa you need to build trust and establish a relationship. You do not tell someone what to do in their own house or also what they don't want to hear in African culture,' states Grant (2008). 'The US came across as arrogant and high-handed,' says Grant (2008). The African perspective was that the US needed to slow down and adapt to the way business is done in Africa, not the other way around. A person who lives on the continent quickly realizes that actions in Africa take time.

The US did ask SACU how and what they felt about the FTA and the process towards the end of the negotiations. 'It was the appropriate gesture but by then most of damage had already been done, and regardless, the US was still pressuring SACU to sign on the dotted line,' states Grant (2008). Nevertheless, some acknowledge within the South Africa government that the negotiations with the US for a FTA collapsed mainly because of this growing resentment of the US even though the deal would have been good for South Africa (Fabricius 2007).

Another view was that SACU member states were negotiating in fear that they might lock themselves into an agreement that cast them as America's puppets, especially since the US had become more unilateralist under Bush. Lehloenyia (2009:123) argues that the refusal by SACU members to 'bow to US pressure to sign an agreement they perceived to be unfavourable seems

to be part of a growing trend among developing countries to insist on asserting their rights and demanding equitable treatment from their developed counterparts in trade matters.' Lehloeny provides the Cancun Ministerial conference in 2003 where the G20, with South Africa being involved, openly rejected a joint US-EU proposal on agriculture ending talks, as evidence of this trend.

### **3. Defense relations**

America shares the same perspective with South Africa; stability – whether political, economic or military for Africa is beneficial to their country. Stability would help the US reduce the likelihood of terrorists using unstable countries to launch their attacks on the US. Stability would also bring with it foreign investment for Southern Africa from the developed world and fulfill the South African objectives of NEPAD and the African Renaissance. Often a necessary component to reach this stability is a military presence by helping to restore peace during and after conflicts. Although military cooperation between both countries would then appear to be a simple equation where both would immediately agree, this has often not been the case.

When Mandela was elected in 1994, he was upset over the US court indictment against South Africa's state-owned Armaments Corporation of South Africa (Armcor). According to the indictment, there were apparent violations on South Africa's part of US arms export controls during the 1980s (Wisconsin 1997). South African officials of the new government requested that the indictment be dropped due to the apartheid government no longer being in power, but US officials refused.

Similar to Americans ongoing disagreement about the pariah states, South Africa was still very upset over the failure to resolve the Armcor issue. Denel's Managing Director Johan Alberts vented his frustration: 'It's totally unfair that the Americans are preventing business, and

it puts my president in a very awkward position (Wisconsin 1996).’ According to Wisconsin Project on Arms Control (1996), Mandela tried for two years to persuade Washington to drop its restrictions on trade with Armscor, to no avail. Mandela even asked President Clinton personally to drop the case when they met at the UN in 1995, but Clinton declined (Wisconsin 1997). He told Mandela that the matter was in the hands of the US Department of Justice (Wisconsin 1997). Meanwhile, Denel employees were crying foul play, accusing the US of trying to quash South Africa's defense industry (Wisconsin 1996).

Regardless of this criticism, former Secretary of State Warren Christopher’s Africa trip in 1996 was to sell the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), or what was called the African Crisis Response Force (ACRF). The main goal of the ACRI was to upgrade Africa's armies. The basic assumption underlying it was that African regions and states would be responsible for their own security, receiving assistance and training from the US. In an ACRI hearing, Congressman Donald Payne stated:

I think that since the US has made it a policy issue of not sending troops into harm's way unless it is very, very unique situation- and I don't see Africa ever getting up to that level on the bar- I think then the next best thing would be that we ought to be able to train troops to be proficient in attempting to avoid the types of problems that we saw in the past (Africa 2001).

Mandela stated: ‘My point of view is if this initiative [ACRF] is to succeed, it must have credibility. It must not come from one country. It should be the initiative of the UN. (Business Day 1996a in Hesse 2001:120).’ He then added: ‘Africans would like to feel they are handling things themselves...not acting in response to suggestions that come from outside the continent. (Business Day 1996a in Hesse 2001:120).’ Additionally, Mandela expressed the suspicion of African soldiers serving on an ACRF like the one the US was proposing ‘might simply become America’s or Europe’s policemen (Business Day 1996a in Hesse 2001:120).’

The ACRF initiative 'had been a hard sell to Americans because it was perceived as having little direct benefit for the US, and yet promised unlimited benefits for Africans (Kornegay 1997 in Hesse 2001:123).' Furthermore, the one country US foreign policy makers had thought they would be able to count on - indeed the one country whose support was necessary if it were to become a reality, South Africa - had failed to give a political endorsement. Numerous South Africans viewed the incident with some satisfaction as South African policy makers watched Mandela all but 'hand Christopher his hat' on the ACRF issue (Business 1996b in Hesse 2001:129). A DFA official later explained, 'What really rankled us was not the proposed ACRF itself, but the fact that it was, apparently, being imposed on us (Van Rensburg 1997 in Hesse 2001:130).'

By 1997, the Armscor fiasco and the stress it brought with it had ended. Armscor, a subsidiary Kentron and a privately held South African company, Fuchs Electronic, pleaded 'no contest' to charges that they smuggled US high technology military equipment in violation of the 1977 UN arms embargo against South Africa. This agreement was similar to a 1995 plea bargain but offered fines far less, which then allowed the defendants to plead no contest (Whelan 1997). At the end of 1997, a meeting was held in the US between Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad and the US Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs concerning the resolution of the final aspects of the Armscor case. This meeting was ultimately aimed at normalizing defense trade relations between the two countries (DFA 1997).

In February 1998, Mbeki's office proclaimed that it was 'a matter of time' before America would lift its arms trade embargo against South Africa. Moreover, the announcement stated that it was 'just a matter of an administrative act on the part of the US' to lift the debarment that was still in place against companies in South Africa (Muller 2000). This was seen



as a fundamental step forward in the relationship, especially coming one month prior to Clinton's historic 1998 visit to Africa.

Mandela pleased the US during Clinton's visit with his first public approval of the ACRI. He said: 'We support the initiative very fully,' but with the provision that any African peacekeeping force that arose would be commanded by an African. US officials had no complaints as they envisaged the trained African force only going into operations launched by the UN or the Organization of African Unity (Fabricius 1998).

South Africa's botched intervention in Lesotho in 1998 showed the lack of their intelligence and overall military capability. It truly showed that training and resources from the US military could prove beneficial to South Africa. Moreover, perhaps intelligence would have assisted Mandela as he lost the negotiations over the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) conflict to Robert Mugabe. Zimbabwe, along with Angola and Namibia, sent military backing to fight the rebellion against President Laurent Kabila. Mandela argued for a negotiated settlement, which was a stance closer to America's position and was seen by some as tantamount to letting the rebels do their work (Mail and Guardian 1997).

From roughly 1994 to 1999, Air Force Col. Keith A. Betsch's job, as the defense and air attache at the US Embassy in Pretoria was vital to assuring military-to-military cooperation between the American armed forces and the SANDF (Kozaryn 1999). Betsch and a joint service team hosted technical teams and other American officials visiting South Africa. In February 1999, Defense Secretary William S. Cohen, visited Cape Town, the first visit ever by a US defense secretary. According to media reports, Cohen noted during his meetings with then South African Defense Minister Joe Modise that the US military can learn much from the South African forces, particularly in the field of demining (Kozaryn 1999). Prior to Cohen's visit,

Kozaryn wrote that Betsch's staff hosted a US Air Force team in South Africa to monitor telemetry from a rocket launch out of Vandenberg Air Force Base in California that carried a South African satellite into orbit.

The defense attache's office also coordinates the International Military Exchange Training program that provides funding for South African service members to train at US facilities and vice versa. This has included, amongst others, two South African pilot candidates attending US Air Force pilot training and a South African colonel who attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, part of the National Defense University in Washington. Furthermore, South African officers also have graduated from the US Army, Navy and Air war colleges.

In the beginning of 2000, US Defense Secretary Cohen returned an official visit to South Africa where regional security issues featured prominently. Cohen talked with Mbeki, Mandela and Defense Minister Mosiuoa Lekota, in which discussions included the UN peacekeeping force in the DRC (MONUC) and the Burundi peace talks (SAPA 2000a). The DoD also worked side by side with the SANDF in Mozambique in March 2000 after floods ravaged hundreds of thousands of Mozambican residents.

Operation Atlas Response, as it was called by US military, was put together by the US European Command. US humanitarian assistance teams arrived in the area on 18 February and the establishment of Task Force Atlas Response was completed on 6 March with DoD allocating more than US\$37 million to pay for the military relief effort (Garamone 2000). American forces in the operation numbered around 800 and pilots for the task force flew about 600 sorties. This included, in total, about 1,200 passengers and 970 tons of cargo.

European Command officials said the effort was truly a joint effort. The US Air Force provided airplanes and helicopters from US airbases all over the world. This included C-130's from Germany, two HH-60 helicopters diverted after duty in Turkey with Operation Northern Watch and helicopter crews from Keflavik, Iceland. Numerous other countries were involved besides the US and South Africa such as the UK, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal and Malawi (Garamone 2000). A member of the South African Air Force (SAAF), Will Morris, was present in Mozambique and was heavily involved with the media. He explained that the American troops were very professional and great at what they do. He has the utmost respect for them; however, he felt that they were very 'distant' from the other countries troops. They stayed in their own tents separate from everyone else. Furthermore, they couldn't simply slot into missions like the troops from the other countries. When discussing this with an official from the US Embassy (Source Four 2008), the American clarified that the US military would have to be separated, having their own command center. Additionally, US troops could not go on missions with other countries because they have different rules and regulations (ie call signs). Throughout the whole mission in Mozambique, Morris felt the best comradely was between the South African and British troops.

Back in Washington, the US once again looked to South Africa for its assistance with peacekeeping and improving the security situation in Africa. The Bush Administration reorganized the ACRI, which Clinton promoted so heavily in 1998, into the Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA). The new ACOTA provided peacekeeping and humanitarian aid, offensive training, particularly for regular infantry units and small units modeled on Special Forces, as well as training for hostile environments (Abramovici 2004). Unlike the ACRI, where non lethal tactics were promoted, the African forces were now given

standardized attack equipment (assault rifles, machine guns and mortars), where the emphasis is on 'offensive' cooperation (Abramovici 2004). American officials hoped South Africa, along with other SADC nations, would participate in ACOTA. Michael A. Westphal, the most senior political appointment in the US Department of Defense for sub-Saharan Africa and policy at the time said on 02 April 2002 that the Bush Administration views South Africa as 'regionally as well as within the continent an important country, an important military (Burger 2002).'

The high number of bilateral visits continued in the beginning of 2003. In January, the US Army Military Police Corps engaged with the Military Police Agency of South Africa in the first visit between the military police of the two countries (Zabek 2004). Members of the US military police saw how South Africa had achieved recognition as being capable of influencing the region. It was also clear that South Africa continued to struggle with the legacy of apartheid and the challenge of fully developing its social, economic, and military power. However, the Americans felt that South Africa could project regional power, which meant that they could take the lead for security in Southern Africa (Zabek 2004).

It was announced in the same month by US ambassador Hume that defense relations between the two countries had been normalized. South Africa's largest arms manufacturers, a result, could now freely trade with the US for the first time since 1991. As mentioned previously, the case was settled in 1996 and the ban was suspended in 1998; however commercial transactions still had to be individually approved under a special program designed to evaluate the companies' compliance with US laws (McDonough 2004). With the news, Denel stepped up the marketing of its new generation 105mm artillery in America. It was currently teamed with the American company General Dynamics Land Systems to develop a long-range and lightweight 105mm gun for the US market. The US already bought fiber optic equipment from

Denel to use in its Marine helicopters. Additionally, the US army was testing South African-made military equipment, especially ammunition at the time (Africa 2004).

There was also a joint announcement of US-South Africa military training during the broadcast of the normalization of defense relations. The US clearly understood the importance of the South African military and gave its assistance through a program known as Project Phidisa (a SeTswana word meaning ‘to heal or give life’). Project Phidisa focuses on treating members of the SANDF and their families who are living with HIV/AIDS and is run by three organizations: the SANDF, the US National Institute of Health, and the DoD. In 2004, the US gave more than US\$50 million over a five-year period to further the Project Phidisa (Underwood 2008:9).

Project Phidisa was an accomplishment in the HIV/AIDS arena and a great cooperative moment between the US and South Africa, but it only came about because of one particular general in the SANDF. According to Source Seven (2008), the US approached this general in 2000 and asked him if he wanted to know if his soldiers were HIV positive after they failed to get any response from Mbeki or his health minister on the HIV/AIDS issue. This general said yes despite being afraid of the repercussions if Mbeki or his office found out. ‘Mbeki didn’t know this was happening. I don’t even think our own Pentagon knew about us working with the SANDF on this,’ stated the Source. The US assisted in testing the general’s troops and both uncovered exactly how bad the situation was.

In a small press conference in the Oval Office following a 2005 meeting between Bush and Mbeki, they were questioned by a handful of US journalists. One journalist questioned both presidents on the issue of Darfur, Sudan. The individual revealed that a new survey was released by the Zogby International Poll that found 84 percent of Americans polled felt the US should not tolerate an extremist government committing such attacks and should use its military assets,

short of using military combat troops on the ground to protect civilians there. Mbeki replied stating: ‘certainly from the African perspective, we wouldn't say we want deployment of US troops in Darfur -- on the continent. We've got the people to do this -- military, police, other -- so long as we get this necessary logistical support. I think that's what's critically important (The White House 2005).’

In August 2005, South Africa became the 13th African nation to participate in America's ACOTA program, the purpose of which is to increase the capacity of African nations to participate in multinational peace support operations. The accord was signed by US Ambassador Frazer and South African Defense Minister Lekota in Pretoria (PANA 2005b). Frazer, shortly after, left South Africa to take up her new post as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in the US. She returned to South Africa in October 2005 for a four day visit where she officiated the opening of the new US Consulate building in Cape Town and met with senior South African government officials.

At the end of the month, a South African National Defence College (SANDC) delegation was in Washington to meet with high-ranking officials at the Pentagon as part of a week-long trip at the invitation of the US military. This was the first time a SANDC delegation would visit America. An official statement stated: ‘Through consistent engagement and co-operation, the United States aims to reinforce South Africa's ability to play a key role in regional peacekeeping efforts, strengthen the skills and capacity of South Africa's military, and expand on the already sound military-to-military relationship (PANA 2005c).’

In July 2007, Welile Nhlapo became South Africa's new ambassador to the US. Of all the diplomatic postings Washington is arguably the most challenging, as relations between South Africa and the US have been somehow patchy, writes Mkhabela (2007:22). Nhlapo referred to

the fact that the US has supported South Africa's peace efforts in the Great Lakes but said: 'They [US] have what they regard as their own interest on the continent, which has created problems for a number of people. We should be able to engage on those issues and be able to say maybe there are common things that we need to do together.' However, Nhlapo was prepared to disagree with the execution of South Africa's foreign policy based on its own interests and the wider interests of the continent. 'But as a South African and an African I should be able to explain why there are certain problems, fears and even misunderstanding. It's not going to be easy,' he said (Mkhabela 2007:22).

Nhlapo believed that the main challenge is to minimize tension that may 'unnecessarily arise from time to time as a result of misunderstandings' to avoid 'trampling each others' toes.' Furthermore, 'It's a question of defining and modifying and understanding interests because international relations is all about interests.' Nhlapo continued by saying there is a 'reality' that the US is the only superpower while there is a 'notion' held by some people that South Africa is a continental superpower. 'I think that notion needs to be nursed very carefully, and also for us to know that when you punch you don't punch above your weight,' he said (Mkhabela 2007:22).

One of Nhlapo's first battles would be the issue of AFRICOM. Leading the African opposition had been South Africa's Lekota, who in July 2007 did not even respond to a request from the US Embassy to meet with General William E. 'Kip' Ward, the designated first commander of AFRICOM when the latter was in Johannesburg to attend a seminar hosted by the Brenthurst Foundation (Pham 2007a). Lekota said publicly the following month that should Africa 'avoid the presence of foreign forces on her soil.' He even went as far as lecturing his sub regional counterparts during their annual meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, by stating 'the interests of unity of African nations supersedes any individual view of a constituent member' and

threatened that ‘should any particular country choose to break ranks with this decision...other sister countries may refuse to cooperate with it in other areas other than that particular area (Pham 2007a).’

While briefing the media on 30 August, Lekota said SADC defence ministers had, at the summit in Lusaka in the same month, decided that no member states would host AFRICOM and more armed US soldiers. Lekota said this was also the ‘continental position’ of the AU. More importantly, he said that there will be consequences should any African country allow the US a military presence. These could amount to neighboring African countries refusing to cooperate with them (Hartley 2007).

Lekota was not the only South African to speak out against AFRICOM. Blade Nzimande, the General Secretary of the SACP, wrote an appropriately titled article on his organizations website ‘The Eagle is not just encircling but landing on our continent: Africans must reject AFRICOM.’ In the article Nzimande (2007) found it interesting that there appeared to be a silence in political and public debates in South Africa about global imperialist plans of the US in general and in Africa.

Civil society has played in a role in AFRICOM in addition to African States. The Africa Human Security Working Group is a faction of American and Africa based organizations and individuals that was established to oppose the role of AFRICOM. In August 2007, Okumu (2007) testified to the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs and explained that African public opinion is ‘really against’ the idea of ‘getting in bed’ with the US.

South Africa asked for America’s help in that same month [August] despite the harsh comments on AFRICOM and their role in Africa. They asked for American assistance in the release of four South Africans who were kidnapped in Iraq, Deputy Minister Pahad said on 15



August. Pahad said the company the four men worked for, SafeNet Security Services, which is contracted by the US DoD, had not been able to make progress in its talks with the hostage takers. Pahad went on to say: 'They guaranteed us that they were going to make progress, but the long and the short of it is they have not made much progress, so we are continuing through the various channels to see whether we can bring a resolution to that problem (SAPA 2007).' The four South Africans, Andre Durant, Johan Enslin, Kallie Scheepers and Hardus Greeff were kidnapped in December 2006 when they were flagged down at a roadblock north of Baghdad. They were traveling in a convoy along with five Iraqis, who were also snatched at the roadblock. The Iraqis were released two days later (SAPA 2007).

South Africans are not strangers to the Iraq war with many having signed up to work in the country. Nobody knows how many for sure, but the DFA estimated around 10,000, though security industry experts and US contracting firms said the figure was far smaller; most likely around 2,000 to 3,000 men. Still, Salopek (2007) found that even the lower estimate would make South Africans the third-largest contingent of armed foreigners deployed in Iraq after the UK. The South African presence in Iraq certainly isn't new either. South Africans armed with submachine guns were guarding America's first proconsul, Jay Garner, within days of Saddam Hussein's fall. Approximately 30 South African citizens have died in Iraq, according to the South African government (Salopek 2007). 'The Americans like us because we're well-trained and used to working in rustic conditions,' said Alex de Witt, who spent 18 months in Iraq protecting construction sites run by KBR, the US engineering giant. However, 'there's a political cost to going. The government here doesn't like it,' says de Witt.

A briefing on AFRICOM took place in South Africa for the PCFA on 20 February, but similar to a meeting held in November 2007 by the US, it was closed and is confidential. The

briefing on AFRICOM came one day after the US military said its regional command headquarters would stay in Germany and not move to Africa just yet (Associated Press 2008).

With the departure of Mbeki and several cabinet ministers in late 2008, including Defense Minister Lekota, US-South African relations began to slowly improve. The US Nuclear ship the USS Theodore Roosevelt flying the AFRICOM flag made its way to Cape Town in the first week of October despite concerns from the environmental lobby group Earthlife Africa (Njobeni 2008). ‘The South African government has invited us to visit Cape Town, and we are grateful for the opportunity,’ said Rear Adm. Frank Pandolfe, Commander of Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group (US Embassy 2008). ‘We look forward to strengthening the relationship with the South African Navy,’ Pandolfe went on to say. The Roosevelt visit to Cape Town marks the first time a US carrier has visited South Africa in more than 40 years. The last carrier to visit South Africa was the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1967 (US Embassy 2008).

A US military source saw this event as a monumental one given South Africa's past refusals to let US nuclear powered ships dock. The military people at the Embassy see this aircraft carrier docking as a possible change of policy (Source Five 2008). The source also revealed that the US military was arranging for a US warplane to fly over Table Mountain.

The US-South African relationship started off slow in regards to defense relations. It was hampered by the Armscor indictment and continued with some disagreements about the ACRI. This gradually improved over time with numerous defense related delegations held in both countries, the official normalization of defense relations, and cooperation in regards to ACOTA. However, one perceived area of disagreement towards the end of the time period was the issue of AFRICOM.

### 3.1 US perspective

America had little incentive to view Africa as anything other than a continent of chaos and decline after the Somalia debacle<sup>31</sup> followed by Rwanda<sup>32</sup> in 1994, hence Clinton launching the ACRI. Under ACRI, African regions and states would be responsible for security in their region with the help of US assistance. America perceived the program as a win-win situation for them. It would help the security situation in Africa while not posing any risk to US soldiers losing their lives. They also perceived it for being beneficial for African countries due to the fact that they frequently requested to handle African conflicts internally. Although South Africa did share that point of view, they had other concerns, which they believed the US failed to address.

Africa's security situation was heightened after the US embassy bombings of 1998 in Kenya and Tanzania. 9/11 further heightened the importance of stability in Africa. The Bush Administration still perceived South Africa and their military to be an important leader in conflict resolution and peacekeeping in Africa. The US wanted to do whatever they could to assist. The largest aspect of this US-South African military cooperation is ACOTA; a revamped ACRI aimed at enhancing the peacekeeping capabilities of African militaries. Project Phidisa, international military educational training, US support of AU and UN peacekeeping missions, and US military assistance in humanitarian disasters such as Mozambique was just a handful of instances where America assisted South Africa and Africa as a whole.

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<sup>31</sup> In April 1993, a transition began in which the UN was to come under command of the operations in Somalia. Despite this, the involvement of US troops who were still very much present in the country commanded attention. In June 1993, when 23 Pakistani peacekeepers were killed, US forces were given the job of arresting the man believed to be behind the ambush, Mohamed Farah Aideed. By August, eight US soldiers had been killed trying to achieve this objective (Hesse 2005:328). Then, in two days in October 1993, 18 US soldiers were killed and 84 wounded in a 17-hour battle in Mogadishu. Shortly after the battle, international news channels showed the footage of Somalis dragging dead US soldiers naked through the streets.

<sup>32</sup> In early to mid 1994, approximately 800,000 Tutsi Rwandans were murdered by Hutus, mostly with machetes and other primitive weapons.

The WOT caused the perspectives of Africa by the Clinton and Bush Administrations to somewhat differ. The promotion of democracy and human rights by Clinton was a large part of his foreign policy, as highlighted in chapter three. It was seen as ensuring stability and development in African countries, and in turn benefiting the US economy. However, Africa and its leaders during the time period saw the WOT and America's security interests take precedence over other matters.

One perception both Bush and Clinton understood was that Africa wanted internal conflicts to be handled internally. Darfur is a typical example, yet an interesting one. It is one of the rare occasions where the American public has overwhelmingly supported the US using its military to assist the people in the area (The White House 2005). This was a drastic change in attitude compared to earlier situations such as Somalia. Bush sided with Mbeki and the US led international efforts to achieve peace and stability in the Sudan but without using the specific American military force. Despite the US being largest single humanitarian donor and peacekeeping supporter for Sudan, it received criticism from other Africans and numerous outsiders that their approach was too multilateral and that the US was not doing enough to quell the violence (Source Four 2008). Some critics advocated the use of US military force contrary to Mbeki's wishes.

The rationale for AFRICOM was to combine the operations that the US was already participating in such as peacekeeping and humanitarian missions to improve US military focus on Africa and enhance American inter-agency support for the development of African military establishments. Similar to past US initiatives, AFRICOM's mission is to build African capacity so that African states can manage their own security issues. One other main benefit includes expanding and intensifying counter-terrorism operations (i.e. WOT) throughout the region.

American government officials are always quick to point out that there will be no US combat troops permanently assigned to AFRICOM, nor with its headquarters element, nor will there be any new military bases associated with AFRICOM (Source Four 2008).

South Africa became the loudest voice on the continent in opposition to AFRICOM, much to the dismay of the US (Hartley 2007). US officials at the embassy perceived this action along with Lekota's anti-American statements as a way to earn 'brownie points' in the ANC elections held at the end of 2007 (Source Four 2008). They perceive many ANC members who make public statements against the US as simply trying to earn favor with their colleagues who approve of the rhetoric against the global power (Source Four 2008).

This is concerning because some Americans have the opinion that should the Command fail to win the support of nations such as Nigeria and South Africa, it will have trouble selling AFRICOM to the continent as a whole. On the other hand, there are some Americans that see South Africa as having competition from countries like Nigeria, Libya and to a lesser extent, Ethiopia that threaten its African leader status (Keller 2008).

Due to these conflicting views, various Americans such as Shillinger (2008) question the so-called 'African unity' that South Africa always put forth. One example given was the American drafted UN resolution that would condemn rape and sexual abuse by governments and armed groups as a means to reach their goals. South Africa initially tried to portray its position as being supported by the 43-nation African group, but American diplomats found this not to be true. Another example of South Africa not sharing the same view as Africa as a whole is all four African members of FIFA's executive committee voted for losers Morocco in the 2010 World Cup hosts (BBC 2004). The South African *Sunday Times* remarked in August 2003 that SADC delegates at a Dar es Salaam regional summit felt that Pretoria was 'too defensive and protective'

in trade negotiations [and] is being accused of offering too much support for domestic production 'such as duty rebates on exports' which is killing off other economies in the region'.

Another example is that in July 2003 the *Sunday Times* reported from an African Union (AU) meeting that Mbeki is 'viewed by other African leaders as too powerful, and they privately accuse him of wanting to impose his will on others. In the corridors they call him the George Bush of Africa, leading the most powerful nation in the neighborhood and using his financial and military muscle to further his own agenda (Bond 2004:614).' Grant (2008) also disclosed that Africans view South Africa as the 'US of Africa.'

### **3.2 SA perspective**

South Africa has been emphatically and actively trying to succeed in a neighborly like foreign policy contrary to that of the apartheid government. Because of ubuntu and the African Renaissance, South Africa is skeptical of unilateral US military force and their plans for Africa. They feel it almost represents a return to colonialism. Furthermore, South Africa believes they can assist in the goal of unleashing prosperity in the rest of Africa because of their struggle against such a strong government during apartheid. However, as mentioned previously, there is distrust and tension among South Africa and many African nations.

The South African perception over the original ACRI was that:

- Africans would like to feel they are handling things themselves...not acting in response to suggestions that come from outside the continent;
- African soldiers serving on an ACRF like the one the US was proposing might simply become America's or Europe's policemen; and
- The ACRF was being imposed on them (Hesse 2001:120).

SANDEF's official military position toward ACOTA was more positive than that of the ACRI. Lekota knew he needed better trained troops and staff members and he welcomed US assistance in this regard. Others felt that ACOTA training would prove useful in South Africa's

quest to build a more vigorous peacekeeping force. However, the South African government strongly disagrees with American policies on global engagement preferring that individual nations or regional bodies should handle their own difficulties. What South Africa understands all too clearly is most African states lack the tactical mobility and logistics infrastructure to conduct peace-enforcement and peacekeeping operations; therefore they welcome US assistance in those particular aspects. South Africa also realizes that this is likely not to change in the near future so they will continue to require US assistance when crises emerge in Africa such as logistical assistance, which Mbeki asked Bush for in 2005 when discussing the situation in Darfur (The White House 2005).

AFRICOM has been a completely different story to ACOTA. Some South Africans were concerned after the Iraq war that the US could invade South Africa in order to gain access to strategic minerals such as platinum (Carroll 2006 in Glenn 2008:77-8). In a similar line, some viewed the new command as a neo-colonialist move to secure oil as Sub-Saharan Africa has surpassed the Middle East in exports of natural resources to the US (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:2). Others perceive AFRICOM as being established to thwart the growing Chinese influence on the continent (Mesfin 2009).

South Africa didn't see the need for AFRICOM during Mbeki's presidency (Hartley 2007). It felt that there were other institutions to handle promoting stability in Africa such as the UN, AU and SADC (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:5). Their perception was that AFRICOM is undermining African unity. In addition, South Africa is concerned that AFRICOM's location could pose a threat against African governments given America's strategy of regime change (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:5) and that its presence alone would lead to Africa being a larger target for terrorist attacks.

South Africans know that the militarization of political and economic space by African military leaders has been one of the factors that held Africa back. Many want to see democratic systems do their work and leave the military out of it. This has created the perception that the US doesn't care what South Africa or Africa wants. And in a situation where collective response is needed, they see the AU's Common Defense and Security Policy as the main mechanism to ensure a collective response to threats to African states and to enhance defense cooperation. There have been some individuals (Wheeler 2008) who feel AFRICOM can make a contribution in helping Africa achieve these objectives, but if so, this has not been properly explained by American officials.

While African states are trying to put the culture of military rule behind them, the US appears determined to demonstrate that many civilian activities in Africa should be undertaken by armed forces. To some African policy makers, this suggests that Washington lacks sympathy for what Africans so deeply want today, namely true democracy where the armed forces remain in the barracks (Makinda 2007). Furthermore, they feel America's military engagement around the world provides little evidence to believe that AFRICOM would be beneficial to Africa (Makinda 2007). They simply perceive it is stopping terrorism and gaining access to African oil.

#### **4. Summary**

The issue of economic relations and defense relations (ie African conflicts and peacekeeping) were of major importance during the time period and rose in prominence during the Bush and Mbeki Administrations.

This chapter discussed how positive trade relations boded well for both sides with trade between the two countries expanding exponentially since 1994. Some differences arose over issues such as property rights, AGOA and the SACU FTA. However, both appear to want to



further grow trade relations with the idea of not only helping their economies, but the economies of Southern Africa as well.

On the defense front, Clinton automatically assumed South Africa would support his initiative before even attempting to consider South Africa's point of view. AFRICOM was somewhat similar because for all of 2007 and most of 2008, America was completely failing to portray a positive image of the command to Africans. South Africa in particular was highly skeptical over AFRICOM during the time period (Hartley 2007). However, the docking of the USS Roosevelt under an AFRICOM flag shows a possible change in this perception.

The next chapter continues on a similar path by examining the role 'allies and enemies' had on the relationship.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: ALLIES AND ENEMIES: PARIAH STATES AND WMD, IRAQ WAR (SINCE 2003), ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

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## **5. ALLIES AND ENEMIES: PARIAH STATES AND WMD, IRAQ WAR (SINCE 2003), ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter examines the factors related to America's and/or South Africa's allies and enemies. This begins with South Africa's relationships with so-called pariah states, which includes Iran, Libya, Syria and Cuba. These countries were the most frequently discussed in primary and secondary sources, as well as in interviews. This section is purposely combined with the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) because connections to WMDs were often one of the main reasons why a particular bilateral relationship with South Africa was prominent in the first place. Secondly, America's invasion of Iraq in 2003 is discussed. The time period leading up to it was an extremely rocky phase between the two countries, with harsh criticism being flung at each other from both sides. Lastly, the Israel-Palestinian conflict, which has been a long-standing issue in the US-South African bilateral relationship since 1994, is scrutinized in full.

### **2. South Africa's relations with so-called 'pariah states' and the non-proliferation of WMD**

The term 'pariah state'<sup>33</sup> is closely related to the term 'rogue state' and has often been used by Western journalists, political scientists and even diplomats to describe nations such as Burma, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Liberia, Libya, Syria, North Korea, Uganda and Zimbabwe<sup>34</sup>. In a broader context, pariah states are usually ruled by authoritarian regimes,

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<sup>33</sup> It is believed that one of the first academics to provide a definition of the term 'pariah state' was Penn State Political Science Professor Robert Harkavy. In his 1981 *International Organization* article entitled 'Pariah States and Nuclear Proliferation,' he defined the term as a state who has precarious diplomatic isolation, the absence of assured, credible security support or political moorings within big-power alliance structures, and ... [being] the targets of obsessive and unrelenting opprobrium and censure within international forums such as the United Nations.'

<sup>34</sup> It should be noted that the US has had or currently has a positive relationship with some of the countries listed.

restrict human rights, are often accused of supporting international terrorism and, in some instances, seek to proliferate weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

The issue in the US-South African bilateral relationship is that the ANC received support from a number of the countries listed previously during their fight against apartheid. The US knew this was going to be a ‘problem’ even before the ANC officially took power in 1994. A declassified DCI report from before the elections states:

Although we judge that on balance ties between the United States and the ANC probably will grow stronger this year, there remains ample cause for concern. [sentence blocked out]. The ANC-mindful of latent anti-Americanism among its militant and young supporters, and affected by a sense of loyalty that Mandela and other top officials feel toward states such as Cuba that actively supported the ANC’s guerrilla campaign- will look for opportunities to assert its independence on foreign policy issues without completely alienating the West. At the same time, some of the party’s ideological, generational, racial, ethnic, and class fissures will widen under the strain of applying state resources to a host of serious political, socio-economic, and security problems. [sentences blocked out] (DCI 1994:14).

US government personnel back in the States were also skeptical of the ANC and the soon to be new president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. One such individual was Congressman Donald Payne of New Jersey who raised concerns at the US Policy Toward South Africa hearing before the subcommittee on Africa in the House of Representatives. He proclaimed that the ANC was planning to spend at least 34 million Rand on a post-inaugural bash with a number of world leaders being invited, including American leaders. However, Payne viewed the scheduled guests of honor as Muammar Qaddafi, Fidel Castro and Saddam Hussein. ‘What do these things tell us about the ANC’s moral compass? And if they have 34 million Rand to spend on such frivolous activities, should we really be contemplating an increase in our already generous aid program,’ Payne stated. The congressman further elaborated:

I raise these concerns, Mr. Chairman, not as a Republican or Democrat, not as a conservative or liberal, and not as a partisan of any one group in South Africa. I simply raise a series of concerns that ought to trouble all of us who are committed to human rights, freedom and democracy in South Africa. For ultimately, if we act as cheerleaders for the ANC and stand idly by while the ANC turns South Africa into just another African dictatorship, we will have severely let down the South African people and the blood of their children will be on our hands (Hearing 1994).

Regardless, Bridgman (1999) observes that American pronouncements on South Africa in the wake of the April/May 1995 Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review and Extension Conference created an impression that the two countries were taking great strides in their defense relations. America's believed the NPT should be indefinitely extended under which the developed world could maintain some control over the spread of nuclear weapons while working to reduce its own stockpiles. South Africa, as part of the NAM, faced a difficult decision in that the developing nations were opposed to such an extension. NAM instead favored a fixed period extension, in order for future negotiations to take place that could change the status quo under which NAM countries were at a distinct disadvantage.

South Africa itself refused to admit to a nuclear weapons program before making the decision in July 1991 to sign the NPT (Albright & Hibbs 1993). As part of the stipulations of the NPT, South Africa had to submit its nuclear inventory to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Controversy soon became rife between the South African government and the future governing party, the ANC. The latter continuously stated that it was against nuclear weapons development and that it wanted the former to release all information regarding the nuclear weapons program (Albright & Hibbs 1993). The US government later got involved and offered to buy South Africa's highly enriched uranium. According to a US official in 1993, 'The ANC is bound to view the sale of the weapon- grade stock as a signal that the governments involved in the transaction do not trust a prospective black-majority government. But ANC's stated position opposing the building, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons would make it difficult for the party to oppose the sale (Albright & Hibbs 1993).'

It was only on 24 March 1993, that South African president de Klerk admitted to his country's nuclear weapons program, and that the arsenal was dismantled in 1991 (Baeckmann et

al 1995). The IAEA later confirmed this. Even with the new information, the ANC still pronounced the need to permanently extend the NPT.

The US was clear that South Africa should support the American position and the US ambassador to South Africa quietly warned the South African elite what was expected from them, although research shows that it appeared there already was a shared viewpoint despite the warning. Even so, the US saw South Africa in a strong moral position to lead the NAM as they swore off the development of future nuclear weaponry. In the end, South Africa lobbied for the American position, and persuaded NAM to follow suit (Bridgman 1999:131).

The US thoroughly praised South Africa's stance at the NPT conference in light of this. Speaking at the first meeting of the US-South African Binational Commission<sup>35</sup> (BNC) in late 1995, Gore proclaimed that 'clearly South Africa has a tremendous amount to offer the United States and the entire world. Your leadership on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation provides a model for the rest of the world (UNIS 1995 in Bridgman 1999:132).' Source Nine (2008) recalls that South Africa really came across as the leader at the NPT conference and it was one of the great cooperative moments between the US and South Africa. It should be remembered that in 1994, under pressure from the US, South Africa also agreed not to build long-range missiles and to destroy the plants and equipment it was using to build large space rockets. South Africa also terminated its nuclear weapons program and demolished its key rocket sites and was allowed to join the Missile Technology Control Regime; a group of 28 countries that agreed to restrict the spread of long-range missiles in the summer of 1995 (Wisconsin 1996).

The CIA issued an intelligence report 'Southern Africa: Blandishments by Pariahs and Cuba Yield Mixed Results' dated 17 May 1995 stating that so-called pariah states such as Iran, Libya, North Korea and Sudan continued to seek diplomatic support, trade ties, or opportunities

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<sup>35</sup> To be discussed in length in chapter eight.

to export militant Islam to countries in Southern Africa. Moreover: 'Most of these countries are focusing on South Africa and Zimbabwe, countries perceived as offering opportunities for commercial as well as political gains (CIA 1995:1).' Additionally, 'their representatives and activities in southern Africa will remain unhelpful to US interests, at a minimum, and in the worst case, may post a threat to US personnel and facilities (CIA 1995:1).'

The CIA concluded that in South Africa, 'despite the ANC's declarations of solidarity with the [Blocked] Libyans- which mollify militants in the ANC's constituency- mainstream leadership elements in the government are likely to continue to emphasize close relations with Western countries to garner funds and maintain South Africa's international standing (CIA 1995:6).' The CIA stated that in maintaining this 'two-track' policy, South Africa will undoubtedly act against US interests on some issues, such as casting votes in support of Cuba in the UN, while actively supporting the West on others, such as an indefinite extension of the NPT. Similar to the older reports from the US intelligence community, this report said that, 'As long as major Western countries significantly contribute to South Africa's crucial Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) to raise living standards for blacks, the West will likely continue to enjoy a competitive edge unmatched by the pariahs [blocked] (CIA 1995:6).'

Of the so-called pariah states and their relations to South Africa, Iran, Cuba and Libya took center stage in mid to late 1995. South Africa signed a multimillion-Dollar oil deal, which allowed storage of 15 million barrels of Iranian oil at Saldanha Bay, north of Cape Town. The deal thoroughly annoyed the White House, which had hopes that key allies would not go against President Clinton's recently announced US economic boycott of Iran (Erasmus 1995:4a). Pretoria also forged several new cooperation agreements with Iran and increased its oil purchases from them, over Washington's objections.

With regards to Cuba, South Africa's intention to send an ambassador to Cuba drew fire from four republican members of the House International Relations Committee. They protested in a letter to South Africa's ambassador in the US, Franklin Sonn. The letter was signed by Chairman Ben Gilman, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen., chairman of the subcommittee on Africa; Christopher Smith and Dan Burton. It urged South Africa to 'refrain from undercutting our efforts to bring to the people of Cuba the same rights of liberty, justice and democracy that we in the United States and South Africa now enjoy (Erasmus 1995:4a).' The House members were particularly upset by Mandela's hosting of Castro 'as an honored guest,' later in 1995. In South Africa, Pretoria was looked upon in a positive light by ending the 30-year-old trade blockade against Cuba, in defiance of the US<sup>36</sup>. South Africa even hosted a conference to promote African-Cuban solidarity in October 1995. Mandela also proclaimed South Africa's solidarity with Libya and welcomed Qaddafi on a visit to South Africa in late 1995.

In a confidential meeting between members of the South African military and the CIA in 1995, US intelligence operatives questioned many of the South African personnel on incidents that took place during apartheid (Source One 2007). A source present at the meeting recalled a gentleman from the CIA bringing out satellite images from the Angolan war and asking questions about certain army vehicles such as tanks, and whether they were South African or Cuban (Source One 2007). The source felt that it was extremely obvious from the images what kind of equipment it was and more specifically, which side it belonged to. The source had the perception that the whole purpose of the meeting was to show the South Africans that the Americans were watching their every move and that they would continue to do so in the future.

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<sup>36</sup> This blockade originally came about because the apartheid government honored America's wishes that it would have no relationship with Cuba.



‘They wanted to show us that they were the big brother,’ according to the source (Source One 2007).

It is believed that these relatively minor disagreements might have been resolved sooner, but that this had not been the case due to South Africa’s relations with rogue states. In reaction to criticism against Iranian President Akbar Hasjemi Rafsanjani's visit to South Africa in September 1996, Mandela said that the enemies of the West are not necessarily also the enemies of South Africa. Mandela stressed that his country wanted to develop good relations with all countries, including the superpowers, but not at the cost of the ties that existed with good friends who supported the ANC against the apartheid regime when the superpowers supported the apartheid regime (Henwood 1997:249).

South Africa’s foreign policy became heavily criticized and not only by the Americans. ‘They're getting out there like a kid in a candy shop,’ a non-African diplomat said (Duke 1996:A21). In South Africa, this is called ‘universality,’ which basically means trying ‘to maintain cordial relations with all countries,’ said Pieter Swanepoel, spokesman for Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo. ‘But observers call the friend-to-all approach a naive defiance of a diplomatic dictum: Nations don't have permanent friends; they have permanent interests (Duke 1996:A21).’

South African foreign policy makers were perceived as causing a national security incident for America in 1997 by considering selling arms to Syria following the leak of secret South African cabinet documents on the weekend of 12 January. To be more specific, South Africa wanted to sell electronic sighting systems for Syria’s tanks. One grave concern for the American’s was that the sale would put Syria on a level playing field with Israel in regards to their tank arsenal, which in turn posed a serious national security fear for America’s greatest ally

in the Middle East. An interview with a South African military source uncovered just how good South African tank technology was. The individual disclosed a meeting with a US military counterpart shortly after the elections in 1994 in which an overview of South African tank technology was presented. The American was so impressed that he/she believed that if the US had that same technology during the first Persian Gulf War, the war would have ended in days or weeks and not months (Source One 2007).

Along with Iran and Libya, Syria was blacklisted by the US government for supporting international terrorism. Under US law, Washington could take punitive action such as imposing sanctions on nations assisting these countries. The US reacted very strongly to the Syrian arms sale news. 'The United States is deeply concerned about the proposed sale' said one State Department official a day after it was reported in the press. 'It would be extremely serious if these sales actually occurred (Reuters 1997 in Hesse 2001:122).' While the US was previously concerned over South Africa's support for countries such as Cuba, Iran and Libya, the Syrian matter was 'much more serious because it involves military support to a state sponsor of terrorism...(and) it has much more serious implications (Christian Science Monitor 1997a:11 in Hesse 2001:122).' The US threatened to withdraw its US\$120 million aid package for 1997 if South Africa went ahead with the reported deal (Mutume 1997). Inside of South Africa, government understood that such a move would hurt South Africa badly. America was Pretoria's biggest donor at the time and more than 750 US companies operated in the country, employing upwards of 50,000 people (Mutume 1997).

From South Africa's foreign policy maker's point of view, they did have a substantial interest in seeing the Syrian arms sale go through. Local newspaper reports revealed that one Syrian order was for R3 billion (US\$645 million)- more than twice as much as South Africa's

entire defense exports for 1996, which had stood at R1.3 billion (US\$280 million) (The Star 1997:9 in Hesse 2001:131). This would have also added to the 50,000 jobs the industry already provided. Some South African government officials were upset and saw America's actions as clearly valuing interests in the Middle East over the benefit the sale would do for South Africa. Moreover, they again asked the question, 'Might the US, the largest exporter of the arms in the world, want to constrain a competitor they asked (Hesse 2001:131)?' 'Then adding insult to injury, South African foreign policy makers had appeared largely unconcerned, even indignant, when US foreign policy makers attempted to make their concerns known,' Hesse (2001:123) writes. Hesse (2001:123) further explains that South Africa had even given off the impression they would push even harder for the sale with Syria if US foreign policy makers continued to voice their worries.

A South African source explained that the US wanted South Africa to sign a document that listed countries that they would never be allowed to sell arms to in the future (Source Six 2008). South Africa refused because they understood relations with countries can change over time and a country that supports terrorism one day can change the next. 'We thought America's stance was ridiculous because we weighed the positive and negatives of every deal on a case to case basis, and based on our criteria, we would have never sold the tank sights to Syria in the first place,' said the source (Source Six 2008).

Addressing a SAIIA gathering, US Ambassador to South Africa at the time James Joseph, commented on America's attitudes towards South Africa's relationship with Washington's foes. 'I am often asked why Americans seem so concerned about South Africa's relationship to Cuba, Iran, Libya and Iraq,' he said. 'The answer is that we respect and support South Africa's right to choose its own friends based on its own priorities...But we ask of all our

friends to join with us in affirming the values we share; especially the respect of human rights, economic freedom, free and fair elections and the rejection of state-sponsored terrorism (Mutume 1997).’

Vale (1997) maintained that the Syria incident showed a major vulnerability in South African foreign policy:

This background has produced a near- national consensus that success or failure in international relations is only determined in terms of might. It is also true that within the policy process democratic markers, like the tier-structure of arms sales, have been set. But because we are constantly told that power and national interest drive foreign policy - instruments like these are seen as scant or a wish- list to appease the faint-hearted. This perspective accounts for why our foreign policy challenges are always pitted in simple either/or terms and it suggests why the range of options is always stark - the US will cut its aid to South Africa if the Syrian arms deal goes ahead, or the country will lose \$3-billion in foreign exchange if it does not. And it explains why we are encouraged to believe that all decisions must rest on crude asymmetries of power - the US is the remaining superpower; South Africa must bend to Washington's will (Vale 1997)!

Mandela’s trip to Libya to award Colonel Qaddafi the Order of Good Hope Medal in October 1997 made quite a stir from the West’s point of view. The Medal is the highest honor that South Africa can bestow upon a citizen of another country. Libya had been under UN sanctions since 1992 for its refusal to hand over the two indicted suspects in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people (Judson 2005:1).

The White House pronounced itself ‘disappointed’ about Mandela’s trip, drawing an intense response from Mandela that he would not be dictated to about who he could visit (Sawyer 1999b). ‘Those who say I should not be here are without morals,’ Mandela said. ‘This man helped us at a time when we were all alone, when those who say we should not come here were helping the enemy (Business Day 1997b).’ Qaddafi replied: ‘What we are facing is an attempt of domination from one power. All international proposals serve this evil purpose. The [UN] General Assembly should be overriding the Security Council (Mekey 1997).’

This was only the tip of the iceberg because in a few short weeks in October and November 1997. Mandela also conducted another state visit to Libya, agreed to conclude two finance agreements with Iran, had South Africa's UN Ambassador deliver a castigating speech about US sanctions against Cuba at the UN, and awarded the Good Hope Medal to President Suharto of Indonesia (Hesse 2001:140). One reporter called it 'a diplomatic hat-trick with...pariah states (Christian Science Monitor 1997b:5 in Hesse 2001:140).' One Western diplomat commented: 'For forty years South African foreign policy was a single issue. Now it's multi-issue. (Mandela) has a steep learning curve making the transition from an ideological stance to pragmatism... It is certainly noble but unrealistic, this notion (he) can have universal relations (Mail and Guardian 1997 in Hesse 2001:140).'

From Mandela's and South Africa's perspective, they wanted to promote South African interests. These interests included the very basic to macro-economic necessities. Moreover, some issues the West would simply not address concerning South Africa so Mandela felt it necessary to deal with the pariah states. For example, Cuban doctors were working in South Africa helping to address the national shortage and filling gaps in demand by agreeing to work in difficult areas. Similarly, countries like Iran, from whom South African bought 65 percent of its oil in 1996, offered countless trade opportunities because of the West's embargoes; the period between 1994 to 1997 saw the value of imports from Iran almost triple and exports double (Sowetan 1997:11 in Hesse 2001:141).

During Clinton's 1998 South African visit, Mandela requested for Clinton's aides to give them a moment alone so they could talk to the president privately. They discussed Libya and the negotiations regarding the Lockerbie bombing. After the doors closed, Saudi Arabian diplomat Prince Bandar bin Sultan unexpectedly joined the group for five minutes to participate

in the talk. ‘We were surprised to find how little Clinton knew about this matter. National Security Advisor Sandy Berger almost had a heart attack over having the president talk on something he hadn’t been briefed on before. It was clear he actually knew very little about the matter.’ Professor and then Director-General of Mandela’s office, Jakes Gerwel noted (Judson 2005:13). In this private meeting, Mandela also urged Clinton to bury the hatchet with Iran, Cuba and Libya.

This was quite a big request considering earlier in the month South Africa established formal diplomatic links with Iraq and North Korea despite objections from the US and human rights groups. The South African perspective on the Iraq/North Korea issue was that they were hosting the NAM Summit in Durban in late August/September 1998 and they would not feel comfortable hosting with countries that it did not have formal ties with. On the other hand, US policy on South Africa’s relations with Cuba appeared to have undergone some reformulation in the wake of Pope John Paul’s visit to Havana in early 1998. As illustrated previously, before the Pope’s visit the US continued to voice disapproval of the ongoing ties between Castro and South Africa (Cape 1996).

In the aftermath of the nuclear tests in by India and Pakistan, also in 1998, the US State Department, CIA, and other agencies were scrambling to review South Africa’s armament industry with emphasis on its apartheid-era nuclear weapons program (Vesely 1998b). South Africa’s nuclear arsenal during the apartheid regime was confirmed in April 1997 by Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Pahad, who was quoted in the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz* as saying, ‘There was definitely a nuclear test<sup>37</sup>.’ ‘With South Africa’s current crippling recession and porous borders, we have serious concerns about such residual materials,’ a National Security Agency

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<sup>37</sup> Pahad was referring to a secret nuclear test by the apartheid government in 1979. Known as the ‘vela incident,’ a mysterious flash was detected off the coast of South Africa.

(NSA) official confirmed when questioned about whether US spy satellites were targeting the region again. ‘Such material is worth millions of Dollars on the black market and poses a serious problem if sold to pariah nations such as Syria or Iraq (Vesely 1998b).’

In the multilateral arena, the South African Government expressed its concern and disappointment at the decision by the US Senate not to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in October 1999. The Treaty ratification was blocked by the Republican-controlled Senate. South Africa foreign affairs spokesman Marco Boni said Pretoria had hoped that the US Senate would achieve bipartisan consensus to enable Washington to ratify the treaty and join the international community in reinforcing both the legal force and moral authority of the treaty (PANA 1999). Boni said Pretoria called on the Senate to reconsider its view on ratification and how it could add to the ‘Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Disarmament and non-proliferation’ adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty for the non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (PANA 1999).

Of all the countries South Africa had positive relations with; Iran was arguably on the top of that list. South African-Iranian relations had worried the State Department for some time and the 1996 meeting between Mandela and then Iranian President Ali Akbar Rafsanjani did not help. After their meeting Rafsanjani said: ‘Iran and South Africa will not allow the United States to determine our fate and our destiny (Vesely 1998b).’ This statement came shortly after reports that Iran was recruiting South African nuclear scientists to work in their own atomic energy program, and understandably sent shockwaves through CIA headquarters.

According to Vesely, South Africa had dozens companies involved in producing arms for the global export market at the time and that they manufactured everything from jet aircraft to the R5 assault rifle. Some of their controversial clients included Lebanon, Yemen, Rwanda, the

Congo, and even Yugoslavia. Vesely uncovered that Lanseria airport outside Johannesburg had practically no security or customs oversight and that it is an open secret that giant Russian cargo aircraft took off at dusk for unknown destinations with undocumented cargoes. 'As long as it's small arms it's of no major concern,' a CIA Africa/Asia Case Officer contends, 'but in a shrinking home market such as the one South Africa is experiencing, how soon will it be before someone is prepared to bend the rules by supplying nuclear information and/or equipment? Besides which, bomb grade plutonium is a compact material that can be transported in a six-by-three-inch lead-lined container (Vesely 1998b).'

On 9 September 1998, another declassified CIA intelligence report entitled Sub-Saharan Africa: Seeking Pragmatic Relations With Rogue States, revealed that some African leaders were indebted to rogue states, particularly Libya, for aiding them when they headed rebel or exile groups. With South Africa, the report made known that their relations with Libya took center stage due in part to Mandela's gratitude for Libya's support during the antiapartheid struggle. Furthermore, 'South Africa appears to be cultivating Tripoli as a market for South African retail goods and capital equipment (CIA 1998:3).' The CIA report went on to say that sovereignty concerns and Third World solidarity figure in the decision-making of African leaders, especially in multinational forums. 'They [African leaders] also are aware that it is their interest to remain on reasonably good terms with rogue states that could fund opposition groups [rest of sentence blocked out],' the report stated.

Mbeki had not bowed to pressure to alter the ANC's policy positions towards its allies such as Qaddafi and Mugabe. Munusamy (2002:11) argues that because of their unwavering in their support of the ANC, and whatever their misdemeanors, South Africa will never consider severing diplomatic ties. The ANC government had also raised the plight of the Palestinian



people at every global forum in the past year, dismissing a tag of anti-Semitism to support the PLO. Munusamy explained that South Africa's boldest foreign policy statement had been to unflinchingly support for Iraq in 2002 in the face of looming military strikes.

According to Source Eight (2008), some US government officials at the time [prior to the Iraq war] believed that South Africa was 'not worth talking to.' This was how bad the situation had become. Many Americans saw South Africa as this 'beacon of human rights' but no more (Source Nine 2008). 'There were exceeded expectations on both sides in 1994 and we didn't have much in common anymore,' said the source (Source Nine 2008).

One situation that appeared to be improving was US-Libyan relations, assisted by the early work of Mandela and his close relationship with Qaddafi. Libya admitted its role in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing (Pan Am flight 103) after a Scottish court convicted a Libyan agent, Abdel Basset Ali al-Meghrahi (Van Wyk 2006:124). The Libyan government agreed to pay compensation of £4.5 million (US\$8 million) in August 2003 to each family of the 270 victims: a total of £1.23 billion (US\$2.16 billion). As a result, UN sanctions against Libya were dropped. Moreover, Qaddafi announced that Libya had voluntarily eliminated its WMD program and that it had a common interest with the US to fight Al-Qaeda and Islamic fundamentalism (Van Wyk 2006:124).

In early 2004, the South African government welcomed the decision by the US to lift sanctions against Libya, as well as the recommendation by the EU member states that certain sanctions be lifted. This decision was in line with the earlier call by the UN and now the AU. The fact that Libya met all their requirements under relevant UN resolutions to have sanctions lifted and even went a step further by halting its WMD Program was clear sign of their determination to end its international isolation (SAPA 2004).

The praise continued in September 2004 when the US praised South Africa in the field of nuclear trafficking after South Africa acted against Pakistan's scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan's secret nuclear network. South African businessman Johan Meyer appeared in court in the town of Vanderbijlpark, south of Johannesburg, a day after his arrest on charges of being in possession of nuclear-related material and of illegally importing and exporting nuclear material. According to reports, Meyer had allegedly used the network in efforts to help Libya develop an atomic weapons program between November 2000 and November 2001 (SAPA 2004).

'And without trying to provide any detail, because the detail really needs to be provided by the South Africans to the extent and whenever they're prepared to do so, I would say that we do congratulate South Africa for its efforts to act against the A.Q. Khan network,' US State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher said (SAPA 2004).

Khan, the so-called father of Pakistan's nuclear program, confessed in February of 2004 that he had shared nuclear secrets with North Korea, Libya and Iran. Boucher went on to say that action by South African authorities would help in the global effort to destroy what remained of Khan's network. South African intelligence is also said to have worked closely with their US and Israeli counterparts in a year-long investigation into nuclear smuggling that led to Meyer's arrest. Abdul Minty, the chairperson of the South African Council for the Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, said the arrest follows an investigation into a number of companies and individuals in cooperation with other countries and the IAEA (Associated Press 2004).

Numerous South Africa-based individuals had been involved previously in the proliferation of WMD materials and equipment. Most notably was a South Africa-based Israeli businessman, Asher Karni, who was arrested in Denver on New Year's Day 2004. He was accused of using front companies and falsifying documents to buy nuclear bomb triggers in the

US for shipment to Pakistan (SAPA 2004). Two other individuals identified as German engineer Gerhard Wisser and Swiss engineer Daniel Geiges, living permanently in South Africa, were arrested in Germany in August 2004 for participating in a nuclear technology smuggling ring (Cauli 2004). Wisser was the owner, and Geiges a colleague and employee, of Krisch Engineering in Randpark, a Johannesburg suburb. Wisser was accused of acting as a middleman in a 2001 request to provide pipes to Libya for use in a uranium enrichment facility. Reports stated that a company in South Africa manufactured the pipes, but they apparently were not delivered to Libya (SAPA 2004).

In the multilateral arena, the US urged South Africa and to speak out against Iran's nuclear program to isolate Tehran. This came a week before the IAEA's Board of Governors were due to meet in November 2005 to discuss Iran's nuclear industry. Ambassador Gregory Schulte, the US's permanent representative to the IAEA said South Africa was a leader in nuclear nonproliferation as it voluntarily dismantled its own nuclear program and therefore had a special role in speaking out against Iran's program (Katzenellenbogen 2005:6).

South Africa had not condemned Iran and abstained from an IAEA vote in September 2005 to bring Tehran before the IAEA. South Africa also denied making a proposal to resolve the standoff. However, what became known as the South African proposal, would involve South Africa selling the Iranians uranium yellow cake, which would then be processed into a gas that is a feedstock for enrichment, which would then be stored by South Africa (Katzenellenbogen 2005:6). The US was against this proposal and any other proposal that stipulated enrichment by Iran. Schulte said 'lightly enriched' could later lead to Tehran developing 'highly enriched' uranium (Katzenellenbogen 2005:6). Source Six (2008) explains that the biggest issue with Iran

trying to acquire nuclear power is that it is not economically viable for them. 'It simply does not make economic sense and this is the key concern,' said the source.

South Africa's defense was Iran's right to enrich uranium for nuclear power in accordance with the NPT. In the September 2005 vote, South Africa, China and 10 other countries abstained from voting on a resolution that would have reported Iran to the UNSC. In response, Tehran threatened to punish countries such as India and Japan, both importers of substantial amounts of Iranian oil, for voting against it. Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad was in Iran a week prior, which showed the importance of South Africa's trade and political ties to Tehran. But for the most part, South Africa kept quiet on the diplomatic conflict, although South Africa's representative on the UN watchdog's Board of Governors, Abdul Minty, said earlier that 'both sides are in confrontation mode (Katzenellenbogen 2005:6).'

Regarding Iran's neighbor to the south, the UN Volcker committee on the Iraq oil-for-food scandal said several South African companies illegally benefited from surcharges and kickbacks from the sale of oil and the purchase of humanitarian goods (Robertson 2005). The report by the committee released in November 2004, stated that in one instance through these illicit exchanges, Iraq hoped to influence the South Africa's foreign policy in the run-up to the war in Iraq. The committee said that the government of Saddam Hussein engaged in illegal business exchanges with Sandi Majali, an executive of Montego Trading and Invume Management, in an attempt to win the support of the South African government (Robertson 2005). In addition, the committee stated that Majali, who falsely styled himself as an advisor to Mbeki, used his relationship with senior South African officials to win contracts under the UN Oil-for-Food Program.

South Africa was one of five countries alongside Libya, Algeria, Indonesia and Belarus that abstained when the IAEA voted to report Iran to the UNSC. Only Cuba, Syria and Venezuela voted against. Western diplomatic officials said Mbeki's government had 'come under a degree of cajoling' in recent weeks from the US and European countries to stop giving Tehran diplomatic cover to continue its nuclear program (Keinon 2006:3). Europe had come over to the American and Israeli position last year when it was clear Iran was pursuing a nuclear weapons program. South Africa was still advocating Teheran's right to pursue nuclear research for civilian purposes.

The US, Israel and the UK had discussed the matter with South Africa over the previous few weeks and months in 2006, but without much success. When US Congresswomen and speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi visited Darfur (Sudan) in March, Bush asked her to deliver a confidential message to Mbeki, seeking his assistance with Iran (Cobb 2006). However, both US and Israeli officials deny that South Africa was supplying Iran with any nuclear material or know-how to help develop its program. One Israeli official stated that South Africa had behaved 'very responsibly' when it came to its nuclear know-how and materials (Keinon 2006:3).

Another perceived blow came in August 2006, when just days after the UNSC passed Resolution 1694 giving Iran a one-month deadline to 'suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development,' three South African Cabinet ministers traveled to Tehran to offer, according to the two unnamed veteran non-proliferation researchers, 'to transfer natural uranium to Iran for use in its program (Pham 2007b).' Shortly after [7 September], the second round of talks for the new UN HRC took place in Pretoria. This came at a time when the US and South Africa were not seeing eye to eye on a number of issues

in various multilateral forums. The US State Department asserted that there is a marked sympathy toward countries that assert their independence from the West. For example, the government has publicly stated its support to Iran's right to a peaceful nuclear power program. 'South Africa has consistently voted against any country-specific resolutions on human rights issues. Indeed, their overall UN voting coincidence with the US is very low (If asked, 11 percent),' according to Thomas-Greenfield (2006).

However, on 24 March 2007, Pretoria's decision to support a UNSC resolution [1747] that imposed new sanctions on Iran had 'shocked' Tehran, a senior Iranian official writes. Javid Ghorbanoghli, a former Iranian ambassador to South Africa wrote in his personal capacity so his views could not be construed as a formal reproach, but they clearly reflected the depth of feeling in Tehran over the vote, according to Dawes (2007). 'Mr Mbeki, this is no way to treat a friend,' Ghorbanoghli concluded. Ghorbanoghli described South Africa's vote as a 'U-turn under Western pressure' the change that saw South Africa join the other 14 members of the Security Council in a unanimous yes vote on the resolution (Dawes 2007). The DFA did not want to comment on Ghorbanoghli's views, but a senior official insisted that South Africa had not changed its approach. 'We have always insisted that there are two sides to this thing,' he said. 'On the one hand, Iran has a right to nuclear energy; on the other, it must show the world it is compliant (Dawes 2007).'

Dawes (2007) uncovered that there certainly was pressure, including a phone call to Mbeki from US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice ahead of the vote, and public criticism from other Western diplomats. Sutterlin (2007:15) further uncovered that South Africa threatened to abstain on the 1747 vote and only after a scathing exchange with Britain and a US envoy visit to South Africa, did it agree to vote for the resolution.

South Africa held meetings with Iran and Venezuela from July to September, and the Friends of Cuba Society protested outside the US embassy in Pretoria (OSAC 2008). Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for African Affairs, Mohammad Reza Baqeri held talks with his counterpart Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad on 17 July. Pahad said they discussed issues regarding the situations in Palestinian, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran's nuclear programme, among others. 'The meeting was an excellent opportunity to get an understanding of developments in the region that you all know are the greatest threat to international peace and stability,' Pahad said. He called on the international community to counter the threats posed by the Israel and US against Iran (Mbola 2008).

## **2.1 US perspective**

America's relations with South Africa regarding Cuba, Syria and Libya have definitely changed throughout the time period. The US was very vocal in the mid to late 1990's about South Africa's relations with those specific countries; however, after time the criticism slowly began to stop. With Cuba, the US and South Africa have simply agreed to disagree. With Syria, their relationship with South Africa has remained somewhat low key after the 1995 arms deal incident and is no longer a strong concern to America. The same can be said for Libya. Now that US-Libyan relations are seen in a positive light, the perceived criticism by the US over South African-Libyan relations has ceased to exist. Moreover, a former US government official viewed South Africa's relations with Libya as one of more competition for the position of Africa's leader during Mbeki's years compared to Mandela's (Source Seven 2008). The Source felt that Mbeki might have been somewhat threatened by Libya's presence on the continent therefore keeping a distance from Qaddafi and Libya as a whole. 'It was a different relationship with Mandela, which showed more comradely and cooperation than with Mbeki,' the Source said.

One country that the US is strongly concerned about South Africa's relations with is Iran. Since 2003, the US has accused Iran of having a nuclear weapons program and America's skepticism has risen over what appears to be growing South African-Iranian relations (Shillinger 2008).

Similar to previous countries mentioned, America's history with Iran is not pleasant. There have been major obstacles to resuming relations since the 1979 Iranian revolution including: the 1979 Iran hostage crisis; the 1983 Hezbollah bombings; the Iran-Contra Affair; and the 1988 Iran Air Flight 655 tragedy. Above and beyond Iran's human rights violations, their state sponsorship of terrorism and their pursuit of WMDs, the US perceives Iran as a threat to its neighbors in the Persian Gulf and as an opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace process. Professor Vali Nasr and Takeyh (2008) sum up the Bush Administration's view when they state: "Its [Iran] quest for a nuclear capability, its mischievous interventions in Iraq, and its strident opposition to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process constitute a formidable list of grievances. But the bigger issue is the Bush Administration's fundamental belief that Iran cannot be a constructive actor in a stable Middle East. This poor perception of Iran has been further heightened after repeated statements by Iranian government officials to 'wipe Israel off the map' and to cause 'death to America.'"

It could be assumed that South Africa's coddling of Iran has a lot to do with the ANC's history with the country. The ANC supported the Iranian revolution in 1979 and various members of the party were given military training in the country. Iran also stood by the people of South Africa during the days of apartheid. Furthermore, South African and Iranian leaders are perceived as determined to strengthen ties in line with the greater goal of boosting South-South cooperation and harmonizing the stances of the countries of the South. Another reason for the



close Iranian-South African relations is South Africa's oil imports from Iran. South Africa's vast oil purchases from Iran have continued since 1994.

The most obvious vital concern of Americans is Iran's pursuit of nuclear energy and/or nuclear weapons. South Africa's constant argument is that Iran has a right to develop peaceful nuclear energy due to article IV of the NPT. Some Americans such as Shillinger (2008) feels that is just a cover and that South Africa wants to be a global power, which explains why they support Iran. 'South Africa will lead to the end of the NPT,' Shllinger argues. South Africa's belief is that the NPT is unfair because it means that only nine countries can have access to nuclear weapons, which puts the rest of the world at a disadvantage, according to Shillinger (2008).

Americans believe that nations around the world fully understand that once a country develops a nuclear energy program, even if it was just for 'peaceful' means, that the same country could develop militarized nuclear weapons in a matter of months. Therefore, the US doesn't comprehend how South Africa can promote non-proliferation and nuclear energy at the same time, as the two simply do not go together. The US feels there would be no more safeguards under that type of a scenario.

Nevertheless, the US holds South Africa in high esteem due to the fact that it dismantled its nuclear weapons program in 1991, chemical and biological warfare program in 1993, and missile program in 1994; brought about an 'African Nuclear Weapons Free Zone' in 1995 and participated in NPT review conferences in 1995, 2000, and 2005. The US and South Africa also held yearly high level disarmament meetings separate to the BNC for many years after the new government took over in 1994 (Source Six 2008). The US was also very pleased in its role to

help bring down part of Khan's nuclear proliferation network, being one of the few countries to do so.

America still fears, however, that former South African weapons scientists may now be sharing their skills with extremist groups, or the foreign governments of the pariah states (Shillinger 2008). India and Pakistan's nuclear tests in the 1990's and former South African scientist Goosen trying to sell biological weapons to the FBI was two large wake up calls for the US. This apprehension is still present as the US is aware that many in Pretoria accept the fact that some South African scientists had links to Tehran and possibly still do.

## **2.2 SA perspective**

ANC relations with countries such as Iran and Cuba span back decades and have continued to grow since 1994. Cuba and South Africa have assessed the development of their bilateral relations as excellent and have yearly consultative meetings with their foreign ministers. South Africa has expressed its solidarity with Cuba's struggle against the economic blockade by the US, and both countries defend multilateralism and third world countries. South Africa and Cuba have a number of bilateral co-operation projects such as, for example, the training of South African students in the field of medicine. In 2008, Cuba was the chair of the NAM, which both countries perceive as an important institution that needs to be revitalized.

Outsiders viewed South Africa-Libyan relations during the mid-and-late 1990's solely in the media on the basis of positive Mandela-Qaddafi relations. Source Six (2008), a former high level diplomat with the DFA, argues that that there was no relationship between Mandela and Qaddafi and that their relationship was on a Head of State basis only. Nevertheless, this relationship between presidents would help bring about an end to the Lockerbie bombing situation. While many Americans perceived Mandela's large support as shunning the US,

Mandela proved to the US that negotiations, instead of sanctions, could bring an end to a conflict (Judson 2005).

Mandela assisted in gaining Qaddafi's support and trust by speaking out against the US and by emphasizing that he was acting independently of the West. That factor, combined with Mandela's loyalty to old friends, played a key role in the negotiations. Mandela also realized that it would be better to have Qaddafi on his side than treat him as a crazy terrorist like the US often did. This approach helped Mandela secure Libya's agreement to a trial of those allegedly responsible for the Lockerbie bombing, which marked the end of Libyan diplomatic isolation. This, in turn, also led to an improvement in US-Libyan relations.

The Lockerbie bombing case showed that South Africa did not believe in diplomatic sanctions and that they thought diplomacy was there for a reason. Other countries also frowned upon America's use of sanctions in the Libyan case and other situations like it around the globe. Rihab Massoud, Political Minister at the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington said in 2004:

America's image in the region suffered from a policy of sanctions that extended from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Bengal—Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, India. There were sanctions on Libya; there were sanctions on the Sudan. We told Clinton, for godsakes, you cannot run a foreign policy based on sanctioning people right and left, then basically waiting to see how things work out. You have to engage people, that's the whole concept of what a foreign policy is (Judson 2005:73).

South Africa's relations with Iran have grown since 1994. In 1996, the South African-Iranian Joint Bilateral Commission was established to promote relations (Polity 2006). In 2003, the South African/Iranian Business Forum was launched. According to Pahad, South Africa's annual exports to Iran for 2005 amounted to R785,2-million, and annual imports from Iran account to R14,2-billion - showing a negative trade balance of R13,5-billion, mainly on the back of South Africa's oil purchases from Iran (Polity 2006). However, South African businesses links

with Iran are on the rise. One such project is developed by Sasol, the world's leading coal-to-liquids company, and the cellular network provider MTN is looking to operate in Iran.

South Africa is interested in developing its own civilian nuclear program for its own energy needs and they feel if Iran's nuclear energy program is shut down, the same might happen to them. South Africa has also been very vying for leadership among the global South countries, as the Americans suspect. Like the Myanmar case, South Africa feels countries from the North have been focusing on certain smaller countries instead of focusing on others due to their positive relations with certain countries such as the US. Lastly, South Africa strongly objects to a situation where the West keeps nuclear technology from the developing world (Source Six 2008).

Since 1994, South Africa took offense to the US telling them who may have and who they may not have bilateral relations with. Mandela's made numerous remarks about South Africa's relations with so-called pariah states in the 1990's for various reasons. By forming bilateral relations with such states and publicly pronouncing acerbic criticism at the US, they showed local, and African and international audiences that the new South Africa had an independent foreign policy. This was especially true in southern Africa, where many perceived South Africa as a puppet of the West (Mugore 2007).

It appears that South Africa perceives America's stance on Cuba as bizarre. Cuba provides its citizens with full health care, an excellent education system and some manner of housing and food. Others around the world and even some Americans share the same perception. Cuba has improved its relations with Latin America, Europe, and Canada and they have continued to expand its influence as a leader in public health in developing nations. In fact, Cuba has more medical professionals abroad than the World Health Organization (WHO) and

consistently sends emergency teams to disaster zones, as it did after the tsunami in South Asia in 2004, and to Pakistan after their earthquake in 2005. According to one media report, Cuba even offered a team of 1,600 bi-lingual medics outfitted with 83 tons of medical equipment to the US after the Katrina disaster-- the US ignored the offer (Farrell 2008).

With Libya, South Africa felt they proved their point that diplomacy can work and that sanctions are not always the answer. South Africa feels that unilateralism and bullying is not the correct way to go about foreign policy. They are further concerned that non-proliferation is preached for Iran, but not for Israel and that human rights is an issue with China but not Pakistan. Although South Africa is concerned about Iran's oil and its affect on its own economy, they see escalating tensions between the US and Iran as being attributed to the evolving state of energy geopolitics, and the future of energy security for the West (Source Six 2008).

South Africa and the NAM are against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and have wanted to begin negotiations as part of the NPT over the years to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons around the world. It is likely that states such as South Africa, Egypt, and Brazil will harshly criticize the US on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as the Americans have not adhered to their own NPT obligations to undertake systematic and progressive efforts towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons arsenals.

South Africa does not want see a war break out over the nuclear issue in Iran nor does it want to see an Iran possessing nuclear weapons or the denial of the right of any signatory to the NPT to exploit the peaceful applications of nuclear technology with appropriate safeguards. Since the beginning, South Africa has argued that Iran has a right to peaceful nuclear energy under the NPT, but some South African scholars (Habib 2008) feel that is time for their country to change their tactics. They feel that instead of South Africa using article IV as their basis for

their argument that they should explain to the international community that the US has caused a ‘game theory’<sup>38</sup> situation. By the US invading Iraq, Iran would undoubtedly want nuclear weapons in order to either act as a deterrent to invasion or to defend itself from the US if it became necessary. That line of thought would be constructive to obtaining real solutions to the current situation rather than pointing to a clause in the NPT.

Although South Africa did vote with the P5 to impose sanctions against Iran, they believed that the sanctions were temporary and would be lifted once the IAEA had addressed the remaining issues.

### **3. Iraq War (since 2003)**

The build up to the beginning of the Iraq War caused a severe amount of stress on the US-South African relationship. South Africa, like dozens of other countries, vehemently opposed unilateral US action especially after their discussions with Iraq’s WMD experts because it was clear that there were no WMDs (Source Six 2008). It was an even a more important issue for South Africa because it chaired NAM from 1998.

In April 2001, Aziz Pahad, South Africa’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs returned from Iraq and indicated that South Africa was likely to have a resident Ambassador in Baghdad soon. The official statement issued by Pretoria on Pahad's visit to Iraq stated that ‘there is need for more regular high-level contacts and consultations between South Africa and Iraq.’ Since South Africa established diplomatic relations with Iraq, they have had a resident representative in Pretoria. Prabhakara (2001) felt that the reasons for South Africa not having a resident mission in Baghdad were not related to weighing of diplomatic and budgetary options, but that ‘South Africa simply cannot brush aside the sensitivities of countries like the US and Saudi Arabia, both

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<sup>38</sup> Game theory is referred to in a political sense where rational players (ie Iran) study strategic interactions and would most likely react based on the size of the threat against it.

bitterly opposed to the present Government in Baghdad, and its own economic and political stakes in these countries.’

Controversy was already in the air prior to Pahad’s comments when it was reported that South Africa was planning a humanitarian flight to Iraq carrying medical and relief supplies for civil society organizations prepared by some South African voluntary agencies. A statement issued by the DFA on 22 February 2001 read: a flight carrying ‘essential medical supplies, baby milk formula and high protein biscuits’ was to have left for Baghdad on 28 February. The statement said: ‘The purpose of the humanitarian flight is to give effect to the groundswell opinion in South African civil society condemning the devastating effects of sanctions on the civilian population of Iraq (Prabhakara 2001).’

When the focus began to shift from Bin Laden to Saddam Hussein in 2002, Mandela was extremely vocal against what appeared to be an inevitable US invasion of Iraq. After Bush would not take his calls, he spoke to Secretary of State Colin Powell and the president's father George Bush Sr., asking the latter to discourage his son from attacking Iraq (Mail and Guardian 2002). When this had no effect, Mandela made numerous comments against the US:

- ‘We must condemn that very strongly. No country, however strong, is entitled to comment adversely in the way the US has done. They think they're the only power in the world. They're not and they're following a dangerous policy. One country wants to bully the world.’
- ‘If you look at these matters, you will come to the conclusion that the attitude of the United States of America is a threat to world peace.’
- ‘When there were white secretary generals, you didn't find this question of the US and Britain going out of the UN. But now that you've had black secretary generals, such as Boutros Boutros Ghali and Kofi Annan, they do not respect the UN. This is not my view, but that is what is being said by many people (Mail and Guardian 2002).’

Mandela, as well as Mbeki, are known to have a sharp memory. This was evident of Mandela as some of his criticisms of America stretched back over 20 years. According to Mandela, the US decision to arm and finance the Mujahedin movement in Afghanistan following the 1979 Soviet invasion of the country led to the eventual rise of the Taliban regime. He also said that, in his view, unqualified US support of the Shah of Iran led directly to the Islamic revolution of 1979 (Newsweek 2002). He might have also remembered that Cheney voted against a resolution calling for his release because of his alleged support for terrorism in 1986.

Dlamini-Zuma was also quite vocal about America's idea of attacking Iraq. She told journalists that she did not understand the rationale behind it (PANA 2002). 'Just as it is wrong to change governments internally by unilateral military means, so it is unacceptable for one government to change another by military means,' Dlamini-Zuma said (PANA 2002).

In November 2002, South Africa began to see a serious issue with the US's fixation with a possible war against Iraq. They consistently argued that the US had no right to unilaterally wage war and forcibly induce regime change that might, or might not, reflect the will of the Iraqi people. South Africa was also concerned that US foreign policy was increasingly moving towards eroding the role of the UN. However, South Africa's statements became of great concern when former State Department officials began to suggest that South Africa could fall out of favor with the US (Sowetan 2002). Moreover, it became even worse when it was suggested that this would cost South Africa the benefits that come with this favorable relationship - such as those that flow from the AGOA. South Africa felt it had been consistent in its call for Iraq to submit to UN inspections and their desire to find a non-military solution. And as a South African media report acknowledges, that has been the central thrust of South African diplomacy. It is certainly anti-war and unapologetically so (Sowetan 2002).



South Africa was undoubtedly very skeptical of Bush and his motives for invading Iraq. There was an anti-American sentiment in the press on the lines of: if they invade Iraq for their oil, will they invade us for our minerals and invent some pretext? The most famous case had been an incident recounted by *The Guardian* journalist Roy Carroll. At a cocktail party in 2002, Carroll asked the health minister, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, a very close Mbeki ally, why the government preferred to buy new German-made submarines instead of AIDS drugs. 'Look at what Bush is doing,' she replied. 'He could invade.' Carroll thought a minister citing a US threat seemed extraordinary. He was so flabbergasted he failed to ask any follow-up questions. Carroll filed a short story using that quote soon after that caused uproar. The health minister denied the comment and at a press conference Dlamini-Zuma said it was a lie (Carroll 2006 in Glenn 2008:77-8).

Also continuing in 2003 was former President Mandela's strong criticism of US foreign policy. In a speech delivered to the International Women's Forum meeting in Sandton, South Africa he stated:

If there is a country that has committed unspeakable atrocities in the world, it is the United States of America. [APPLAUSE] They don't care for human beings. Fifty-seven years ago, when Japan was retreating on all fronts, they decided to drop the atom bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki; killed a lot of innocent people, who are still suffering the effects of those bombs. Those bombs were not aimed against the Japanese, they were aimed against the Soviet Union to say, 'look, this is the power that we have. If you dare oppose what we do, this is what is going to happen to you'. Because they are so arrogant, they decided to kill innocent people in Japan, who are still suffering from that... Who are they, now, to pretend that they are the policemen of the world? [APPLAUSE] To want to decide for the people in Iraq what they should do with their government and with their leadership (Mandela 2003)?

An SABC/Markinor poll conducted as part of a Gallup poll in 40 countries on the subject on the Iraq war around the same time as Mandela's speech found that the majority of the South African public felt the same way he did. Sixty-three percent of South African respondents were in favor of war 'under no circumstances'; 20 percent were in favor 'only if war is sanctioned by

the UN;’ a mere nine percent were in favor of war undertaken by the US alone; and eight percent replied ‘don’t know.’ Sixty-eight percent of South African respondents did not think their country should support military action against Iraq (SAPA 2003a).

This view continued to grow as thousands of protesters took to the streets across South Africa to voice their opposition to the US drive for war against Iraq. Organized by the South African Antiwar Coalition and comprising of more than 50 organizations, demonstrations were held in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban and Bloemfontein (Graham 2003). The groups involved included the ANC, the Azanian People’s Organisation, the Pan Africanist Congress, the United Democratic Movement, the SACP, COSATU, the South African National Civics Organisation, the South African Council of Churches, Lawyers for Human Rights and the Muslim Judicial Council. An organization of South African Jews opposed to the Zionist occupation of Palestine called Not in My Name also participated in the demonstrations.

Outside the US embassy in Pretoria, representatives of the various organizations made speeches condemning American aggression. ANC secretary-general Kgalema Motlanthe, who was also present at the protests, told the crowd: ‘The primary crime of Iraq is the fact that it floats on oil. Because we are endowed with several rich minerals, if we don’t stop this unilateral action against Iraq today, tomorrow they will come for us (The Star 2003).’ It was assumed that Motlanthe’s anti-American statements upset Mbeki’s carefully balanced Iraq diplomacy, especially after Mbeki rejected the notion in parliament during the previous week that the government had given South Africa an anti-American label (The Star 2003).

In early 2003, Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad led a team of South African WMD experts who met with Iraqi presidential advisor General Amer al-Saadi and General Hosam Mohamad Amin, head of the National Monitoring Directorate, which liaised with the UN inspectors at the

end of February. The South African delegation stayed in Baghdad for a few days and had talks with Iraq's WMD experts that were 'extremely open (Source Six 2008).' According to the source, it was clear that the Iraq did not have nuclear capability although they were close. The Iraqi experts also discussed and showed documentation of the biological and chemical weapons they had received from the US during the 1980s.

Despite South Africa's discussions with Iraq's technical experts and other members of government, the Iraqi invasion started in March 2003. The South African government stated that it was a blow to multilateralism and that the UN should have asserted its authority to ensure that military action was conducted under the rules of International Humanitarian Law (SAPA 2003b). Additionally, Mbeki appointed a ministerial committee to assess the impact of the war on his country. The committee was led by Foreign Minister Dlamini-Zuma and comprised of Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin, Finance Minister Trevor Manuel and Minerals and Energy Minister Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. The committee was to report to the Cabinet on an ongoing basis on issues relating to South Africa, such as the fluctuating oil price, economic and trade repercussions and the security situation (Sunday Times 2003).

One South African strategist argued: 'Our foreign policy is based on economic interests, cultural and historic ties and people-to-people interests. While the war has caused divisions between governments, these interests will not change and therefore our policies will not need to be reviewed (Sunday Times 2003).' Mbeki himself cautioned that in South Africa's opposition to the war, it should not communicate hostility towards the US. While Mbeki disapproved of Bush's blunt tactics against Iraq, Mbeki did not want it to result in diplomatic tensions between the two countries (Sunday Times 2003).

Deputy President Jacob Zuma shared a similar line with Mbeki stating South Africa's differences with the US over the war in Iraq will not affect 'the many sided relations' South Africa had with the US. 'We are very clear about the fact that the relations we have with, among others, the US, Britain and Australia, are based on more than just the issue of Iraq,' he told a function hosted by the Stop the War Campaign. Zuma said the principle of multilateralism and the provisions of the Vienna Convention informed the government's decision and 'as such, government will be guided by any relevant decision taken by the UN... The foreign policy of this government is not a haphazard affair that we make up as we go along, according to Zuma (SAPA 2003c).'

Although South Africa was fundamentally opposed to the war in Iraq, according to Bond (2003) they 'decided to stand on the side of war profits, ignoring Anti-War Coalition calls to withdraw permission for three Iraq-bound warships to dock and refuel in Durban, and to halt sales of sophisticated armaments to the US/UK regimes.' Moreover, Bond researched and deduced that the state-owned arms manufacturer Denel was contracted to deliver US\$29 million in ammunition shell casing, US\$169 million in artillery propellants, and 326 hand-held laser range finders to the British army. Denel also sold the US Marines 125 laser-guidance sights in the months before the war (Bond 2003).

In July 2003, members of the US Senate Intelligence Committee accused the CIA of withholding information in September 2002 that the committee had requested on US military action in Iraq and that only after the accusations were made public, the CIA briefed the committee on the existence of the phony uranium documents and other intelligence information. Bush and his top White House advisers said that the CIA cleared information referenced in the 2002 State of the Union address that was used to try and persuade the public to support a war

against Iraq (Leopold 2003). This included the allegation that Iraq tried to buy uranium from South Africa. Moreover, it was revealed that the British dossier, which alleged Iraq had sought large quantities of uranium from South Africa in an effort to jump start its nuclear weapons program, was dismissed as forgeries last October in a private meeting in Vienna at the IAEA, according to the head of the agency, Mohammed ElBaradei (Leopold 2003).

Mandela, in May 2004, retracted his earlier criticism of the US from 2003, simply because 'it is not good to remain in tension with the most powerful state in the world (CNN 2004 in Bond 2004).' As Greg Mills, Director of SAIIA, explained: 'I think there was a bluster by the South African government, or those associated near or around it, prior to the American invasion of Iraq in March last year, but that was toned down fairly quickly by the South African government and most notably, Mbeki. Really, there has not been much in the way of condemnation of the American position since March last year (Williams 2004 in Bond 2004:605).'

### **3.1 US perspective**

Several reasons were given for why the US invaded Iraq; WMD's, oil, al Qaeda and 9/11, Saddam Hussein, and the desire to spread freedom and democracy (Lobe 2006). Looking back to chapter three, one of America's core values is to spread democracy and during the Bush Administration, an aggressive foreign policy and distinguishing friends from enemies was part of the viewpoint of neoconservatives present around Bush, and including Bush himself. This combined group of individuals also believed that with power comes responsibilities' meaning if you have the power you should use it.

Similar to Iran from 1997 onwards, the US was skeptical over South Africa's links to Saddam Hussein. Some perceived South Africa as trying to help Iraq expand his weapons

program and others thought, at a minimum, he was trying to purchase uranium from Pretoria (Astill & Carroll 2002). This was a concern of both the US and America's allies in the region, particularly other Gulf States such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait who became increasingly uncomfortable leading up to the start of the war due to the frequent interaction between the two countries. This concern was heightened, as South Africa remained remarkably quiet on Saddam and his security forces human rights abuses such as the gassing of Kurds (Astill & Carroll 2002).

America made their true feelings on South Africa-Iraqi relations known when former State Department officials began to suggest that South Africa could fall out of favor with the US (Sowetan 2002). This could have included cutting the trade benefits they received under AGOA. This feeling escalated when South Africa refused to close its Iraqi mission and bring its diplomats home prior to invasion at America's request. South Africa argued that it would act in accordance with UN resolutions therefore it saw no reason to abide by America's request. The anti-US rhetoric by senior ANC and South African government officials only added fuel to the fire. In the few months prior to the invasion, the US remained relatively silent in regards to South Africa, almost ignoring them completely.

The few months at the end of 2002 and early 2003 were harmful for US businesses operating in South Africa. Grant (2008) points out that this time period witnessed strong anti-Americanism by South African business executives and government officials, and unfortunately US businesses paid the price. In some instances, South Africa boycotted various US products. In other instances it took US businesses much longer to get their paperwork from the South African government.

After the US attacked Iraq on 20 March 2003, the US was aware of the frequent statements by Mbeki and others that they did not want to come across as anti-American and that

the bilateral relationship was in 'good standing.' Mandela's criticism retraction also helped although US government officials understood he was a former president acting in his private capacity and that his unofficial views had a limited impact on the actual intergovernmental relationship.

The US reiterated the same in May 2003 when Congressman John Lewis said the US was going to continue to try and maintain strong ties with South Africa. Since then, the US has appreciated the support of the South African arms industry and the role of South Africans working for US defense contractors. In addition, the US undoubtedly approved of a secret meeting by Sunni and Shi'a leaders with the new Northern Ireland and South Africa in August 2007 in order to start a potential peace process in Iraq in high favor (Hayden 2007). ANC leaders Mac Maharaj and Rashid Ismail were some of the key participants at the meeting that saw the signing of a draft set of principles, which resembled the protocols that guided the peace settlements in South Africa.

On the negative side, America and the UK slammed South African legislation known as the 'anti-mercenary bill' that would make it a criminal offense for any South African to participate in any foreign-armed conflict as a combatant, mercenary, or private security guard (Shillinger 2008). However, according to Shillinger (2008) it allows such participation in 'legitimate armed struggles, including struggles waged, in accordance with international humanitarian law, for national liberation; self-determination; independence against colonialism, or resistance against occupation, aggression or domination by foreign nationals or foreign forces.' Americans perceived this bill as saying the thousands of South Africans in Iraq would have to withdraw, but any South African may be legally entitled to fight in the insurgency against the coalition forces.

### 3.2 SA perspective

After diplomatic links were established in 1997 between South Africa and Iraq, a number of South African companies attempted to acquire business deals in the country. In addition, South Africa had been involved in the clearing of 10 million square miles of landmines and unexploded ordnance from previous wars prior to the beginning of the war (Source Six 2008).

South Africa was extremely upset when it became obvious that the US was going to invade Iraq. Mbeki wrote in the *ANC Today* in January 2003: ‘The very countries that are threatening Iraq over weapons of mass destruction, themselves own large quantities of these weapons. They say nothing whatsoever against Israel's weapons of mass destruction. Of course, from their point of view, the matter has nothing to do with principle. It turns solely on the question of power. We disagree (Mbeki 2003a).’

The Iraq War was one of the most significant events that in all likelihood helped shape many South African foreign policy makers perception of US foreign policy, especially under the Bush Administration. For the individuals who were skeptical of US foreign policy since the apartheid days, the Iraq war certainly helped to reinforce those perceptions. South Africa felt that expanding US power in the world, their ‘friendship’ with Israel and securing vital resources like oil were the main drivers of US foreign policy. Mbeki’s (2003a) statement mentioned previously clearly showed that he believed US actions were solely based on power.

The Israel connection is something South Africa thought the Americans refused to recognize. South Africa perceived links between Iraqi disarmament and the creation of a truly independent Palestinian state (Field 2000:11). Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad argued before the invasion that such an action would exacerbate the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (Ensor 2002). South Africa argued that if US wanted to destroy any remaining WMDs in Iraq, then it should



also do the same with Israel and its hostile behavior towards the Palestinians and other neighboring countries. South Africa knew this was indeed unlikely, which showed an unacceptable double standard in the international arena.

South Africa's perception of oil being a factor in the Iraq War rested a lot more on its economic affect on Africa than what the Americans perceived. Mbeki remembered the effects of the 1970s oil crisis on Africa. He knew that if oil prices were to skyrocket due to the war that this would severely hamper African development. This was a concern of non-African countries in the global South as well. As chair of both NAM and the AU, South Africa had an obligation to raise the feelings and decisions made by both organizations.

The US-led invasion showed South Africa that the US wanted maintain its overwhelming global power and sway in international relations. This was hurtful because it went against South Africa's foreign policy principles of multilateralism and actually using diplomacy and international organizations like the UN as a peaceful means of resolving conflict, which was pointed out in chapter three. Likewise, it showed South Africa that they really have a very little scope for action and maneuverability on the world stage. This contradicted the US paradigm of 'you are with us or against us' and the labeling of countries of part of the 'axis of evil.' For some, it is unilateralism that poses the most serious threat to international peace and security and not nations like Iraq and Iran. Moreover: 'The prospect facing the people of Iraq should serve as sufficient warning that in future we, too, might have others descend on us, guns in hand to force-feed us,' Mbeki said. 'If the United Nations does not matter,' he continued, why should 'the little countries of Africa' think that 'we matter and will not be punished if we get out of line (Butler 2008)?'

As South African announced that bilateral relations with the US were still on good footing, they perceived their position before the war as correct due to the fact that no WMDs were found in Iraq. They felt they simply disagreed on the issue like so many other countries had done. The Iraq War was a damper on US-South Africa relations. However, since then South Africa has offered their expertise and experience in negotiation and reconciliation (i.e. with Iraq's divided leaders, as discussed earlier). They also have the perception that they can afford to take very different positions to Washington and still be on good terms because of their stance on non-proliferation and as a free-market and democratic country.

#### **4. Israel/Palestine**

The Israel-Palestinian conflict has been a long standing issue and an extremely important one in US-South African relations. America's relationship with Israel played a role in several occurrences throughout the time period, including: the 1995 Syrian Arms Deal; the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Xenophobia and other Forms of Discrimination (WCAR); and numerous protests during both the Clinton and Bush Administrations against Israel and the US, which in one instance included the burning of Israeli and American flags<sup>39</sup>.

Israel's treatment of the Palestinians is likened by some as a system of apartheid. Former US president Jimmy Carter even entitled his 2006 book, *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*. Carter argued that Israel's options included a 'system of apartheid, with two peoples occupying the same land but completely separated from each other, with Israelis totally dominant and suppressing violence by depriving Palestinians of their basic human rights. This is the policy now being followed ... (Carter 2006).'

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<sup>39</sup> US and Israeli flags were burned in June 2007 as demonstrators from the End The Occupation Campaign gathered outside the Israeli Embassy in Pretoria to highlight the ongoing plight of the Palestinian people (Radio 702 2007).

Mandela was originally invited to Israel in 1994, but had cancelled many of the planned visits over the years because the peace process did not make the visit 'politic (Belling 1999).' In October 1999 serving as a political intermediary between Israel and its neighbors, Mandela made his first visit to Israel. This trip came after Mandela's term of office had ended and was in his private capacity. He met with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat. Mandela was a longtime supporter of the PLO and he told reporters that 'Israel should withdraw from all the areas which it won from the Arabs in 1967, and in particular Israel should withdraw completely from the Golan Heights, from south Lebanon and from the West Bank (Belling 1999).'

Following his release from prison in 1990, Mandela said: 'Almost every country in the world -- except Israel' had invited him to visit (Belling 1999). However, he now decided to show a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. Mandela said: 'To the many people who have questioned why I came, I say: Israel worked very closely with the apartheid regime. I say: I've made peace with many men who slaughtered our people like animals. Israel cooperated with the apartheid regime, but it did not participate in any atrocities (Belling 1999).'

The Israel issue arose again in 2001 at the WCAR that was held in Durban, South Africa from 31 August to 7 September. Reverend Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, President of Africa Action's Board of Directors said: 'as the WCAR approaches, it is time for the US to confront the racism that continues to be a major determinant of its foreign policy towards Africa, and that has enabled the US to sit on its hands while the AIDS pandemic devastates the African continent (Africa Action 2001).'

Prior to and during the WCAR, the anti-American and anti-Israeli hysteria ran extremely high.

At the very beginning of the WCAR, the US was criticized for sending a low-level delegation, which was headed by US Ambassador Michael Southwick, Deputy Assistant

Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs instead of what many people thought should have been Colin Powell, the Secretary of State. This was especially true of a conference that dealt with several controversial issues like slavery and Israelis actions in the Middle East. Mbeki himself stated that they thought sending such a low-level delegation was a mistake (Sowetan 2001). Nevertheless, the WCAR proceeded, and after four days of heated negotiations Israel and the US withdrew from the conference.

Powell stated that the hateful language ‘singles out only one country in the world, Israel, for censure and abuse’ in the draft text and US delegate Tom Lanto’s said that the conference had been ‘wrecked by Arab and Islamic extremists (BBC News 2001b).’ The South African Government viewed ‘the withdrawal of the US delegation or any other delegation as unfortunate and unnecessary. It will be unfortunate if a perception were to develop that the USA's withdrawal from the conference is merely a red herring demonstrating an unwillingness to confront the real issues posed by racism (BBC News 2001b).’

In mid 2002, members of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) marched on the offices of the US consulate in Cape Town on 11 July to demonstrate the League's solidarity with the people of Palestine ‘whose rights are denied by and continue to suffer under the hands of Israel and the United States,’ according to the organization (SAPA 2002a). The ANCYL presented a memorandum calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied areas. In addition, the memorandum called for a commitment to a cease-fire by both Israel and the Palestinians as well as the establishment of a new and fair mediation over the conflict. The ANCYL felt the mediation in the Israel/Palestine conflict was based on US military superiority and therefore had not been an impartial mediator (SAPA 2002a).

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development held shortly after in Johannesburg, Muslim protesters under the banner of the Palestinian Solidarity Committee made up a major block at the rear of the civil society march. The chants included 'Free, free Palestine,' 'Viva bin Laden' and 'Phanzi (down with) George Bush (SAPA 2002b).' Media reports indicated that as the marchers passed a row of black policemen on the outskirts of the Alexandra township one man called out 'Viva Osama, comrades. You suffered under apartheid, but you are our brothers.' Another marcher, Imran Abrahams of Cape Town, said: 'The people love Bin Laden, the poor people of South Africa. He's been deprived of his money; they froze his money, so he can't give to the poor now.' He said Bin Laden was seen as a hero (SAPA 2002b).

Although overshadowed by the war in Iraq and Bush's Africa visit, the Israel/Palestine issue was one that did not disappear in 2003. A report from a US Jewish newspaper whose name was not mentioned in the article quoted that 60 percent of South African Jews interviewed did not see a long-term future for themselves in South Africa mainly because of the perceived increase in anti-Semitism (SAPA 2003e). This was a grave concern according to Mbeki and he reassured the South African Jewish community that they will always have a home in South Africa and should fear no threat of anti-Semitism (SAPA 2003e).

South Africa supports the two-state solution to resolve the Israel/Palestine conflict. Mbeki stated in 2003 while addressing the centenary conference of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies in Sandton, South Africa: 'We support the Road Map to move forward to permanent peace and stability and this includes the two-state solutions - an independent Palestinian state and a state of Israel within safe and secure borders (SAPA 2003e).' Russell Gaddin, national chairman of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies said at the same event

that international Jewry was facing a growth in anti-Semitism that had not been seen since the defeat of Nazi Germany in the Second World War (SAPA 2003e).

Mbeki hosted Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert behind closed doors in Pretoria in October 2004, in an attempt to help find a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Pro-Palestinian groups criticized South Africa, which defended their warming relations with Israel. The pro-Palestinian activists, mostly from South Africa's Muslim minority, were upset about South Africa's willingness to talk to the Israeli government, and its position as Israel's largest trading partner in Africa (Reuters 2004). South Africa said it hoped to use its experience in negotiating the end of white rule to help bring peace in Israel. However, they have also been a vocal critic of Israel's security policies.

Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad later stated in a news conference: 'We are not mediators, we want to use our own experience to help them... We will criticize actions, for instance of Israeli defense forces occupying territories and at the same time criticize actions of the Palestinian groups, such as suicide bombing (Reuters 2004).' He then said South Africa wanted to see a legitimate Palestinian state living side by side with Israel behind secure borders. Nevertheless, Olmert, who also headed the trade and industry ministries, was the first top Israeli official to visit South Africa since 1994. He hailed what he called was a new era of stronger ties with South Africa during his trip, and signed an investment protection agreement with South Africa (Reuters 2004).

Israel began to worry when South Africa's stance on Iran was combined with Mbeki hosting Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. Abbas was in South Africa for a three-day visit and was welcomed by a full honor guard as he arrived at the parliamentary complex in Cape Town in 2006. Mbeki pledged that South Africa would continue to give aid to the Palestinians 'to attain

their long cherished dream of an independent and sovereign state (Nullis 2006).’ Mbeki offered the South African nation's ‘unconditional acceptance’ of the legitimacy of the Hamas-led government, but also urged the militant group to recognize Israel's right to exist. Mbeki said that Hamas must be included as a negotiating partner in the peace process, this despite the refusal by Israel and Western governments to deal with the militant group, which is on the American and EU lists of terrorist organizations (Nullis 2006).

Defense Minister Lekota said in February 2007: ‘We welcome the formation of the coalition government in Palestine and consider that it would be very, very wise if the sanctions of the European Union and United States were lifted to give encouragement to the standing of this coalition (Webb 2007)’. Four months later, South Africans were called on by pro-Palestinian groups to turn out in their thousands during a week of (4-9 June) national protest action in solidarity with the Palestinian people. The week of action coincided with the 40th anniversary of the occupation by Israel of the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Addressing a media conference, South African Intelligence Minister Kasrils described the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory as ‘criminal and intolerable (ANC 2007b).’ Speaking at the briefing, COSATU President Willie Madisha said protest action against Israel ‘must be sustained for as long as possible beyond the week we have identified. COSATU will campaign among organisations of the working class around the world to support this call.’ He said COSATU supported a campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel (ANC 2007b)

US and Israeli flags were burned as demonstrators from the End The Occupation Campaign gathered outside the Israeli Embassy in Pretoria to highlight the ongoing plight of the Palestinian people during that week (Radio 702 2007). The protesters constructed a two-meter

wooden wall with the words, Free Palestine, spray-painted on it and called on the South African government to cut all diplomatic ties with the Jewish state (Radio 702 2007).

At the end of November 2007, Dlamini Zuma left South Africa and traveled to Annapolis in the US to attend an international conference on the Israel-Palestine conflict. In the *ANC Today*, Dlamini Zuma she said she was attending the conference in response to the formal invitation of the convener of the conference, the US government (ANC 2007c). This was contrary to a media report in *The Sunday Independent* (a South African newspaper), written by Peter Fabricius, entitled ‘‘Unhelpful’ SA gets belated invitation to peace talks.’ Fabricius wrote:

After long uncertainty, the United States has invited South Africa to participate in the Middle East peace conference... Diplomatic sources had said that the US was not keen to invite South Africa because it was considered ‘unhelpful’ in international organisations - largely because of its votes against US positions in the UN. The US would also have regarded South Africa as unsympathetic to Israel, a key US ally... But it is believed that South Africa received an ex-officio invitation as a current member of the Security Council (ANC 2007c).

In early February 2008, news already began to surface about America boycotting the 2009 South Africa Racism Summit in Durban. Secretary of State Rice told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Washington could boycott the conference if it was likely to degenerate into anti-Semitism, but that the US government had not taken a final decision on participating in the summit (Agence France Presse 2008). ‘We have no intention of participating in something like Durban I [One]. I mean, it was an outrage, and I’ve been very clear with my counterparts about that,’ she said. At the time, Canada had already bowed out of the upcoming conference saying it would likely ‘degenerate into ... expressions of intolerance and anti-Semitism (Agence France Presse 2008).’



## 4.1 US perspective

Chapter three explained the importance of certain lobby groups in formulating US foreign policy. Many US political scientists such as John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt argue that the Israel lobby is one of the most powerful. US-Israeli relations are an important factor for American policy in the Middle East. The US has supported this policy by providing Israel with billions of Dollars of foreign aid<sup>40</sup> and economic and military grants each year. The relationship is complex, with Israel dependent on the US for its economic and military strength, while at the same time that the US is an ally of Israel, it is dependent on Arab states oil.

There is some division in the US on the issue of Israel. One side questions the levels of aid and general commitment to Israel and argues that an American bias toward Israel operates at the expense of improved US relations with various Arab states. The other side, which includes the powerful and influential Israeli lobby and the neo-conservatives in Washington, feel obliged to defend a democratic Israel against non-democratic forces. They maintain Israel is a strategic ally and that US relations with Israel strengthens the US presence in the Middle East.

The US has been skeptical of South Africa's relations with Palestinian leaders from organizations such as the PLO and Hamas. America grasps the fact that South Africa wants to use their experience in conflict resolution to establish a two state solution, but are often distraught by anti-Zionist statements from ANC, COSTAU and SACP members and protests by the Palestinian Solidarity Group. These statements have been combined with actions such as conducting several meetings with Israel's enemies Iran and Hamas, where South Africa have defended their point of view. Furthermore, South Africa has voted for several UN resolutions condemning Israel; on occasion even co-sponsoring the resolutions. For example, it was one of

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<sup>40</sup> The exact amount is very difficult to identify because certain categories of aid are buried in the massive federal budget, hard to estimate the actual value, or are simply unknown. Best guess estimates are that the US provides Israel with around 3 to 5 billion US dollars a year.

only 15 countries put forward a submission to the International Court of Justice in The Hague against Israel's security barrier, commonly referred to by Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad as the 'apartheid wall (Pahad 2007).'

Some Americans such as a former US State Department employee who preferred to remain anonymous (Source Nine 2008) feel South Africa is 'punching above their weight' when dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because it **is** outside the scope of Africa. It is believed that South Africa wants to be recognized for its work on the international level thereby pushing them ever closer to a seat on the UNSC. Others feel that Israel's strong relationship with the apartheid government during the 1970's and 80's is another reason why so many South Africans are critics of Israel. South Africa provided enriched uranium to Israel during the 1980s in exchange for military technology transfers and other items (Horton 1999).

#### **4.2 SA perspective**

South Africa's ties with Palestinian organizations have grown considerably since 1994. At the same time, South Africa has maintained strong economic relations with Israel; they are their largest trading partner in Africa. It is also notable that the South African Jewish community, although extremely small compared to that of the US, is among the most vibrant Diaspora communities, especially in the Johannesburg area. They continue to have a considerable influence in business and political circles.

South Africa throughout the time period has had to balance these two interests and has done so showing remarkable pragmatism at times. However, from a pure economic standpoint, South Africa understands that three-quarters of its liquid energy requirements come from this region and that the Middle East is the most promising market for South Africa's arms industry.

South Africa does not want to be seen as mediators, but simply as using their own experience to assist in the Israeli/Palestinian situation. South Africa has criticized Israeli actions such as Israeli defense forces occupying territories, but has also criticized actions of the Palestinian groups such as suicide bombings. A large majority of the Israeli criticism comes from the strong leftist ideological parties such as the SACP and COSATU (SACP 2001a). However, critics have also included pro-Palestinian activists mostly from South Africa's Muslim minority, and some members of the ANC, with South African Intelligence Minister Ronnie Kasrils being the most vocal.

South Africa perceives the protection of Israeli interests in the Middle East as one the driving factors of US foreign policy (Grobler 2007:1). Although the conflict in the Middle East may seem far removed from this Africa's regional leader, many within the South African government, as evident by their participation in protests, sympathize with Palestinians and perceive parallels to their own struggle for liberation. In fact, the ANC has a long history of cooperation with the PLO and Israel's close ties with the apartheid regime led many ANC members to perceive the Palestinian cause as a sister struggle. This long history has led to a deep distrust of what appears to be America's unwavering support for Israel. This distrust is further deepened when Americans themselves such as Jimmy Carter compare the conflict to that of apartheid.

Carter's (2006) statements also reminded South Africa of the large amount of aid America gives to Israel. This inequity in aid, especially compared to some African countries, is perceived by South Africans as pure favoritism and has even been labeled 'racist.' On the whole, South Africa perceives American assistance to Israel as bolstering Israel's ability to deny Palestinians their right to self-determination. This reminds many South Africans of the apartheid

days. The status of this faction of US-South African relations and of overall Israeli-South African relations will be most likely be linked to status of future peace talks.

South Africa's diplomacy and mediation efforts almost always consist of small groups coming together to talk about an issue or problem (Wheeler 2008). It was pointed out in chapter three that this was the favorite approach of Mbeki and where he felt most comfortable. This helps explain the frequent meetings between Palestinian leaders and South African government officials. The US has a tendency to perceive these encounters as South Africa's growing support of 'terrorist organizations' while South Africa is only trying to bring about a solution by discussing the issue at hand.

According to South Africa and President Obama himself, America finding a solution to the Israel/Palestine issue is a priority (DPA 2009). South Africa maintains that, in order for the peace process to succeed, Hamas would have to be involved in the peace talks; however, they feel Hamas should be moved closer to Fatah (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:7).

## **5. Summary**

This chapter examined three other significant issues in the US-South Africa relationship that related to 'allies and enemies,' looking at the situation from both sides. These issues included South Africa's relations with so-called 'pariah states' and the non-proliferation of WMDs, the Iraq War (since 2003) and Israel-Palestine. This information will be crucial when the analysis of the main theoretical framework is presented in chapter eight.

The Israel lobby is one of the most powerful in the US. The state of Israel is considerable factor and influence when it comes to America's interests in the region. This has affected US-South African relations in a variety of ways. With the Iraq War, for example, South Africa perceived links between Iraqi disarmament and the solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. South

Africa wants to use their conflict resolution experience to help establish a two state solution. However, often it is hard to see if South Africa is taking sides due to anti-Zionist statements from ANC, COSTAU and SACP members, protests by the Palestinian Solidarity Group and with South Africans sympathizing with Palestinians due to their own struggle for liberation. At the same time, South Africa sees the US almost always favoring Israel's side, which in turn hampers negotiations.

Israel has also played a role in US-South Africa relations due to South Africa's relations with certain Middle Eastern countries like Syria and Libya, although this was more of an issue during Clinton's Administration than Bush's. Iran is a somewhat different story. Their quest for nuclear weapons during Bush's years posed a serious threat to US national security and its interests in the region. Many in American circles feel that South Africa's warm relations with Iran have a lot to do with the ANC's history with the country. Nevertheless, this has led to a great debate over the NPT. South Africa has viewed the Americans as not adhering to their own NPT obligations to undertake systematic and progressive efforts towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons arsenals. They are further concerned that non-proliferation is preached for Iran, but not for Israel and that human rights is an issue with China but not Pakistan.

One of the other key countries involved in the pariah states debate during the time period was Cuba. South Africa's relationship with the island nation was an issue in the mid **1990s**. However, its significance dissipated rapidly. In the end, the US and South Africa agreed to disagree.

One of the fundamental points about the Iraq War during Bush's presidency, and why it became such a massive problem in the relationship, were the differences between the US and South Africa on when to go to war and when to use diplomacy. Chapter three showed conflicting

views between the two nations, with Bush determined to use America's military power and South Africa's, and Mbeki's in particular, peaceful approach of resolving conflict.

The next chapter continues on a similar pattern as this one and analyzes additional significant topics.

## **6. CHAPTER SIX: GLOBAL FIGHTS: HIV/AIDS, US LED WAR ON TERRORISM AND MULTILATERALISM**

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## **6. GLOBAL FIGHTS: HIV/AIDS, US LED WAR ON TERRORISM AND MULTILATERALISM**

### **1. Introduction.**

This chapter discusses the US and South Africa in what is labeled ‘global fights.’ It begins with the global fight against HIV/AIDS. The issue of what is often referred to as the US led global war on terrorism follows this.

South Africa’s willingness or not to be an ally in the WOT is another considerable component of the US-South African relationship. Although 9/11 was the event that raised the bar on the fight against terrorism, America and South Africa had previous experiences with the issue since 1994; most notably People against Gangsterism and Drugs<sup>41</sup> (PAGAD)’s attacks in South Africa and the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania by Al Qaeda.

Since 1998 and 9/11 there have been numerous connections between terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and South Africa. This has included the use of South African passports by Islamic fundamentalists and the reported terrorist training camps operating within the South Africa’s borders (Lefkowitz 2004). South Africa’s cooperation with the US has always been in doubt. There have been perceived times of disagreement such as with the Dockrats, two South Africas added to a list of Al Qaeda terrorists (Pham 2007b), and perceived times of agreement, with the extradition or deportation of alleged terrorists such as Rashid.

The last topic discussed in this chapter involves various disagreements the US and South Africa had in global or international organizations such as the UN and the ICC.

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<sup>41</sup> An Islamic oriented militant group based in Cape Town, South Africa formed in 1996.



## 2. HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS has been a central concern of US-South African relations for more than a decade. UNAIDS estimated in 2007 that between 4.9 and 6.1 million South Africans were living with HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS 2007). The most important player in the fight against HIV/AIDS in South Africa during the time period was President Mbeki. Mbeki himself admits he is an Aids dissident (McGreal 2007). In a 2007 Mbeki biography by Mark Gevisser, the journalist describes how the president's view of the disease was shaped by an obsession with race, the legacy of colonialism and 'sexual shame (McGreal 2007).'

Back in the mid 1990s, the US and South Africa were in a dispute over pharmaceutical policies from 1997 till approximately April 2001. The US government had allegedly been pressuring South Africa on behalf of numerous pharmaceutical companies. Meanwhile, South Africa undertook a number of new initiatives to lower prices for pharmaceuticals. These initiatives included restrictions on inappropriate marketing efforts, mandatory generic drug substitution, registration of generic versions of the cancer drug Paclitaxel (sold as Taxol by Bristol-Myers Squibb), parallel-imports and compulsory licensing (Bond 1999). Clinton signed an Executive Order in July 2000, making it easier for African nations to get access to cheaper drugs. Then in March 2001, 39 foreign drug companies went to court to challenge South African law that would allow the country to buy cheap, generic substitutes for patented AIDS drugs. However, after pressure from NGOs and AIDS activist groups, the pharmaceutical companies unconditionally dropped the case a month later.

A year earlier, in April 2000, America's Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) website stated: 'In our view, the infectious disease burden will add to political instability and slow democratic development in sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Asia, and the former Soviet Union,

while also increasing political tensions in and among some developed countries (Kindra 2000).’ According to the CIA report entitled ‘The Global Infectious Disease Threat and Its Implications for the United States,’ the pandemic's socio-economic impact is a threat to democracy and will increase pressure on democratic transitions in sub-Saharan Africa. The intelligence report quotes experts who isolated HIV/AIDS as the single biggest threat to the sub-Saharan economy, with predictions the disease will reduce the region's gross domestic product by at least 20% by 2010 (Kindra 2000).

The CIA report also highlighted HIV's impact on national security and international peacekeeping efforts, with the sub-Saharan militaries being the worst affected. The report states, ‘Infectious diseases are likely to continue to account for more military hospital admissions than battlefield injuries (Kindra 2000).’ This was especially relevant in South Africa when only a week prior to the CIA report being posted, the *Mail and Guardian*, a South African weekly newspaper, reported that the HIV/AIDS infection rate in the SANDF may be as high as 60% to 70% (Kindra 2000).

One of the more primary topics discussed during Mbeki’s 2000 US visit, and which actually took precedence, was the controversy over both his personal views and his government’s HIV and AIDS policies. Mbeki had maintained a highly controversial belief that AIDS was not caused by the HIV virus.<sup>42</sup> Mbeki reminded the US about its African obligations and that it has to back its promises on aid, trade, investment and international peacekeeping (Monyane & Landsberg 2000).

In the multilateral fora, the UNSC adopted the ‘historic’ US sponsored resolution 1308 on HIV/AIDS in July 2000. The resolution was the first ever by the Council on a health issue,

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<sup>42</sup> In his address to the 2000 International AIDS Conference held in Durban, Mbeki reiterated his view that HIV was not wholly responsible for AIDS, which led to hundreds of delegates walking out on his speech (Avert 2009).

and it expressed concern at the potentially damaging impact of HIV/AIDS on the health of international peacekeeping personnel, including support personnel. ‘Stressing that the HIV/AIDS pandemic, if unchecked, may pose a risk to stability and security,’ states the actual resolution (UNIS 2000). The US recognized that HIV/AIDS is a national security issue as the human impact of the disease is massive enough to affect the economic, political and military interests of a state. A partially declassified US National Intelligence Council estimate from 2000 argues that infectious diseases threaten American national security because they ‘endanger US citizens at home and abroad, threaten US armed forces deployed overseas, and exacerbate social and political instability in key countries and regions in which the United States has significant interests (National Intelligence Council 2000).’

Feldbaum (2006) argues that three main arguments linking HIV/AIDS and national security emerged. The first is the impact of the disease on individuals critical to the maintenance of state and international security (ie soldiers and peacekeepers). Secondly, the epidemic in some sub-Saharan African nations may cause state instability and failure. Thirdly, HIV/AIDS has the possible security effects on the larger, more strategically important states such as India, China and Russia.

Mbeki, determined on the HIV/AIDS issue, later in 2000 accused the CIA of being part of a ‘conspiracy to promote the view that HIV causes AIDS (United Press 2000).’ Mbeki also thought the CIA was working covertly alongside the big American pharmaceutical manufacturers to undermine him because, by questioning the link between HIV and AIDS, he posed a risk to the profits of drug companies making anti-retroviral treatments. Mbeki’s comments about the CIA came from his address at Parliament to ANC MPs (United Press 2000). Shortly after the South African president’s comments, the South African Medical and Dental

Council, which represents three out of four doctors in the country, made their first public statement on the controversy: ‘There is no merit in him confusing everyone about the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS (United Press 2000).’

In September 2000, Mbeki was quoted as saying: "A virus cannot cause a syndrome. A virus can cause a disease, and Aids is not a disease, it is a syndrome (BBC News 2000)." He went on to say that questions about HIV and Aids had been raised by "very eminent scientists", and declared that while he could accept that HIV contributed to the collapse of the immune system, other factors like poverty and poor nutrition were also involved (BBC News 2000).

Mbeki spoke out against the US during his address to the NAM in 2000. He singled out America as a country of increasing racism and xenophobia (Mbeki 2000). Nevertheless, then US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright arrived in South Africa at the end of 2000 as part of a visit to three African countries where, of course, the AIDS pandemic was discussed.

When Mbeki was in Washington in June 2001, he was asked the following question by a local journalist: ‘last week the *New York Times* published an editorial accusing your government of, in its words, dooming half a generation of young people to an early, protracted and expensive death because of its failure to distribute anti-retrovirals. How do you explain the amount of criticism that you're coming in for in the United States for what is a perception that you're not doing enough on HIV (The White House 2001a)?’ Mbeki responded: ‘Well, I'll—we've said—all I would say to that, really, is that people must look at what we're doing in South Africa, not their perception of what they think we're doing but what we're doing actually in the country. And I don't think, on the basics of facts **that** an accusation like that can be sustained (The White House 2001a).’

Andrew Natsios, Administrator for USAID, in both the *Boston Globe* on 07 June 2001, and in testimony before the House International Relations Committee that same year argued against providing drugs to the 25 million Africans living with HIV/AIDS at the time claiming that they would be unable to follow treatment regimes. More specifically, Natsios said that Africans ‘don't know what Western time is,’ claiming, ‘you have to take these drugs a certain number of hours each day, or they don't work. Many people in Africa have never seen a clock or watch their entire lives (Africa Action 2001).’ This means that treatment simply ‘couldn't get done,’ according to Natsios, and instead argued instead to focus all attention on prevention.

Africans and the rest of the world did not take Natsios comments lightly. By him stating the US should focus attention entirely on prevention, the perception was that America was condemning to death the millions already infected by HIV/AIDS in Africa and throughout the developing world. However, Natsios statements regarding Africans not being able to follow treatment regimes was far worse received. In response, Africa Action, the oldest organization in the US working on African affairs released a letter to Colin Powell, urging him to issue an official apology and repudiation of ‘racist comments’ made by Natsios (Africa Action 2001).

One of Bush’s first acts in 2002 took place on 10 January where he signed the FY2002 Foreign Operations Appropriations and the Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations, which together provided more than US\$618 million for bilateral US HIV/AIDS programs worldwide (Copson 2002). The following year Bush visited Africa. The US viewed Bush’s visit in 2003 in a positive light as the American Congress recently passed the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003, which promised to dedicate almost US\$5 billion over five years to ongoing American HIV/AIDS programs, and US\$1 billion to the UN-endorsed Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Hesse

2005:333). However, Hesse pointed out that there is a provision in the US law supporting the President's global AIDS stating that any country which receives a grant as a part of the initiative may *not* buy generic AIDS drugs from non-American companies unless US regulators certify them safe and effective.

Other people thought Bush's AIDS plan was a public relations gambit meant to soften possible criticism of the President during his African tour (Hesse 2005:337). Likewise, others thought it was ploy meant to win over black voters in Bush's bid for re-election in 2004. This appeared to be a legitimate thought. Talbot (2003) explains that in the most 'distasteful' moment in his tour, Bush was a photographed hugging AIDS orphans while his wife shed tears. Either way, according to Hesse (2005:333) Bush's billion-Dollar pledge certainly did receive the high-profile press.

In late 2004, controversy surrounded Bush's HIV/AIDS policies when a draft contract for the distribution of HIV anti-retroviral medicines throughout Africa surfaced. The contract, involving US\$7 billion over five years, was considered being bided on by the US government's second-largest defense contractor, Northrop Grumman and US defense contractor Dyncorp (Hesse 2005:334). Hesse revealed that unsettling for some was Northrop Grumman and Dyncorp officials started visiting organizations such as Catholic Relief Services before a draft of the contract was even posted. Hesse speculates that perhaps the individuals had inside information on a potentially lucrative business opportunity and were looking to partner with organizations to help their bid. Was the military industrial complex really looking to diversify into the medical industrial complex?

In early 2005, the two countries signed a joint research arrangement to further advance 'Project Phidisa.' US Ambassador Frazer and the defense minister Lekota signed the accord.

Frazer said:

Faced, here in South Africa, with an unprecedented HIV/AIDS challenge, we are giving hope. Faced with stigma that limits the seeking of medical care, we are demonstrating that AIDS is just an illness that can be treated. And, faced with a need for more research progress to stop this disease globally, South Africa is becoming a leader as we seek effective vaccines and new therapies against this disease (PANA 2005a).

US Congresswoman and Democratic Leader of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi led a Congressional delegation to South Africa in February 2006. The delegation met with senior South African government officials with talks focusing on the implementation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in South Africa

In August 2006, scientists were shocked by South African Health Minister Tshabalala-Msimang's appearance at an international AIDS conference in Toronto, Canada. She represented the South African stand and the government exhibition had featured 'garlic, lemons and African potatoes' as an alternative treatment against HIV infection. However, analysts reported that the most serious errors of Minister Tshabalala-Msimang's policies was her 'undermining' of HIV science in South Africa, resulting in the 'proliferation of unproven remedies' and the marketing of 'quackery, at the expense of the sick and dying (Afrol 2006).' As a result, a letter was sent to the health minister endorsed by Dr. Mark Wainberg, chairperson of the Toronto conference stating:

To deny that HIV causes AIDS is farcical in the face of the scientific evidence. To have as Health Minister a person who now has no international respect is an embarrassment to the South African government. We therefore call for the immediate removal of Dr Tshabalala-Msimang as Minister of Health, and for an end to the disastrous, pseudo-scientific policies that have characterised the South African government's response to HIV/AIDS (Afrol 2006).

However, in the run-up to the Bush-Mbeki meeting in December 2006, the South African government seemed to make a change of course — not unnoticed in Washington — that saw the emergence of a more sound policy voice, and Minister Tshabalala-Msimang being pushed off center stage in the handling of HIV/AIDS following her disastrous display at Toronto in August (Cobb 2006). In remarks following the meeting, Bush said: ‘We talked about our bilateral relations and his [Mbeki’s] government’s commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS and our willingness to provide over US\$600 million to the folks in South Africa to help deal with this terrible pandemic (Cobb 2006).’

This was an important development because the remarks of both Mbeki and Tshabalala-Msimang undermined South Africa’s own policy on HIV/AIDS, which became more progressive and comprehensive since late 2003. The South African government standing on the issue was considered quite advanced by the end of the time period.<sup>43</sup>

It was announced in the beginning of the year that US funding for HIV/AIDS programs in South Africa for 2008 came close to matching the South African government’s own budget for dealing with the epidemic. The US provided R4.3-billion to South Africa through PEPFAR in 2008 to support its HIV/AIDS programs (Keeton 2008). Moreover, this was set to increase to R5.3 billion in 2009. The US funding for 2008 represented an increase of R1.4 billion compared with last year, when it donated about R2.9-billion to its South African HIV/AIDS partners (Keeton 2008). US Ambassador Bost said the plan was close to Bush’s heart. ‘I have heard this from his mouth,’ said Bost.

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<sup>43</sup> US Ambassador to South Africa Cameron Hume stated in November 2003 that it was ‘a good day in South Africa’s history when the government decided to make anti-retrovirals available in state health facilities (Smit 2003:9).’



## 2.1 US perspective

The US government's perception of HIV/AIDS is straightforward. Fighting HIV/AIDS is a top priority, not only for humanitarian reasons, but because the disease threatens the prosperity, stability, and development of nations around the world. However, most Americans were skeptical whether South Africa felt the same way throughout the time period (Source Nine 2008).

There was optimism that the issue would be addressed at the beginning of the Mandela Administration, but as former US Ambassador to South Africa Princeton Lyman (2006) explains, Mandela did not return to the issue for the rest of his term. A national program began, but had limited funding and little widespread participation. Van der Vliet (2004) argues that the 'new government would prioritize positive programmes, such as housing, jobs, education and wider healthcare issues. AIDS warnings and the message of safer sex were not subjects congenial to those savouring the euphoria of freedom.' Moreover, South Africa was involved in the dispute with pharmaceutical companies, which involved a three-year legal battle over HIV/AIDS medicines. America argued that the US government was simply trying to make South Africa abide by international law, and in particular, the WTO TRIPS Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights accord on intellectual property.

In 1999, Mbeki questioned the scientific basis of the link between HIV and AIDS and suggested that western countries were pressing governments on the issue in order to make countries like South Africa dependent on expensive western pharmaceuticals (United Press 2000). Mbeki believed that South Africa needed to focus on poverty alleviation and basic health services and not HIV/AIDS.

America was concerned over Mbeki's accusations in 2000 that the CIA was working covertly alongside the big American pharmaceutical manufacturers to undermine him. However, various US government officials perceived Mbeki as having a paranoid element about him (Shillinger 2008). They originally saw this paranoia in the 1980s with his obsession over an alleged substance called Red Mercury (Shillinger 2008). This substance was supposedly used in nuclear bombs and a variety of unrelated weapons systems. It was believed that the apartheid government was importing red mercury for military purposes and that this was the reason why South African Airways Flight 295 from Taiwan caught fire and crashed off the coast of Mauritius in 1987 (Shillinger 2008). The US perceived Mbeki as being just as paranoid with the HIV/AIDS situation, hence the CIA accusations. Regardless, the US believed Mbeki's stance created confusion within South Africa's own programs (Source Ten 2008).

In 2000, the US went around Mbeki and directly worked with the SANDF in testing their soldiers. According to a former high level US government official (Source Ten 2008), they felt this was the only way to get things accomplished. Source Ten (2008) states: 'Mbeki and Tshabalala-Msimang (the Health Minister) would not sit down and talk with the US about what and how to use American funds for. This was especially true of HIV/AIDS. Neither were interested in talking to us.'

By 2003, America's concern with South Africa over the topic was growing despite the pharmaceutical debate ending two years earlier. One individual that was particularly upset about Mbeki's stance on HIV/AIDS was US Ambassador Hume. According to a source close to the ambassador: 'Hume was furious at Mbeki (Source Seven 2008).' This frustration became evident when Ambassador Hume questioned the commitment of the South African authorities to fighting HIV/AIDS in the media (BBC News 2003). Moreover, according to Hume, the South African

government failed to spend its own AIDS budget, bringing into question whether the authorities would use US donations effectively. This came at a time when Bush recently announced PEPFAR, highlighting America's commitment to fighting the epidemic. Washington was particularly concerned over South Africa's commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS within the SANDF.

By this time, the US and the international community understood that Mbeki and his government has failed and will continue to fail millions of HIV-positive South Africans. Mbeki himself stopped talking publicly about HIV/AIDS when he was instructed to and under pressure from the ANC because it was seen as damaging South Africa's reputation (McGreal 2007).

Some American's such as Gerard (2005) thought one of the main problems with Bush's Administrations was its 'conservative religious politics' in its approach to HIV/AIDS prevention. According to Gerard, one-third of the international funds spent on prevention programs at the time, or approximately \$130 million, had to be spent only on promoting abstinence before marriage, and not on the use of safer sex or condoms.

South Africa's Health Minister Tshabalala-Msimang's appearance at the international AIDS conference in Toronto in 2006 was sort of a breaking point for the US. She was labeled by one American source as a 'nut (Source Nine 2009).' Bush addressed the issue in his meeting with Mbeki in December of 2006. Since that meeting and South Africa's unveiling of new outline of a four-year national strategic plan on the disease, it appeared that both South Africa and the US shared a common-sense approach to the pandemic and for the most part saw eye to eye.

However, many South Africans still did not understand PEPFAR and Americans proclaim it is still difficult to work with the South African government on the HIV/AIDS issue

(Source Nine 2008). The program is designed to provide prevention, care, and treatment in support of the South African government's own comprehensive plan by working with the South African NGOs the Government, or both. In total, eighty percent goes to South African community and faith-based groups. Source Ten (2008) explained it was much easier to work with South African NGOs than it was with the South African government, hence the reason why so much of the money goes directly to the NGOs.

In 2008, US funding for HIV/AIDS programs in South Africa came close to matching the South African government's own budget for dealing with the epidemic and the US House of Representatives had approved a nearly US\$50 billion aid package to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS in the developing world over the next five years (Keeton 2008). By the end of 2008, the US anticipated that the PEPFAR in South Africa would be helping to support the provision of effective ARV-based AIDS treatment for 500,000 South Africans, providing care for 2.6 million orphans, vulnerable children, and other individuals, and would have prevented approximately 1.8 million new HIV infections (Teitelbaum 2006).

It is important to point out that the US and Bush himself cares deeply about people living with HIV/AIDS despite the accusations that US government officials posed to take photos with AIDS patients is for politics only.

## **2.2 SA perspective**

South Africa was the first country to be vocal about HIV/AIDS in the developing world. In 1992, the National AIDS Coordinating Committee of South Africa was launched with a mandate to develop a national strategy on HIV and AIDS (NACOSA 2010). Throughout 1997 to 2000, South Africa did not appreciate the White House pressuring them to drop its plans to seek cheaper alternatives to AIDS medications. They knew they couldn't afford the expensive

medication because the country's public finances were overstretched and they were downright angry at the colossal profits enjoyed by the pharmaceutical firms while hundreds of thousands of people died of the disease in South Africa.

Legally, South Africa was under the perception that it was under full compliance with TRIPS requirements and continued to defend their stance as the US placed South Africa on the Special 301 Watch List, for possible intellectual property violations. The US, led interesting enough by Gore due to many pharmaceutical companies assisting in his campaign for president, was directed to punish South Africa with the threat of trade sanctions. It was determined in the end that neither compulsory licensing nor parallel importing violates the TRIPS agreement. The White House finally eased off when its South Africa policy became a source of major embarrassment back home with one US group calling it a 'medical apartheid' (Bond 1999).

Tshabalala-Msimang's situation six years later was a big blow to the international reputation of South Africa's HIV/AIDS policy, but South Africa felt it was a large misunderstanding. Tshabalala-Msimang responded to questions about her behavior in one particular interview. She said the phrase 'HIV and AIDS' is used because it helps clarify the specific challenges they confront (Bate 2006). 'These are, first, to prevent the transmission of HIV; second, to slow progression to AIDS-defining illness once transmission of HIV has occurred; and third, to treat and support HIV-infected patients to the best of our ability when they present with AIDS-defining illness,' Tshabalala-Msimang said. In response to critics who accused South Africa of saying that lemons and garlic are the same as antiretroviral drugs, she responded:

We have never said that lemons or beetroot or garlic are therapeutically equivalent to ART. What we do say is that is that they contain micronutrients that make them valuable in strengthening the body to respond to certain health conditions associated with HIV and AIDS. A good diet, the right micronutrients, and a healthy lifestyle can help a patient infected with HIV stave off the

onset of AIDS-related illness. When a patient exhibits stage 4 AIDS-defining illness as defined by the World Health Organization or presents with a CD4 cell count of two hundred cubic millimeters or less, he or she is eligible for ART at the public expense (Bate 2006).

During Mbeki's second term, many South African officials were still somewhat disappointed with their country's relationship with the US regarding HIV/AIDS. For example, Health Minister Tshabalala-Msimang (2006) in June 2006 stated: 'I understand that currently about 65% of PEPFAR funding to South Africa is for treatment, care and support. The UN high-level meeting has acknowledged that prevention should be the mainstay of the response to HIV and AIDS.' It appears she was implying that PEPFAR should focus more on prevention like the UN has been doing and less on treatment, care and support.

Others saw the involvement of America's military industrial complex in HIV/AIDS and its militarization as raising suspicions because of Bush and Cheney's connections to the defense sector. Yet one ANC member still held the perception that instead of the US assisting South Africa, it was selling expensive medication (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:4). The majority of government officials welcome PEPFAR (Benton 2007), but there was some difference of opinion between both countries. South Africa wants to interact with the US and appreciates the assistance, but they feel it must be sustainable and in line with South Africa's objectives.

### **3. Security and the US led war on terrorism**

Security in Africa and South Africa became a large concern for both countries in August 1998. On 6 August, an explosion outside the offices of the South African police special investigation task team elevated PAGAD into the world of Islamic terrorism (Botha 2005). PAGAD was formed in 1996 as a community anticrime group fighting drugs and violence in the Cape Flats section of Cape Town. By early 1998, it had also become antigovernment and anti-

Western, according to the US State Department. PAGAD and its Islamic ally, Qibla, view the South African Government as a threat to Islamic values, and consequently promote a greater political voice for South African Muslims. PAGAD uses several front names, including Muslims Against Global Oppression (MAGO) and Muslims Against Illegitimate Leaders (MAIL), when launching anti-Western protests and campaigns (Taylor 2002).

The following day [7 August] hundreds of people were killed in simultaneous car bomb explosions at the US embassies at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya. Although the targets were US government facilities, most of its victims were African civilians: approximately 11 Tanzanians were killed in Dar es Salaam and around 200 Kenyans were killed in Nairobi. One of the terrorists responsible for bombings, Khalfan Khamis Mohammed, entered South Africa a week later on a tourist visa he had obtained the day before the attacks (Pham 2007b). Mohammed then applied for asylum under a fictitious name and lived in Cape Town for more than year working at Burger World (Pham 2007b).

At the end of August 1998, the Planet Hollywood restaurant in Cape Town was attacked. Officials from the FBI assisted South African police to determine whether there was any link between the bombing at the American related restaurant and the missile strikes Clinton launched against targets in Sudan and Afghanistan in retaliation for the embassy bombings. A person claiming to represent MAGO telephoned a South African radio station shortly after the explosion claiming responsibility for the attack, saying it was in retaliation for the US strikes. An official statement by the group later denied any connection with the bombing, but PAGAD was ultimately determined to be the organization behind it (Botha 2005).

It also became obvious at this time that South Africa's intelligence capacity was somewhat lacking. Holiday (1998) writes that there are intelligence-gathering organizations like

the South African National Intelligence Agency (NIA), but they are leaky and crippled by inefficiency and Byzantine office intrigues, as a new breed of ANC analysts and operatives struggle to wrestle control from apartheid-era survivors. Due to this fact, (and also because of the friendly disposition Pretoria has evinced towards the likes of Cuba's Castro, Palestine's Arafat and Libya's Qaddafi), 'foreign intelligence agencies, like the CIA and MI6, no longer supply us [South Africa] with 'feed' from their spy satellites - something they readily did before apartheid died (Holiday 1998).' Most are aware that satellites photos are what Holiday refers to as the 'staple diet of spies in the developed world.' Without them, a modern intelligence or political adviser is like 'grandma without her bifocals (Holiday 1998).'

US Attorney General Janet Reno's attendance at the BNC in February 1999 was regarded as a strong indication of just how seriously the US considered the problem of security related issues in South Africa. Gore also had what was referred to as a 'massive retinue of security personnel' larger than his normal tight security, in case security risks arose from organizations such as PAGAD, which was indeed warranted at the time (African 1999).

Mohamed, one of the terrorists linked to the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya, was arrested in October 1999 in South Africa, where lived under an alias for a year. South African police were the first to question Mohamed, followed by two FBI agents and the Assistant US Attorney Ken Karas. Prosecutors alleged that Mohamed was the one who rented the residence where he and his accomplices assembled the Tanzania bomb; he provided the TNT and the rode in the actual bomb truck (Hirschhorn 2001). He was illegally spirited from South Africa to the US.

In a later court ruling, the South Africa Constitutional Court stated their authorities acted illegally when they extradited Mohamed due to his role in the bombings. 'The handing over of



Mohamed to the United States Government agents for removal by them to the United States was unlawful,' the Court said in its official judgment. 'The immigration authorities failed to give any value to Mohamed's right to life, his right to have his human dignity respected and protected and his right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment,' it said (Constitutional Court of South Africa 2001:17, BBC News 2001a).

In 2000, PAGAD members perpetrated at least 14 prominent acts of terrorism that included attacks against eyewitnesses in PAGAD-related court cases, restaurants and international interests. One of the larger attacks occurred on 29 August when a car bomb was detonated near the US consulate in Cape Town injuring seven people (Botha 2001). News such as this, and the bombardment of foreign media with the talk of military coups and civil wars throughout the rest of Africa, had duped investors into believing that unrest plagues the continent - a perception that has drained much-needed capital, Mbeki said in September in New York (Arce 2000).

South Africa's bad reputation due to its high crime rate has hurt investment. At this moment in time, many were reluctant to invest in the country due to the high crime, which the US government was very well aware of. The South African Police Service (SAPS) were viewed as not effective enough to tackle numerous issues such as organized crime, which included groups with links to international terrorism, and political corruption, amongst others. This led to a partnership between the US and South Africa to create a specialized investigative unit or what was referred to as the South African version of the FBI. Stockton (2000:56) notes that after a month of training at home, followed by almost three months of training in the US, a very select group known as the Scorpions emerged. The Scorpions were dismantled by South Africa's parliament in October 2008 and its members were to be integrated into SAPS in 2009.

The September 11 attacks changed the world and made a strong impact on the US and its foreign policy. Matthews (2004) provides the most comprehensive assessment of South Africa's reactions and statements regarding 9/11. Matthews reveals that the first official South African government statement described the events as 'terror attacks.' The statement says that Mbeki learnt 'with shock and dismay' of the attacks and that the South African government 'joins the world in unreservedly denouncing these senseless and horrific attacks (The Presidency 2001).' Source Seven (2008) recalls that Mandela phoned Bush and offered his support and condolences. Furthermore, the South African government expressed 'its confidence that the United States' authorities will ensure the perpetrators face the full might of the law.' The ANC's official response was one of absolute condemnation (ANC 2001).

The South African government was concerned about how the US would chose to respond to the attacks. On America's military actions in Afghanistan, the government reaffirmed 'its unequivocal condemnation of the terrorist attacks on various cities of the USA' and recognized the right of America to 'seek out those responsible for those acts of terror', but reiterated the need for 'hard evidence' to precede harsh actions, and of the importance of caution to prevent the deaths of civilians (DFA 2001). Thus, according to Matthews' analysis, the South African government's official response to the 9/11 attacks can be said to be one of outright condemnation, but not one of absolute support for America's retaliatory actions.

As we all know, and as Matthews understood, official government statements do not often reveal the feelings that are far closer to the truth. For example, Eastern Cape Premier, Makhenkesi Stofile's responded to the attacks by saying: 'I do not know for sure that these are acts of terror. They could be guerrilla tactics fighting for something. In that case, guerrillas use small units as a tactic not as an act of cowardice. These are the same tactics the ANC used and

we too were labeled as terrorists (Stofile 2001 in Matthews 2004).’ Speaker of Parliament, Frene Ginwala's comments also said that the attackers were driven by despair as a result of America's unwillingness to engage in dialogue with regard to various issues (Leon 2001a in Matthews 2004).

In a later speech on 9/11, DA leader Tony Leon (2001a) disapproved of some of the comments made by the various ANC politicians. He felt these statements were the result of a 'pervasive anti-Americanism that is often accompanied by a cloaked anti-semitism.' Leon believed that the attacks on America were attacks on the liberal values which the US, the West, and his own DA hold dear. In another speech, Leon (2001b) called on South Africa 'to rally to the global coalition against terrorism.' Leon also said that South Africa should 'use every weapon - military, diplomatic, economic and political' in fighting this battle and argued that South Africa should take the lead in coordinating the response within the southern African region. He added that 'it is impossible to be both against terrorism and for communion with international rogues' and called on the ANC to cut amicable ties with Qaddafi, Gerry Adams and Mugabe (Leon 2001b).

On 12 September, the US embassy in Pretoria thanked South Africans for their support. ‘We have been deeply touched by the outpouring of support and sympathy from the South African people,’ US Charge d’Affairs Steve Buckler told people outside the embassy (SAPA 2001a). South African residents laid dozens of wreaths or bouquets at the front gate and more than 50 people also signed a condolence book at the gate, writing messages of support for the American people. Many South African’s had also offered to donate blood (SAPA 2001a).

A week later (on 19 September) Bush allegedly telephoned Mbeki, but had not asked South Africa for military support, according to Dlamini-Zuma. Dlamini-Zuma was quite stern

from the beginning that South Africa would not commit military resources. 'We are not considering that option. It was not raised. In our own approach on how terrorism should be fought a military option is not in the offing right now,' she told reporters (SAPA 2001b). Minister in the Presidency, Essop Pahad, said Bush telephoned at about 2pm (6am Washington time) and had thanked South Africa and the government for its support. Bush had repeated that America could not stamp out terrorism alone, and that a global coalition was necessary. In addition, Bush emphasized that his country and government was not against Islam or Arabs, and that there was no 'collective guilt' approach to any people (SAPA 2001b).

In a South African meeting to discuss the attacks, government spokesman Joel Netshitenzhe said the meeting had begun with a minute of silence in honor of the late Govan Mbeki (Mbeki's father) and the victims of the 9/11 attacks. South Africa would cooperate with all effort to apprehend the culprits and bring them to book, Netshitenzhe said (SAPA 2001b).

It was announced in the media days later that Pahad confirmed none of the 40,000 leads followed up by US investigators into last week's terror attacks had led to South Africa (SAPA 2001c). Pahad was also questioned at the time about Mohamed and him being released to the US. He said Mohamed had been 'deported' by South Africa to the US after cooperation with the FBI. When asked about the Constitutional Court judgment that found that Mohamed had been handed over illegally to the US and its implications if US terror suspects were arrested in South Africa, Pahad said: 'We cannot violate our constitutional positions.' Referring to cooperation between South Africa and US investigators over 9/11 attacks he said: 'We will continue that form of cooperation at a higher level (SAPA 2001c).'

The 9/11 attacks brought South Africa's two largest Muslim groups, PAGAD and Qibla back into the media spotlight. Koos van der Merwe, a former SANDF intelligence official,

revealed: 'Qibla has about 260 members. They are tightly knit and exist in cells of about six or less in number. Some Qibla members are top leaders inside PAGAD. They use radio station 786 to spew anti-Western venom and recruit new terrorists (LoBaido 2001).' Adriana Stuijt, a Dutch journalist and former anti-apartheid activist, stated that terrorist attacks would likely increase in number. Stuijt added:

Journalists like myself inside South Africa have been warning U.S. government officials inside South Africa for the past nine years about the incredibly volatile anti-American sentiments and the dangers they represent to all pro-Westerners. ... I, in fact, attended many meetings even inside mosques in which this hatred was preached constantly and consistently throughout my reporting years, and I have also reported how it has been growing in intensity ever since then (LoBaido 2001).

On 12 November, another shock came when American Airlines Flight 587 crashed in Queens shortly after taking off from JFK International Airport in New York. There were immediate concerns that this was a terrorist attack and people looked to the White House for answers. Bush was meeting with Mandela at the time when he received the news of the plane crash. In the press briefing, Mandela expressed his deepest sympathies. He added: 'But I know you have quite a strong leader, and the people of the United States of America can face disaster, and I'm sure that they will overcome this unfortunate incident (The White House 2001b).' In his actual meeting with Bush, it is believed that Mandela expressed grave concern that the president would not meet with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. However, he did offer his support for American actions in Afghanistan stating: 'The United States of America lost 5,000 people, innocent people, and it is quite correct for the President to ensure that the terrorists, those masterminds, as well as those who have executed the action and survived, are to be punished heavily (The White House 2001b).'

South Africa's role in what was perceived as Muslims and Christians being involved in a fight for global superiority began to make headlines in their country's newspapers. Vale (2002)

raised the question of whether or not a country like South Africa, where each of a thousand social balances are delicately poised, could tip one way or the other on an issue like this? Vale, answering his own question, said the plain truth is no. Vale wrote that South Africa's concern should be with humanity: 'with those who died in New York, with those who needlessly perished in Afghanistan and the many lives that this crusade now threatens.' It was also pointed out that the South African government must jog the memories of how, in the years following World War II, a coalition not very different to the present one embraced the apartheid government for forty-six years and how easy it was for them to believe that Nelson Mandela should be imprisoned for twenty-seven of them because he was a communist (Vale 2002). Vale was essentially saying South Africa should be careful how far they lean and to which side (ie towards the US or towards the right for people to fight for their freedom).

While the US approached South Africa for its support on ACOTA, South Africa's biological weapons again became an issue. In May 2002 the FBI, supported by the CIA, devised a plan to hijack source material from South Africa's biological weapons program — material the South African government had for years claimed was destroyed when the secret apartheid-era program called Project Coast was shut down (Sole & Brümmer 2003). A document obtained by the South African newspaper *Mail and Guardian* showed the American plan was first a covert project to remove South Africa's unacknowledged biological stockpile — with the help of one of the scientists, Daan Goosen. The contract signed between Goosen, Tai Minnaar and the US on 05 May commits Goosen and Minnaar as the sellers to deliver 200 ampoules of 'hazardous biological material' that is 'extremely harmful to people and the environment.' Sole and Brümmer (2003) in the 25 April 2003 newspaper article maintained that the US\$5-million contract makes it clear that the Americans were interested in cleaning out South Africa's bio-

warfare potential. Clause 5.5 of the contract states: ‘The Seller expressly warrants that all material known to exist in the Seller’s country that is within his control shall be provided by the Seller to the Buyer. The Seller further guarantees that no material shall be left undelivered to the Buyer that is in the control or easy access of the Seller and his agents (Sole & Brümmer 2003).’

Goosen reportedly delivered his biological toxin sample to the FBI on 9 May 2002 via a toothpaste tube that concealed a vial of a less dangerous pathogen, an organism that was however technically advanced because it was based on genetic modification. However, the FBI decided to reject the deal and the US embassy reported Goosen to SAPS without telling the NIA. The NIA eventually came across the police investigation and the fallout became embarrassing for the NIA as Goosen — a man who was supposedly close to the Agency- had made contact with the Americans without telling them (Sole & Brümmer 2003).

The US used this incident and South African government’s failure to come clean about its biological assets to portray them as a proliferation risk. Goosen himself believed he was deliberately set up by the US to make South Africa look bad (Sole & Brümmer 2003) . Investigative journalists Sam Sole and Stefaans Brümmer uncovered that South African government officials admit privately that organisms and pathogens developed by Project Coast still exist (Sole & Brümmer 2003). This was important because the US and other Western countries remained concerned about the prospect of terrorists using South Africa as a base of operations. Because of South Africa’s world-class banking system and stock market, modern telecommunications system, good roads and broad civil liberties, it makes it easy to move people and money. Reports that surfaced revealed al-Qaeda was buying gold and diamonds to make it more difficult to trace the organization's wealth in Africa (Sole & Brümmer 2003). Moreover, in 2002, Mohamed Suleman Vaid and his wife Moshena of Durban were arrested at a Swaziland

border post with more than one million Rand hidden in their clothing (Burgess 2007). Vaid denied that the money was for al-Qaeda, but authorities claimed that the money was on its way to a Mozambique citizen with al-Qaeda connections.

In October 2002, Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad explained that the WOT put additional demands on the DFA and had changed the focus of its work. He said his country was fast-tracking a new counter-terrorism law, which would probably be passed in 2003. This new legislation would bring together various anti-terrorist measures into one law.

Describing the terrorist attack in Bali in October 2002 that killed more than 180 people just prior to his statement, as well as the attacks in the Philippines, Yemen and Kuwait, Pahad said South Africa would have to deal with these new challenges through the UN and similar bodies. Briefing the media on the DFA's Annual Report, Pahad said South Africa would maintain its broader mission of campaigning for greater equity between North and South and for the strengthening of multilateral organizations, which had been weakened since the terrorist attacks on the US on 11 September last year. In addition, he said the period after the 9/11 attacks had brought new challenges and the need to deal with concepts such as the 'axis of evil', the clash of civilizations, regime change, and whether 'you are for or against us (The Star 2002b:3).'

Despite the good words by Mandela and Mbeki about the Iraq war, prominent issues that we had seen previously arose in 2004. The most notable was the WOT. There was increasing evidence that al-Qaeda operatives were using South Africa as a base for terrorist support infrastructures. In February 2004, Al-Libi, also known as Ibrahim Tantouche, emerged in South Africa when he was detained for holding a fake South African passport. A few months later, British security agencies found boxes of South African passports at the home of a suspected al-Qaeda member in the UK. The passports were legitimate passports, not fakes, indicating that



they were obtained illegally through a South African government official (Soloman 2007a). There was a strong possibility that al-Libi acquired the fake passport through al-Qaeda support structures in South Africa. Media sources reveal that Al-Libi previously directed the al-Qaeda terrorist financing fronts, the Afghan Support Committee and Revival of Islamic Society, which diverted money to al-Qaeda (Soloman 2007a).

Another incident occurred on 19 July when US authorities arrested a South African woman, Farida Goolam Mohamed Ahmed, for trying to enter America illegally from Mexico. Several pages had been torn out of her passport. The US government quickly investigated any possible ties she may have to terrorist activities in Pakistan (Sperry 2004). Not even a week later, two South African suspects – Feroz Ibrahim and Zubair Ismail – were arrested in Pakistan with Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, an al-Qaida operative wanted by the FBI for his role in the 1998 bombings of US embassies in East Africa.

Ibrahim and Ismail, two South Africans of Asian descent were arrested during a 12-hour gun battle with Pakistani police in the eastern city of Gujrat, which led to the capture of Ghailani (Meldrum 2004). Gujrat's police chief, Raja Munawar Hussainl, alleged that the two South Africans - Ismail, 20, an Islamic student, and Ibrahim, 30, a doctor - were 'plotting attacks in their home country.' According to Hussainl, authorities found several maps of South African cities among the items seized in the raid. Pakistani police said they believed there were several targets for attack in South Africa, including the US embassy, the Sheraton hotel and the Union Buildings in Pretoria, the Johannesburg Securities Exchange, the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront shopping centre in Cape Town and the Cunard liner, the QE2, which stops at Cape Town and Durban (Meldrum 2004).

The Department of Homeland Security put inspectors at major airports and seaports across the nation on high alert for suspicious travelers from South Africa in response the events mentioned. 'Al-Qaida and other terrorists may be utilizing South African passports to facilitate travel' to the US, warned the four-page bulletin issued by US Customs and Border Protection, a bureau of Homeland Security. It advised that suspicious routes of entry included passage through Britain, Canada or Mexico. Britain and Mexico do not require any type of visa for South Africans (Sperry 2004).

South Africa being a safe haven for international terrorist organizations was a glaring concern not only for the US, but Israel as well. For example, Israel lodged a formal complaint with the South African government in 1996 regarding the existence of five Hezbollah training camps (Lefkowitz 2004). In 2002, the *Wall Street Journal* reported a growing concern among security analysts that 'Islamist extremists, including Al-Qaeda, are using South Africa's open society as a safe haven and a base to raise funds, launder money and plan terror operations (Lefkowitz 2004).' One American counterterrorism official told *The Journal*, '[w]e are detecting so much smoke lately that something's got to be burning down there somewhere.' In July 2003, the Israeli Security Services declared that there is 'recognizable [Hamas] activity in South Africa (Lefkowitz 2004).'

The issue of al-Qaeda leaders hiding in South Africa arose again in October 2004 when the CIA named South Africa as one of the countries where a new tier of al-Qaeda leaders were hiding (News24 2004). This news came in quite a dramatic fashion as a special investigation aired by the American television network CBS revealed that a recent CIA report had identified 29 new leaders serving as a 'second and third tier' in the al-Qaeda hierarchy stretching from Pakistan and Iraq to South Africa. Responding to the CBS report, South African intelligence

sources said both the police and NIA were investigating alleged al-Qaeda operatives said to be functioning in South Africa - in Cape Town, Durban, the Eastern Cape and Gauteng (News24 2004).

South African Intelligence Minister Ronnie Kasrils responded to the CIA report by saying: "That is nothing new. Even before 9/11, there was a [al-Qaeda] presence (The Star 2004)." Kasril was referring to al-Qaeda bomber Khalfan Mohammed, convicted of the US embassy bombing in Tanzania, who was extradited to the US. The minister also urged the media to be 'very, very wary of scaremongering (The Star 2004)'.

Mbeki signed a proclamation the following month that stipulated The Protection of Constitutional Democracy against Terrorism and Related Activities Act – known as the anti-terrorism law – would come into effect on 20 May. The new Act brought South Africa fully in line with UN and AU terrorism conventions. In particular, it created a general offense of terrorism, and offenses relating to terrorist activities, such as recruiting, assistance to commit terrorist activities, and facilitating terrorism. However, the Act excludes from the definition of 'terrorist activity' actions in pursuance of a liberation struggle in accordance with principles of UN and AU Charters.

It is believed that the WOT was also discussed in Bush and Mbeki's private meeting in 2005 in the US. It was important factor to the US, as Shillinger points out, Western officials quietly admitted that Pretoria's ability to monitor the flow of people moving across its borders was poor (Shillinger 2005). From the South African perspective, the South African intelligence community remained skeptical of the US. The NIA had accused some members of the Scorpions, in which the US assisted in establishing and training personnel, of spying for foreign governments (News24 2005). The NIA was unhappy about the Scorpions' alleged working

relationship with US-owned Kroll, a risk-management company with perceived strong ties to former CIA operatives. There **were** additional concerns about the Scorpions' apparent close and regular liaisons with the US embassy in Pretoria and the fact that they employed foreign nationals like Ms De Gabrielle, an American who was assigned by the US Department of Justice and its local counterpart to advise the South African National Prosecuting Authority on financial and commercial prosecutions. Other alleged links included connections to Chinese, German and French foreign intelligence services (News24 2005).

There were allegations at the same time that the British and South African governments were directly implicated in 'rendition,' a now famous practice whereby foreign nationals accused of terrorist involvement are kidnapped and sent overseas to be interrogated, often tortured and sometimes even disappear. The US has often used rendition and journalists have documented European governments either allowing CIA agents to carry out kidnappings or permitting CIA-operated airplanes to land en route to secret facilities in Eastern Europe or countries such as Afghanistan and Egypt.

In November 2005, South African newspapers such as *The Star* and the *Mail and Guardian* published reports suggesting that the South African authorities may have cooperated with the British government and its intelligence agencies in the rendition of Pakistani citizen, Khalid Rashid, who was arrested last year at his home in the town of Estcourt in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal Province for alleged involvement in terrorist activities (O'Keeffe 2006). At the time, Rashid had not been seen since his arrest on 31 October 2005.

O'Keeffe (2006) writes that the register at the Cullinan (northwest of Pretoria) police station confirms that Rashid and another man by the name of Jeebhai were held there. It notes that Rashid was taken out of his cell on at least nine occasions by police and South African

Department of Home Affairs officials. Rashid was signed out for deportation twice, once on 6 November and then again the following day. Home Affairs claims Rashid was deported to Pakistan on 6 November, less than a week after his arrest. However, according to his family, Rashid never arrived in Pakistan. Moreover, the department was unable to give the flight number, the name of the airline, or the name of the person who met him on arrival in Pakistan (O’Keeffe 2006).

There appeared to further disagreements in some facets of the WOT as well. Prior to 2006, Professor Adam Habib, a South African citizen and deputy vice-chancellor at the University of Johannesburg and a critic of US policies, traveled to the US with ease. Habib lived in the US for years while pursuing his PhD, but in October 2006 the US government ‘prudentially’ revoked his visa. Habib’s lawyer, Melissa Goodman of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), asked the question of what had changed since 2003 (his last visit to the US) and October 2006?

Goodman went to court to challenge his exclusion on behalf of the American Sociological Association, the American Association of University Professors, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and the Boston Coalition for Palestinian Rights -- all organizations that had invited Habib to speak at upcoming events and which have a right under the US Constitution to hear his views (Goodman 2007). The State Department eventually claimed that Habib was barred because he had ‘engaged in terrorist activity,’ but according to Goodman, they had provided no evidence to support this charge. The ACLU maintained that Habib was excluded not because he has done something wrong, but because of his political views and associations.

Discussing Somalia with President Bush in 2006, Mbeki described the country as a 'failed state.' Cobb (2006) reiterates that this remark underlined the growing US-South African agreement on issues related to security and terrorism. 'It's an important thing [support for the transitional government] because the problem, one of the big problems, is that as it is, [Somalia] provides a base for terrorists, [they] find safe haven there and then can spread out to the rest of the continent. It's something that is of shared concern,' Mbeki said.

In January 2007, the US Department of the Treasury added two South Africans, Farhad Ahmed Dockrat and Junaid Ismail Dockrat, as well as a Johannesburg-based company controlled by the latter, Sniper Africa, to its list of 'specially designated global terrorists' for their role in financing al-Qaeda (Pham 2007b). According to reports, Farhad transferred money to Taliban representatives in Pakistan, which was then forwarded to al-Qaeda. Meanwhile, Junaid was in direct telephone and email contact with Abu Hamza Rabia, Abu Faraj al-Libi's successor as al-Qaeda's operations chief, to coordinate the sending of South Africans to Pakistan for terrorist training (Pham 2007b). Junaid also allegedly came up with US\$120,000 to help sponsor the recruits' travel and study under Abu Hamza before the latter met his end at the hands of a US-operated Predator drone in late 2005 (Pham 2007b).

According to Shillinger (2008), the US was irate when it was leaked to the press - on a Friday in time for the Sunday headlines - that the US had added both Dockrats to their list of global terrorists. Shillinger indicated that the US and South Africa were in negotiations over the issue for more than six months prior, as South Africa was gathering strong evidence for their courts and the US was preparing an overseas intelligence docket. The leak supposedly came from the South African embassy in Washington after the US thought South Africa was dragging their feet on the issue.

Many South Africans were upset about the news when they read it in the Sunday newspapers. Brown (2007) wrote: 'while the Dockrats could well be linked to al-Qaeda, their treatment raises serious questions about our sovereignty as a state.' Brown went on to say:

SA's handling of its relationship with the US points to the fact that government is willing to fall into line with the US and to do its dirty work on the continent. Not only does the ANC betray its own political history by adding its weight to prevent other international liberation movements from charting a similar course to its own, it is allowing itself to become a proxy for the US in its shameful bullying of the world (Brown 2007).

Then when the US State Department forwarded the designation to the UNSC al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee, Foreign Minister Dlamini-Zuma used her country's membership on the Council to stop what would have otherwise been a routine endorsement of the ruling (Pham 2007b).

A relatively secret meeting took place from 25-27 January between the US and South Africa to discuss Southern Africa and international terrorism. Hosted by the Brenthurst Foundation, a South Africa based think tank, the participants included the South African Intelligence Services, the US National Intelligence Council, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the ISS (a Pretoria-based think tank) and SAIIA. According to the Brenthurst Foundation website, 'Due to the sensitivity of some of the discussions and an agreement on non-attribution, a report on the conference proceedings will not be published (Brenthurst 2007).'

Subsequently, South African Muslim leaders admitted there was a problem in their community with Islamic fundamentalism. As activist Naeem Jeenah wrote on his website: 'We do have people in our community who are sympathetic to al Qaeda and the Taliban; we do have people in our community who hold the same ideologies as those groups (Schanzer 2007).'

Meanwhile, Muslim Youth Movement spokesperson Na'eem Jeenah accused foreign governments of planting spies among South African Muslims. The claim surfaced when 15 major South African Muslim organizations held a press conference in Johannesburg to protest

against the US labeling of the Dockrats. Jeenah added: ‘The reality is that within the Muslim community there are people who are paid to do surveillance for various countries.’ Jeenah said this had become apparent when intelligence agents stopped South African Muslims at foreign airports and interrogated them by saying ‘and tell you that you said such and such at some mosque ... (Tromp 2007).’

In March, more reports surfaced of paramilitary camps, extremist activities and extraordinary renditions of jihadi suspects in South Africa. Then on 13 March, Barry Gilder, coordinator of South Africa's National Intelligence Coordinating Committee, indicated that terrorists with links to Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan were increasingly spending time in the country (Soloman 2007b). Coinciding with Gilder’s remarks, a Johannesburg magazine featured an expose of an alleged jihadi training facility outside Port Elizabeth. James Sanders wrote the feature and provided pictures of the property—including images of a shooting range and makeshift mosque (Soloman 2007b).

In April 2007, Rashid, who disappeared after being handed over by South African government officials to agents of the Pakistan Government on 06 November 2005, appeared before the ‘Federal Review Board’ in the Supreme Court Building in Islamabad. Amnesty International was concerned for Rashid's well being after nearly 18-months of being in detention with no communication. The international NGO had raised its concerns about this case with the South African Government the previous year, which appeared to have breached its obligations under Article 3 of the UN Convention Against Torture by participating in the enforced disappearance of and exposing Rashid to the risk of torture (Amnesty International 2007). Rashid's family and lawyers had accused South African authorities of arranging his removal to Pakistan under the CIA's ‘extraordinary rendition’ program. South Africa repeatedly denied the



charge saying Rashid was deported ‘under special circumstances’ and flown to Pakistan where he was formally handed over to officials (Simao 2007).

South Africa’s Intelligence Minister Ronnie Kasrils replied to the incident stating the US-led WOT had opened a Pandora's Box of unintended consequences and was veering dangerously close to Islamophobia. ‘We are concerned that the so-called 'global war on terror' has opened a Pandora's Box. It has fuelled a host of unforeseen and unintended consequences ... deep grievances and veers on a dangerous phobia about Islam, one of the world's most respected and venerated religions,’ Kasrils said (Mail and Guardian 2007). Kasrils also stated that South Africa believed that the ‘terrorist’ label should not be indiscriminately or incorrectly applied. Lekota, in a separate speech in April argued: ‘While 'terrorism' has been identified by the 'developed world' as the biggest threat, we maintain that poverty and underdevelopment are the biggest threats to democracies in the developing world because they expose our people to manipulation by those of wealthier countries. Competition for scarce resources is another source of insecurity across the continent (Heitman 2007).’ Lekota appeared to be making a reference to China’s and America’s interests in Africa, especially in oil and mineral resources.

Intelligence Minister Kasrils made a trip to see Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh the following month, where he praised Hamas and invited him to visit South Africa. Kirchick (2007:4) explains that several months earlier, Kasrils did similar public relations work on behalf of Hezbollah, another US-designated terrorist group. Moreover, Mbeki recounting a 2007 ANC delegation trip to Vietnam spoke even all these years later of ‘the US war of aggression against the Vietnamese people’ and lauded the communist dictatorship's ‘struggle for freedom and national independence.’

America's 2007 Report on Human Rights Practices was released to the public in February 2008. The report hailed South Africa's stable democracy and economic policies, but expressed serious concerns over human rights problems arising from the use of excessive police force against suspects and detainees, among other ills (Radebe 2008).

The US report stated that there were no politically motivated killings by the government or its agents in the country but that the South African police service had often used lethal force during arrests, resulting in a significant number of deaths, as well as deaths in police custody. The statistics indicated that there were 698 deaths in police custody as a result of police action from 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007, which was an 11% increase from the previous year (Radebe 2008). The report also warned about rising violence due to xenophobia. In regards to the South African justice system, various factors were cited as contrary to the spirit of the constitution such as lengthy delays in trials and prolonged pretrial detention, pervasive violence against women and children, and societal discrimination against women and people with disabilities (Radebe 2008).

In the beginning of April, US Ambassador Bost approached South African Safety and Security Minister Charles Nqakula to extend an invitation to help with boosting the police service's crime-fighting capacity, but received no response (Miti 2008). Bost also maintained that South Africa should expect a reduction in aid from the US because of America's looming economic recession and a change in foreign policy. He said that as a show of partnership South Africa needed to shift more towards the use of its own resources, especially in light of its current budget surplus. '(Aid) is going to decrease at my recommendation because SA has a budget surplus. I am here to support your efforts, but if you have money, you need to put up some of

your own money at some point in time. That is called a partnership,' Bost said at a business conference in East London, South Africa.

The US ambassador continued on to say that South Africa had sufficient resources of its own and had programs in place to tackle its challenges, but was lagging behind in implementing those plans. Bost said South Africa continued to be a strategic partner in trade, investment and counter-terrorism efforts and that America would continue to build relations with the country (Miti 2008). The high level of crime, the electricity crisis, as well as South Africa's porous borders were challenges that made some investors reluctant to do business in the country, according to Bost.

### **3.1 US perspective**

Defense of the homeland is one of America's four broad foreign policy interests, according to unpublished US State Department documents (Source Four 2008). Moreover, the Bush Doctrine dictated that the perception of great threats could be defeated only by new and vigorous policies. The WOT fulfills both these objectives by engaging the terrorists before they have the time and the means to carry out another terrorist attack against America.

South Africa is a vital link in this mission for several reasons. Firstly, America perceives South Africa as having a large problem with international organized crime. Nigerian syndicates, amongst others, engage in a wide variety of illegal activities from car hijackings and credit card thefts to the trafficking of arms, guns, drugs and even people. These syndicates are becoming increasingly linked to terrorist organizational structures. Secondly, several suspects having links to al-Qaeda have been arrested in South Africa. This has led to the American perception that South Africa may be targeted as a new logistical and operational hub by Islamic extremists. This is a high possibility, according to America, because of South Africa's sophisticated banking,

telecommunications and transportation sectors. This has become an even bigger worry after Barry Gilder indicated that terrorists with links to Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan were increasingly spending time in South Africa. Lastly, the small but active Muslim population was increasingly vocal over the time period. Some of South Africa's Muslim community demonstrates a jihadi discourse (ie PAGAD). They are very vocal when it comes to America's actions in the Middle East, often protesting against the US (Taylor 2002, Tromp 2007).

The US appreciates that South Africa concurs terrorists may transit through their country or even use it as a base. However, the US perception is that there is a lack of political will and human, material, monetary and technical resources to combat these problems. The US State Department writes: 'The South African government is sensitive to distinctions between 'terrorist organizations' and 'liberation movements' since the ruling ANC was long branded a terrorist group during the struggle against apartheid (US Department of State 2007b). In the latter, events have shown that terrorists were able to circumvent South African authorities by trafficking essential documents like passports and by being able to enter the country, thus highlighting the ineffectiveness of some of South African organizations. More recent events in Zimbabwe have also shown a lack of border control by South Africa, which is a worry to the US. Shillinger (2008) also points out that the South African constitution is a problem in the WOT because there are numerous legal ways to stay in South Africa.

The extent of South Africa's cooperation with America's rendition program is still a question left unanswered. In the two most publicized cases of Mohamed and Khalid Rashid. Mohamed was allegedly 'deported' by South Africa to the US after cooperation with the FBI and Rashid had been deported to Pakistan 'under special circumstances (Simao 2007).' Members of both the DFA and the US Embassy were questioned on the matter of Rashid. The DFA refused to

comment and the US government official simply said in a joking manner, ‘come on don’t ask that because you know I can’t answer. It’s classified (Source Four 2008).’

### **3.2 SA perspective**

America’s perception that the ANC’s history plays a part in South Africa’s role in the WOT is in fact true. South African history has shown it is not always easy to distinguish between two opposing sides; hence the term one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter. Current South African government officials may also recall that during the Reagan years alone, South African attacks against the neighboring countries with the help of the US and UK killed over thousands of people and caused millions of Dollars of damage. ANC members were also constantly reminded that they were still labeled a terrorist organization during apartheid every time they applied for an American visa from 1994 till the middle of 2008 (ANC Today 2002).

South Africa does support the WOT, although like their response to the 9/11 attacks, there is a caution in regards to support of US action. Habib (2008) maintains that South Africa’s position can be summed up examining South Africa’s Intelligence Minister Ronnie Kasrils speech at the Brenthurst Foundation meeting on international terrorism in Southern Africa in January 2007. Kasrils (2007) says in the section regarding lessons to be drawn:

First, we clearly need to continue to strengthen the capacity of our intelligence and law enforcement bodies. We need to know our societies well enough to predict threats and act against them. We need to be able to deal with those who wish to use our countries as a safe haven by making it difficult for them to travel, obtain documentation, support and finance.

Then in his fourth lesson Kasrils states:

Fourth, there is a need to avoid destroying the rule of law or eroding international conventions. This must be fundamental. We lose everything, including the moral high ground, if we sacrifice basic principles of human rights. It is hard to explain to Muslim communities why a particular individual was denied a visa seemingly because of his name or religious persuasion.

Kasrils continues by mentioning the specific withdrawal of the visa of the South African academic Adam Habib and his family, including his 11-year-old son, by the US, which caused an outcry in South Africa. 'We are party to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1267 listing suspected terrorists and their sympathizers but any action taken must be based on sound evidence,' Kasrils says. By looking at his first and fourth point, it can be deduced that Kasrils is really saying South Africa supports the WOT but that there is a fine line, which the US crossed with Habib. South African diplomat Fadl Nacerodien (2008) conveyed a similar tone; South Africa supports the WOT but that the two countries differ on the definition of terrorism.

Nacerodien (2008) elaborated further on South Africa's perception by recalling the frightening statistics of more than 5,000 people injured in Nairobi alone as a result of the 1998 embassy bombings. Of the dozens dead, most were Africans and not Americans. This is something that South Africa does not want to happen in their country, according to Nacerodien. South Africa's foreign policy principles highlighted in chapter three also stipulate that the country must promote security and protect its citizens, South Africa does feel because of a Middle Eastern foreign policy that is critical of the US and the West in general (ie Palestine and Iraq war) that it is somewhat sheltered from the wrath of Islamic extremists.

With that viewpoint in mind and recalling PAGAD's bombings in the late 1990s, South Africa had this fear of upsetting their own small Muslim community. It is important to bear in mind, however, that South Africa did eventually apprehend the leaders of PAGAD, and as a result, the group wasted away. However, according to Shillinger (2005), upon the arrest of Aswat in connection to the London bombings the South African, British, and US governments were at odds over how to handle him. South Africa was disinclined to arrest him out of fear of agitating its own large Muslim community.

Outsiders proclaimed that South Africa has not been attacked since 9/11 due to terrorists using South Africa as a base and a transit point. They asserted that it would be unwise for a terrorist organization to attack a country they perceive as a safe haven with the necessary support infrastructures (Source Two 2007). In early 2009, Associated Press' London office quoted unnamed British "security officials" as saying South Africa had become a new base for terrorist activity. This served as one of many reasons why the UK decided to change the immigration law that now requires South Africans to obtain visas before entering the UK (Stringer 2009).

In reference to America's rendition policy, Pahad said on numerous occasions that rendition goes against South Africa's Constitution. Since the South African Constitutional Court ruled in 2001 that Mohamed's removal to the US was unlawful, Pahad and others became increasingly vocal against the US rendition policy. South Africa was also concerned about aspects of the WOT such as Guantanamo Bay (Nacerodien 2008).

South Africa maintained that the invasion in Iraq would have a 'profound effect on the poor countries of the world, particularly in Africa, which would set back development and progress years and perhaps even decades (ANC Today 2003).' This line of thinking implies that the war would lead to more terrorist recruits around the world if Iraq turned into a failed state. One of South Africa's likely suggestions, and Africa's for that matter, would be for the US to examine the root causes of conflict and to make reduction of poverty and the peaceful resolution of conflicts their main priority. With South Africa's role in Angola, Burundi and the DRC peace process, they are well positioned to take advantage of the benefits that come from America's preoccupation with defeating terror. South Africa feels that when the underdeveloped economies of Southern Africa grow it will create an environment where stability and democracy will flourish (Dlamini-Zuma 2000). One avenue at achieving this goal is through NEPAD.

#### 4. Multilateral institutions

Zimbabwe is a perfect example of how state behavior in multilateral institutions such as the UN can upset a bilateral relationship. Other issues such as Israel and Palestine also put the US and South Africa at loggerheads in various international organizations.

Analyzing bilateral relationships in relation to multilateral institutions is a difficult venture due to a variety of factors such as power politics being played between the old powers (ie some members of the UNSC) and states on the rise. In regards to the latter, South Africa is among the many developing countries that are currently seeking reform in various multilateral institutions. Reform of the UN, and in particular, the UNSC, is the main thrust of numerous states. For example, the AU wants the Council to be enlarged to 26 seats, including six new permanent seats with veto rights, two of which should go to Africa. Other organs inside of the UN have been reformed already. For example, the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, which was the main subsidiary body of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, was replaced with the HRC<sup>44</sup>. Another institution that many states would like to see strengthened is the ICC.

The topic that received a substantial amount of media attention was the deadlock between South Africa and America over the ICC. The US had suspended military aid to 35 countries prior to Bush's visit, including South Africa, for refusing to sign the Article 98 Agreement that would give its citizens immunity from prosecution by the ICC in the Hague (SAPA 2003d). Section 2007(c) includes an article 98 waiver, which allows the US president to waive the prohibition of

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<sup>44</sup> On 3 May 2001, the US, a founding member of the UN Commission on Human Rights, was voted off of the 53-member panel due to disagreements with its members. Some believe it was because of their departure from the Kyoto Protocol and their stance on missile defense. Whatever the reasons may have been, the US Congress responded by withholding US\$244 million in UN dues. However, Judson (2005) explains that after some 'arm-twisting,' the US was voted back on the panel ten months later. Nevertheless, the US fully understood how the developing world perceived it. 'The secret ballot is one of the most effective weapons in the UN arsenal,' a Southeast Asian diplomat noted: 'because it provides a true sense of the inner political feelings of most sovereign nations. We obviously sent a clear message about how we feel about the United States (Deen 2001).'



military assistance. Democratic Alliance<sup>45</sup> defense spokesman Hendrik Schmidt said the US needed to come back and explain the implications of their decision to South Africa and that the defense department would suffer severely under the withdrawal of the military aid. 'The Department is already in shortfall, so the loss of R350-million in aid is important,' Schmidt said. (SAPA 2003d). Other South Africans had difficulty comprehending the American logic in suspending South African military aid. Stremlau (2003b) wrote that punishing them [South Africa] by stopping successful programs of military training, support and sales promotion designed primarily to serve US national security interests further discredits US policy.

Some sectors of the South African public were, for the most part, unhappy about Bush visiting Africa. In fact, the timing couldn't have been worse according to some because the Iraq war and now the ICC was viewed as 'US foreign policy shoving egocentric policies down other countries' throats, while kicking aside international diplomacy and negotiations (Fiil-Flynn 2003:6).' In line with this belief, several hundred demonstrators from the ANC and its allies protested US policies in Pretoria upon Bush's arrival. Days earlier, the Anti-War Coalition gathered more than 2,000 people at the US embassy, and 700 at the ANC office in Johannesburg, which gave the notion that Bush should leave Africa (Bond 2003). One of the coordinators, ANC policy director Michael Sachs, argued the need for 'uniting around the broadest possible alliance in opposition to war and imperialism... George W. Bush has drawn a line in the sand, and we must all decide on which side we stand. (Bond 2003).'

In July 2004, Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad explained that it was unfortunate to observe that since the end of the Cold War, US policies had shifted towards unilateralism in a speech at the University of South Africa. He explained that some of the reasons for South Africa's

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<sup>45</sup> The Democratic Alliance is a South African political party, ruler of the Western Cape in the country and seen as the main opposition to the ANC.

criticism were the decision to go to war in Iraq and of Israel's policy on Palestine (Radebe 2004:3). In addition, Pahad said the US refused to pay its arrears to the UN; refused to ratify key international conventions; renounced the Kyoto Protocol on global warming; rejected the verification protocol of the biological weapons convention; and unilaterally rejected the nonproliferation convention on nuclear weapons (Lefkowitz 2004). Pahad was shocked by abuses at Abu Ghraib prison<sup>46</sup> and the detention of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay<sup>47</sup>. He was also critical of the Israeli government, and said a clear conflict had developed 'between the dictates of international human rights law, and the traditional law on the use of military force.' South Africa supported the UNGA's agreement that the wall being built between Israel and Palestine was a violation of international law, Pahad said (Lefkowitz 2004).

According to one unnamed official quoted in a 2006 South African newspaper article, South Africa's two year seat on the UNSC is a chance of lifetime, as they will probably not be back on the Council -unless it gets a permanent seat- for 20 years; it will be a defining moment in South Africa's foreign policy (The Star 2006). In its first Security Council vote in 2007, South Africa joined Russia and China in voting against a US-backed initiative to discuss the Burmese regime's oppression of pro-democracy followers of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been under house arrest for most of the past 17 years (Lynch 2007b:A14).

America was very upset about South Africa's vote on Myanmar. Shillinger (2008) states that it was viewed by the US as a spit in the face because the resolution was perceived as being 'sponsored' by Laura Bush, the wife of President Bush, and South Africa was not going to let an

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<sup>46</sup> Accounts surfaced of widespread abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US Army soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Such offenses committed included torture, rape and even homicide.

<sup>47</sup> Guantanamo Bay or 'GITMO' is a US detention facility based in Cuba. Since early 2002, a portion of the base has held militant al Qaeda and Taliban combatants captured by the American military during its post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The facility is often criticized by human rights organizations who allege prisoners are being mistreated or tortured.

unpopular president's wife use the Security Council as her play toy to push her views. First Lady Bush even went as personally telephoning UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in September 2007 to express concerns about a crackdown on political dissidents (Reuters 2007). Additionally, she told a small group of reporters in an interview at the White House that she hoped to raise the issue's profile at the UNGA later in the same month (Reuters 2007).

'It's ironic,' said Jared Genser, a Washington lawyer and Burma activist, that the argument marshaled now by South Africa to block the debate on Burma was 'virtually identical' to that used by the apartheid regime to challenge the Security Council's criticism of the treatment of anti-apartheid protesters (Lynch 2007b:A14). Even South African Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu was deeply disappointed by South Africa's vote. 'It is a betrayal of our own noble past,' he said after the vote. 'Many in the international community can hardly believe it,' he said. 'The tyrannical military regime is gloating, and we sided with them (Lynch 2007b:A14).'

An *ANC Today*<sup>48</sup> article revealed that South Africa took the view that the Security Council resolution would have effectively undermined the initiative of the UN Secretary General. 'It would have undermined initiatives to continue to engage the government of Myanmar and could have closed the door to private and confidential communications between the UN Secretary General and the Myanmar government,' the article states (ANC 2007a).

South Africa's Ambassador to the UN, Dumisani Kumalo said his government was seeking to counter 'an imbalance of global power' in the Security Council, where he said the US, Britain, France, Russia and China use their authority to attack enemies and to shield friends (Lynch 2007a:13). The Council should stick to resolving international conflicts and not abuse its

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<sup>48</sup> The ANC Today is a weekly online publication of the African National Congress that provides information on the perspectives and policies of the movement on current national and international issues.

role by bullying small countries or expanding its authority into areas beyond its jurisdiction, including human rights, he said (Lynch 2007a:13). However, after giving the excuse that the Security Council was the inappropriate venue to discuss the matter because it is not a threat to world peace, South Africa did not give its full support at the HRC regarding the Myanmar issue.

Lynch (2007a:13) points out that in approximately three months, South Africa used its position on the Council to: try to block discussion of human rights abuses in Myanmar and Zimbabwe; backed Iran's efforts to evade sanctions for defying UN demands to subject its nuclear program to greater scrutiny; and reacted coolly to Kosovo's bid for independence, lending its backing to a Russian effort to deny Kosovo's president the right to address the UNSC in its formal chambers.

The US had continuously counted on South Africa and its influence on the continent to confront Africa's toughest challenges. Instead, according to Zacharia (2007:2), it's the Bush Administration that South Africa is confronting as it seeks to position itself as a counterweight to American power. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer was in Cape Town in June 2007 during her visit for the World Economic Forum on Africa where she discussed the deteriorating US-South Africa relations. 'It's been a rough patch...partly because they see themselves as a global power. Partly because they see themselves as the voice of the developing world,' said Frazer. 'I also think it's 'beat the big guy on the block,' she said. 'We're the big guy on the global stage (Zacharia 2007:2).'

Again, the US saw South Africa using its Security Council position to voice anti-US sentiments. In addition to Myanmar, South Africa abstained from a vote on a US-sponsored resolution to establish a tribunal for political killings in Lebanon in May. South Africa had also preached engagement with Iran rather than sanctions and Mbeki had opposed sanctions on Sudan

for its role in Darfur violence. The US supported both measures. Assistant Secretary Frazer described the country's opposition to sanctions, which helped bring down the apartheid regime, as 'ironic, given their own history (Zacharia 2007:2).'

'On some votes where we would have naturally expected them to be there, they haven't,' Frazer stated. She attributed South Africa's stance partly to the resentment over the US government's failure to back the ANC when it was battling apartheid. 'And I do think that sometimes there's a knee-jerk anti-America feeling in South Africa,' Frazer said. 'I felt that when I was ambassador, definitely then, and it continues (Zacharia 2007:2).'

Dlamini-Zuma said the mere fact that countries disagree doesn't mean relations are bad. But it's not just South Africa's posture in the UN that is the only flaw in the relationship. For example, when Washington criticized Nigeria's April elections as 'deeply flawed,' Mbeki was the first African leader to call Umaru Yar'Adua to congratulate him as president-elect (Zacharia 2007:2).

The US circulated a draft resolution in the UNGA in 2007 calling for the elimination of rape by governments and armed groups. South Africa was not happy with the wording and wanted the language changed, as discussed earlier. The US then accused South Africa of obstructing the American-drafted resolution. 'The South African position is shocking,' said Kristen Silverberg, the US Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, given 'South Africa's long struggle against oppression (Hoge 2007:16).'

Silverberg said that the South Africans were demanding watered-down language that would make the resolution one about sexual violence in general rather than one about sexual violence sponsored by governments (Hoge 2007:16). 'We think there is a real difference between governments that fail to prevent rape and governments that actively promote it, and we do not want the resolution to blur that difference,' she said. The South Africans were supposedly

shocked at Silverberg's expressions stating they had been with the African group to find agreement on this resolution. Baso Sangqu, South Africa's deputy ambassador, said: 'We are objecting to the resolution because it is politicized and singles out clear categories of rape. We want a resolution that is nonpoliticized and that looks at rape in a holistic manner in all its situations including rape by soldiers in detention centers and in situations of foreign occupation (Hoge 2007:16).'

American officials said that South Africa initially tried to portray its position as being supported by the 43-nation African group at the UN, but when American diplomats made inquiries in the individual capitals they found this not to be true. Only three African countries, Burundi, Congo and Liberia, had signed on as co-sponsors (Hoge 2007:16). Ambassador Kumalo responded to the media about South Africa's stance on the resolution:

Together with other African delegations, South Africa has continued to urge the US to amend the draft and to include the elimination of rape in all its manifestations. We have been joined by delegations from Latin America and Asia, which are also calling for a balanced text. We have argued that it is important for the General Assembly to send a strong and a non-politicised message that rape is a brutal, despicable and violent act whether perpetrated by civilians, the military or armed groups. The UN must avoid sending out a message that could be misunderstood as suggesting different categories of rape. The Africa group also wants to address ways in which victims of rape can be assisted, a topic that is omitted from the US draft.

Any suggestion that South Africa seeks to protect governments or groups that tolerate the use of rape is absurd. Our soldiers and civilians serve in various UN peacekeeping missions, including in the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire and Nepal. South Africa subscribes to the UN zero-tolerance policy with regard to sexual abuse by peacekeepers, and any of our troops charged with rape are subject to immediate arrest and prosecution under South African laws (Kumalo 2007:32).

On 14 December 2007, the HRC considered a resolution on the human rights of women and integrating gender into its work. This initiative was led by Chile with support from 50 states and aimed at ensuring that the new HRC improved upon the practices of the Commission on Human Rights by taking concrete steps regarding how the HRC addresses the human rights of

women (Roth 2008). According to Roth (2008), South Africa played an unhelpful role by threatening to propose amendments to the resolution, and offering only weak support for the text once a consensus was reached. Moreover, Roth argues that South Africa's narrow view of the HRC's mandate and powers was troubling given its efforts to push off discussions on human rights issues from the Security Council to the HRC. 'If South Africa maintains these troubling positions, human rights issues would be segregated within the HRC, and the potential for effective action by the HRC would be extremely limited,' Roth writes.

#### **4.1 US perspective**

Chapter three showed that Bush and his Administration leaned towards neo-conservatism as their political ideology. This comes with the belief that it is promoting democracy and other American values might require the use of force and going against international organizations and treaties. The war in Iraq since 2003, discussed earlier, is the most obvious example. Despite the fact that Clinton and Bush, but with more emphasis on the latter, placed greater emphasis on bilateralism than multilateralism, this does not mean that the US wants the UN to be ineffective and unsuccessful. Moreover, the US understands that 2008 is not 1945 when the UN was created and that UN reform is one of the greatest debates in our history, as the UN will be at the forefront when it comes to some of biggest threats and challenges in the 21st century (US Department of State 2007c).

Some of America's broader recommendations for UN reform that effectively addresses these threats and challenges of the 21st century are:

- Institutionalizing a system-wide approach to enforcing ethical conduct.
- Strengthening the UN's internal oversight body to better identify, obtain, and deploy the resources to accomplish its mandate.
- Enhancing transparency and accountability through procurement reform.
- Increasing the UN's effectiveness and efficiency through results-based management.
- Goal is an effective, accountable organization (US Department of State 2007c).

Regarding Security Council reform, America is open to both reform and expansion including the addition of new permanent members. The US has continued to support Japan for a permanent seat. It feels Japan has clearly earned it due to their large contributions to all aspects of the UN. Criteria to add other countries might include ‘GDP, population, military capacity, contributions to peacekeeping, commitment to democracy and human rights, financial contributions to the UN, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism record, and geographic balance (US Department of State 2007c).’ On the criteria, the US would consider supporting the addition of two or so new permanent members and two or three additional nonpermanent seats, allocated by region, to expand the Council to 19 or 20. These seats would ensure geographic balance. America is also prepared to consider longer-term renewable seats.

The US understands that South Africa wants to be part of the UNSC and a global power (see Frazer’s 2007 quote: ‘I also think it's 'beat the big guy on the block,’ (Zacharia 2007:2), but the US feels that whenever South Africa doesn’t get its way, ‘it kicks the bricks (Shillinger 2008).’ America viewed South Africa’s two year term as sort of a dry run of how they would act if they were chosen to become a permanent member. Instead of using those two years constructively and making friends and alliances, the US perceived South Africa as simply causing problems. The UK was also generally disenchanted with South Africa for some of their behavior at the Security Council. Some issues did not make sense to the US, such as when South Africa joined a minority of 13 countries in opposing UN accreditation of a Canadian gay rights NGO in July 2007 (Philip 2007). America probably thought to themselves; how can a country who allows gay marriage oppose a gay rights NGO?

South Africa’s record in the HRC, and the HRC in general, is perceived by the US as substandard. The HRC has focused on criticizing Israel--condemning it in 19 separate resolutions



and decisions as of July 2008. America feels that no other country like Myanmar, Iran or Sudan has received not even a glimpse of criticism that Israel has. In addition, the US maintains that countries that are hostile to human rights undermined the HRC's agenda by eliminating scrutiny of states such as Iran and Cuba, constraining the independence of human rights experts, and obtaining passage of a resolution on defamation of religion that condones constraints on freedom of expression (Schaefer 2008). This is why the Bush Administration withheld an amount equivalent to the US share of the HRC budget from its 2008 UN funding.

The Bush Administration during its two terms also did not join the ICC for a host of reasons; such as it goes against national sovereignty and is unconstitutional based on the US constitution. This is why the US held back military funding to countries such as South Africa. However, the US later realized that this detrimental to both America and other states who needed military funding. In March 2006, Secretary of State Rice admitted that America's position on Article 98 agreements was 'sort of the same as shooting ourselves in the foot (Mazzetti 2006).' In late 2006, Bush determined it was important for the US waive the prohibition of section 2007 (a) of the article 98 agreement that caused such an uproar in his 2003 visit to South Africa. As a result, the US now provides international military education and training to South Africa.

#### **4.2 SA perspective**

It was determined by examining South Africa's self-perception in foreign policy that multilateralism and respect for International Law are the most appropriate means of achieving global political and economic stability and security. This is why UN and UNSC reform in particular is so important to them. Since 1994 South Africa has continuously participated in and voiced the need for reform efforts to seek fundamental changed to the power imbalances within the UN. South Africa argues that reform would strengthen the Security Council and provide it

with more legitimacy due to a broader representation of African, Asian and Latin American countries serving as permanent members.

Analyzing South African foreign policy documents revealed to us South Africa's desire to play the leadership role in Africa. This would often lead to confrontation in multilateral fora over issues such as Zimbabwe. Moreover, South Africa wanted to show in its two-year stint as a non-permanent member of the UNSC that it was independent and would think for itself. South African government officials insist that their UNSC voting record was not 'anti-American,' even though Americans and even Europeans have this perception. 'It is hard to see why they voted that way [on Burma] but part of what was happening was a reluctance to be aligning themselves with the US,' said one European diplomat (Russell 2007). On the whole, South Africa has made clear it does not want to be seen to have formally joined an anti-US camp and South African officials stress that they will not be representing any particular bloc or region on the UNSC.

The 'balance of power' issue was part of South Africa's agenda at the UN. As indicated earlier, South Africa's UN Ambassador Kumalo said his government was seeking to counter 'an imbalance of global power' in the UNSC. Kumalo said that his government's hesitation to embrace Kosovo's independence bid reflects South Africa's concern that the 15-nation Council is straying from its mission (Lynch 2007a:13).

South Africa knew going into the Security Council that it had to balance the agenda of the South, and more importantly the BRIC countries, but also find common ground with the permanent five members of the UNSC on issues such as international terrorism. Their approach and leaning towards the former on various issues certainly raised its standing in the G-77 and the NAM who also disapprove the power of the P5. One tool that the P5 frequently uses is the use of

sanctions. South Africa believes that sanctions can be useful, but only if used with care and supported by other avenues such as peacemaking and peace building (Nacerodien 2008).

South Africa has also pursued strengthening cooperation between the BRIC countries outside of the UN. South Africa joining the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA) was one way to position them in a leadership role as well as to combine nations that share the belief that global governance institutions are failing. South Africa and others simply want the UN to be more transparent and representative enough to include the rest of the world and not just the few most developed countries.

South Africa's perception of the HRC and the ICC are the same as with the UN. It supports International Law and the rule of law. In fact, South Africa was one of the leading countries in support of the creation of the ICC. It, as well as dozens of other states, becomes displeased when they hear and see the evidence of US human rights abuses at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison or Guantanamo Bay. South Africa was upset with the 'diplomatic blackmail' when the US withheld military aid for their refusal to sign the Article 98 agreement. They were later pleased when America decided to reverse their decision on the matter. South Africa believes that America's new stance now placed all states on the same correct side of respect for the rule of law.

In the end, South Africa and developing countries are acutely aware of the importance of strengthening multilateralism and by extending multilateral institutions (ie the ICC), as a means to advance their common goals.

## **5. Summary**

The issue of unilateralism or bilateralism vs multilateralism put the US and South Africa in difficult positions in various instances. South African foreign policy has a strong focus on

multilateralism where the US has often sought other routes (ie unilateralism) when it comes to their national interests. The Bush doctrine is very clear in that regard. Moreover, South Africa is among the many developing countries that are currently seeking reform in various multilateral institutions. They also represent Africa's overall interests. This was seen as a big problem with Zimbabwe. South Africa also wants to grow their influence on the international stage by aligning themselves with BRIC countries in order to have more leverage against the West. From America's viewpoint, they saw South Africa's two year term on the UNSC as sort of a dry run and were not particularly pleased. The same can be said of other institutions such as the ICC and the HRC, with its strong focus on criticizing Israel.

South Africa's willingness to be an ally in the international WOT was a important component of the US-South African relationship during the time period. Although there were some disagreements at times, South Africa and Mbeki himself maintain that terrorism must not be allowed to flourish. Mbeki (2001) wrote after 9/11: 'As we share the grief of the bereaved and seek to comfort those who are maimed, this we must say, that as a civilised people we condemn this act of terrorism unreservedly and will do everything we can, to ensure that our own society does not give birth to the ugly and repugnant formations that committed willful mass murder in New York and Washington.'

Mbeki had acknowledged the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic back in 1995, but his stance on handling the issue from 2000 onwards had an international impact with foreign leaders and commentators questioning his credibility and judgment. According to Source Six (2008), the mishandling of the HIV/AIDS issue while hundreds of thousands of people around the country were dying 'really pissed off' people. This included Americans who protested against the apartheid government to members of the ANC. Congressman Payne (2008) also gave

details of how Mbeki's stance 'upset' numerous people. The South African government improved programs by the end of the time period to provide crucial drugs, but there is still a sense of insufficient political will, corruption and a lack of human resources in the health-care system to ensuring adequate care for people with HIV/AIDS.

The next chapter continues on a similar pattern as this one and analyzed the remaining significant topics. More importantly, the complete theoretical analysis will take place in chapter eight.

## **7. CHAPTER SEVEN: FOCUS ON AFRICA: ZIMBABWE, DEMOCRACY PROMOTION AND CHINA IN AFRICA**

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## **7. FOCUS ON AFRICA: ZIMBABWE, DEMOCRACY PROMOTION AND CHINA IN AFRICA**

### **1. Introduction**

The last chapter of this four-chapter section looks at the remaining key issues, with most dealing specifically with Africa. It begins by exploring the situation in Zimbabwe and the relationship problems caused due to South Africa's stance on the matter. The second section discusses an issue that both countries have mostly seen eye to eye on, which is the promotion of democracy. Most emphasis here is placed specifically on democracy promotion on the African continent. The third and final section looks at China's recent involvement in Africa and its effects on the two countries and their relations.

### **2. Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe was once the agricultural breadbasket for a large part of Southern Africa. This slowly began to change in 1980s after Robert Mugabe took over as president, ending white rule. By the early 1990's, Zimbabweans frequently expressed discontent with their government and its ruling party, the ZANU-PF. Towards the mid 1990's, industrial unrest and the effects of the Structural Adjustment Program<sup>49</sup> began to weaken the economy, as Mugabe tightened his controls over the country and its people. However, around this time (Clinton-Mandela years), Zimbabwe was a relative non-issue. It is also believed that Mugabe was averse to Mandela because a free South Africa usurped Zimbabwe's dominant position within SADC. According to veteran South African diplomat Tom Wheeler (2008), another key issue was that Mugabe never

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<sup>49</sup> The Economic Structural Adjustment Program, which started in 1990, was World Bank inspired reforms with the goal of transforming Zimbabwe's economy to a modernized, competitive, export-led industrialization (Saunders 1996). However, the country's private sector began a process of deindustrialization, public debt rose dramatically, the standard of living of most Zimbabweans plummeted. The situation was made even worse due to the severe drought of the early 1990s.

forgave Mandela for marrying Graca Machel, the widow of Mozambican president Samora Machel, who died in a plane crash over South Africa in 1986. Mugabe was a very close friend of Samora's up until his death.

Mugabe's defeat in the Zimbabwean constitutional referendum in 2000 marked the beginning of the collapse of the rule of law and democratic governance. Then US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright arrived in South Africa at the end of 2000 as part of a visit to three African countries where the Zimbabwean government's involvement in the wars in the DRC and Angola was discussed (Xako 2000). Zimbabwe was also discussed between Mbeki and Colin Powell when they met in 2001. Powell was very critical of Mugabe and called on him to 'submit to the law and the will of the people' by stepping down (Vesely 2001:36). He also expressed concern over the effect that Zimbabwe's political situation was having on the surrounding countries. According to Powell's speech at the University of Witwatersrand: 'America will be a friend to all Africans who seek peace,' but that 'Africans must bear the lion's share of responsibility for bringing stability to the continent (Vesely 2001:36).'

Various comments were made by both the US and South Africa in the run-up to Zimbabwe's 2002 presidential elections. ANC rhetorical support for ZANU-PF began to grow as did the condemnation of the UK and the US (Hughes 2004:130). Prior to Mbeki's crucial meeting of Commonwealth leaders in London in March 2002, the ANC secretary general Kgalema Motlanthe accused the US and the UK of destabilizing Zimbabwe. He noted: 'If it is possible for Tony Blair to say elections can only be free and fair if one party wins, then they can do the same here (The Star 2002a in Hughes 2004:131).'

However, South Africa did want to reach a common understanding with the US on Zimbabwe. 'We hope ... we can get a common approach,' Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad told



reporters in 2003 just prior to President Bush's arrival in South Africa (De Wet 2003). He continued: 'I hope this visit will give us an opportunity to frankly discuss Zimbabwe and to discuss what we are supposed to do.' Pahad's statements came after Powell was critical of South Africa's approach to Zimbabwe in a US newspaper article the week prior. Powell wrote that South Africa along with other countries on the continent 'should play a stronger role that fully reflects the urgency of Zimbabwe's crisis (De Wet 2003).' In response to Powell, Jonathan Moyo, Zimbabwe's information minister, had branded Powell 'an Uncle Tom who was a disgrace to all Africans (Commey 2003:36).'

On 20 November 2003, in somewhat of a role reversal, an American diplomat was quite vocal about South Africa's foreign policy. Then US Ambassador to South Africa, Cameron Hume, told attendees at a luncheon at Harvard University that South Africa speaks in abstract terms about good governance, but loses all its credibility because it does nothing about the disaster in Zimbabwe, with negative consequences for the NEPAD plan (Smit 2003:9). America had supported Mbeki's NEPAD plan since its inception.

The ambassador devoted a large part of his speech to his views on the Mbeki persona. Hume described Mbeki as 'very clever and charming and a good listener who likes to talk in small groups.' Mbeki is not very open nor is he a 'herd' animal. 'He is a democrat but his iron grip on the ANC inner circle leads to a feeling of isolation. No one wants to tell him he is wrong.' According to Smit (2003:9), Hume's opinion is that Mbeki is often wrong.

Hume referred to South Africa's stance on Zimbabwe and said he was critical of South Africa's soft approach. Hume stated:

The relationship between the US and South Africa is actually surprisingly good if one looks at out differences of opinion on foreign policy. We differ with regard to Iraq; we mostly agree on Africa, but we differ on Zimbabwe. This country is going to the dogs while poor blacks are worst affected. You cannot get a squeak out of the South African government. South Africa speaks in

abstract terms about good governance, but loses all its credibility because it does nothing about the disaster on its doorstep (Smit 2003:9).

Discussing Mandela's influence on current South African policy, Hume said he sometimes gets the impression that Mbeki feels: 'Heck, after all I am the president.' Hume's cell phone often rings after Mandela made statements. 'They are from ministers phoning to assure me that 'Mandela does not represent us.' In the end, Hume explained that 'The US cannot help South Africa by trying to do everything; South Africa is simply too big. We can merely tackle smaller projects that can serve as an example for larger projects undertaken by South Africans themselves (Smit 2003:9).'

Bush proclaimed during Mbeki's visit in 2005: 'The President [Mbeki], who has been very much involved in this issue, gave me a briefing on, for example, different ways that the people are trying to reconcile their difference of opinion within Zimbabwe. But it's a problem (The White House 2005).'

Over the next two years the situation in Zimbabwe continued to worsen. The Movement for Democratic Change<sup>50</sup> or MDC leader and main opposition to Mugabe, Morgan Tsvangirai, was arrested and tortured by the ZANU-PF. Tony Leon, the leader of the opposition party in the South African Parliament the Democratic Alliance, said South Africa's lack of action on the situation 'speaks volumes'. Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad said that the government was committed to resolving the crisis in Zimbabwe through dialogue, but added that 'it is not our intention to make militant statements to make us feel good, or to satisfy governments outside the African continent (Wines 2007:A1).'

Even so, Leon argued that South Africa had stood 'shoulder to shoulder' with some of the world's 'worst abusers of human rights.'

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<sup>50</sup> The MDC was formed in 1999 as an opposition party to the ZANU-PF. It was mostly made up of Civic group leaders who opposed the 2000 referendum on the new Zimbabwe constitution.

The situation in Zimbabwe dominated the headlines from mid-April to the end of June 2008. As Zimbabwe began to deteriorate after election results required a runoff between Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirari, the country began to receive constant worldwide media attention. Gerson's (2008:A13) article in the *Washington Post* revealed that Mbeki had addressed a four-page letter to Bush criticizing the US in a text packed with exclamation points for taking sides against Mugabe's government and disrespecting the views of the Zimbabwean people. 'He said it was not our business,' recalls one American official, and 'to butt out, that Africa belongs to him.' 'Mbeki lost it; it was outrageous,' adds another official (Gerson 2008:A13).

Speaking on 702, a South African radio station, Ambassador Bost confirmed that the White House did receive a letter from Mbeki with which the US strongly disagreed, though he failed to provide any additional information (Goodson 2008). The state of affairs worsened when South Africa provided approval for a shipment of arms and ammunition from China to be shipped across South African soil to Zimbabwe (this permission was later denied). Guy Lamb of the ISS said 'And this in a way runs contrary to South Africa's human rights-based approach to foreign policy. In a way, there is a bit of schizophrenia there (Voice of America 2008).'

While Zimbabweans and other foreign nationals were being attacked during xenophobic violence in South Africa in May, Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad briefed the International Relations, Peace and Security cluster (IRPS) cluster on Zimbabwe. He stated that South Africa had been of the opinion that Africa should solve its own problems and that it was within this framework that Zimbabweans were urged to find their own solutions to their own domestic problems (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2008). As far as outside assistance was concerned, Pahad noted that if non-African states felt that they could make a positive contribution to the mediation efforts in Zimbabwe then they could do so via the AU or SADC.

On 19 June, South Africa ‘snubbed’ a US effort to present a unified front against Mugabe’s government, sending a low-level representative to discuss the issue led by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Rice had called for the meeting with African nations and Security Council members on the sidelines of a ministerial session that this time unanimously passed the US-sponsored resolution to declare rape and sexual violence a weapon of war. However, after Dlamini-Zuma delivered her speech regarding the rape resolution, she remained in the Security Council chambers while numerous other ministers and ambassadors had a 45-minute discussion on Zimbabwe in another room. South Africa did send its deputy permanent representative to the UN, but diplomats present at the meeting said he arrived late and did not speak (MacFarquhar & Dugger 2008).

Zimbabwe again arose because an issue in mid July; this time the US lashed out at South Africa. After surprise Chinese and Russian votes at the UNSC on Zimbabwe, Zalmay Khalilzad, US ambassador to the UN, ‘lambasted’ South Africa as the main culprit in the failed Anglo-American bid to punish Mugabe and his top cronies with sanctions on their travel, finances and arms supplies (Lauria 2008:4). Khalilzad told reporters: ‘I want to say a word or two about the performance of South Africa...It was particularly disturbing given the history of South Africa ... where international sanctions played an important role in encouraging transformation [from apartheid] for its representative to be protecting the horrible regime in Zimbabwe.’ Khalilzad went on to say: ‘There isn't anything serious going on in terms of the negotiations. The South African effort, President [Thabo] Mbeki's effort, so far, has been a failure.’ He also praised ANC president Zuma and retired Archbishop Desmond Tutu for their criticism of Mugabe, and said Mbeki was ‘out of touch with the trends inside his own country (Lauria 2008:4).’

This incident saw political analysts in the US putting forth their feelings on US-South

African relations. Marian Tupy, an analyst at the Cato Institute in Washington, said that Khalilzad's criticism of South Africa symbolized the crisis in US-South African relations (Lauria 2008:4). 'It is common knowledge in the US that relations with South Africa are at their very lowest ebb,' Tupy said. 'There is no love lost between these two countries. South Africa has never missed an opportunity to contradict and accuse the US - which did so much to help end apartheid - of wishing Africa ill (Lauria 2008:4).' In regards to Khalilzad's comments, Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad said his government would seek an apology over what he said were extraordinary and unacceptable comments by Khalilzad (Thai 2008:11a). Laurence Caromba, in his article in the South African newspaper *The Star* of July 24, was disappointed that the UNSC failed to pass the sanctions resolution on Zimbabwe and called South Africa a strategic rival of the US, which Pretoria officials denied (The Star 2008). The US and the EU said there would be no immediate end to sanctions on Zimbabwe, despite a historic power-sharing deal signed in Harare on 15 September.

South African judge Navanethem Pillay was notified of her nomination as the new UN Human Rights Commissioner not long after the UNSC vote, despite American reservations (Cape Argus 2008). According to the *New York Times*, the US was critical of a South African getting the post because of Mbeki's stance on Zimbabwe and because of the 2001 WCAR. The officials did not believe at the time that the US would block Pillay's confirmation in the UNGA, which Washington could do, but didn't. Khalilzad said: 'We want a Human Rights Commissioner that is committed to human rights that will focus on real violations of human rights, that is authoritative, that has a record of speaking and working for (human rights) and has the relevant experience in those domains (Cape Argus 2008).' Another US diplomat stated: 'We

feel the Human Rights Commission is a tragically flawed body and we wish her [Pillay] the best of luck in righting a ship that has gone badly off course.'

The US and South Africa do share the belief that the quicker the situation is resolved the better. Following his meeting with US Secretary of State Rice in October 2008 where Zimbabwe was discussed, ANC president Jaacob Zuma agreed that 'a quicker solution to Zimbabwe is desirable for the sake of the Zimbabwean people and their country. We also agreed that Zimbabwean leaders should be urged to complete the package which is already on the table so that it is implemented for the sake of the Zimbabwean people,' he said (Kaufman 2008).

## **2.1 US perspective**

The US has negligible national interest in Zimbabwe, but sees Mugabe as a tyrant who has committed numerous human rights violations and swashed democracy in his country. A once-model economy now lies in ruins. Because of this, America has been at the forefront of trying to change the political/economic situation by imposing sanctions. Field (2000:9-10) explains: 'to South Africa, the root cause of instability in Zimbabwe is land and race, while to the Americans inequities in land distribution is no excuse for the Government of Zimbabwe to condone or instigate violations of the rule of law against the opposition.' It is these differing perspectives that have created growing tensions between Washington and Pretoria, with the US consistently criticizing South Africa's failure to deal with the situation effectively.

A low point in US-South African relations was the March 2002 Zimbabwean presidential elections, according to Source Seven (2008). The Source gave details of how it was clear to both the US and the international community that the elections were rigged, yet South Africa did nothing. This person thought Mbeki was simply 'protecting his friend' to the north. However, in 2003, Bush put his faith in Mbeki and his 'quiet diplomacy' or 'constructive engagement'

approach to solving Zimbabwe's crisis when he called him his "point man" on the topic (Katznellenbogen 2007:6).

The events of mid-2008 forced Bush to second-guess his original stance in order to help the **assist the** people of Zimbabwe. The US felt that South Africa, as a regional power, had not done enough to pressure Mugabe to allow free and fair elections to take place. They felt he should have pushed Mugabe harder to respect civil rights and stop the violence against political opponents such as the MDC. Washington was equally upset that Mbeki had failed to publicly criticize Mugabe and that he appeared to be strongly opposed to any form of Western pressure.

On 4 April 2008, Bush phoned Mbeki to see how the Zimbabwe situation was evolving and what South Africa's strategy was for resolving it (Frazer 2008). Bush, who believed in African leadership, expressed grave concerns about the fact that presidential election results had not been revealed. According to Frazer (2008), Bush also mentioned to 'step up and make sure that the will of the people is respected.' Mbeki addressed a four-page letter to Bush at the end of April criticizing America in a text filled with exclamation points rather than coordinating strategy to end the dire situation in Zimbabwe (Gerson 2008:A13). Mbeki even accused both of taking sides against Mugabe's government and disrespecting the views of the Zimbabwean people. People close to Mbeki explained that the president sending a letter was a frequent occurrence, as he often used a 'bag man' who delivered messages to bypass the embassies and other departments. One particular individual who worked for Mbeki was an old Afrikaans intelligence officer, would frequently pass notes between leaders and other officials in conferences and other meetings (Wheeler 2008).

Bush and Mbeki were known to have good personal relations throughout both of each others terms, but Bush's response to the letter is unknown. It is likely Bush shrugged it off

because he is aware of Mbeki's obsession with African unity. According to Wheeler (2008), note takers who have been in meetings with Mbeki say he is obsessed with African unity and will never step out of line with Africa. Perhaps Bush was a little disappointed in Mbeki's actions and stance on Zimbabwe.

Some Americans find it ironic that Mbeki's position on Zimbabwe was a partial cause of the xenophobic attacks on African migrants that erupted across South Africa over a three-week period in May 2008 (Source Ten 2008). As Mbeki tried to improve governance across Southern Africa and provide economic and political integration, millions of illegal immigrants were drawn to South Africa seeking better jobs and a better life. This was viewed as helping to contribute to the xenophobic violence. Many also saw Mbeki as spending too much time on foreign policy, which led to domestic concerns such as poor border control, high unemployment and crime rates, and high rates of corruption. Moreover, it is perceived that Mbeki's Zimbabwe policy assisted in creating an exodus of Zimbabwean refugees that fled Zimbabwe due to a collapsing economy and Mugabe's tight political reign, with most refugees ending up in Gauteng where the xenophobic violence mostly took place (Source Ten 2008).

The departure of Mbeki as South African president has brought with it a South African stance that is closer to America's. It is highly unlikely that the US would use their military to invade Zimbabwe for various reasons such as a lack of political will, but mainly due to the colonialist history in Africa. They believe the organizations such as the UN, and SADC in particular, have a very important role to play in resolving the crisis and in the rebuilding process if necessary. Former Ambassador Bost maintained in 2008 that the US believed SADC has 'the capacity to continue to play a very important role. We are just hopeful that they will continue to step up to the plate and do so (Frazer 2008).'



## 2.2 SA perspective

Mbeki was the main driver when it came to Zimbabwe. Many within South Africa have tried to understand his relationship with Mugabe and why as a mediator he had a need to publicly hug the Zimbabwean president during several different meetings (Habib 2008). It is alleged that this relationship may be in part because when Mbeki was arrested in Zimbabwe in the 1980s, Mugabe intervened to secure his release<sup>51</sup> (Mugore 2008). Some feel it is a racial issue due to discrimination Mbeki experienced during the London part of his exile and this is why he speaks out when he perceives as Westerners telling Africans how to act (Source Four 2008). Others think Mugabe took over as a father like figure when his father passed away. Yet some South Africans think it is purely African culture; Mugabe is the elder and it is not in Mbeki's place to tell him what to do or how to behave (Grant 2008).

Stepping back, there appears to be more plausible explanations to South Africa's apparent accommodating of Zimbabwe and the ZANU-PF. This includes:

- South Africa feels a source of indebtedness to Zimbabwe for being outspoken against the apartheid regime and its other assistance during those years.
- The ANC feels it cannot turn its back on Mugabe and ZANU-PF, which Dlamini-Zuma in (Graham 2007:119), refers to as its 'sister party', since both the ANC and ZANU-PF fought colonialism and oppression in their respective countries.
- A future emerging Zimbabwean economic would make matters rather difficult for future of the South Africa economy, as it would hinder the maneuvering space that South Africa currently enjoys somewhat restricted through competition (Balageas 2007).
- Zimbabwe is an 'experiment' similar to their own and they want to learn from Zimbabwe about issues or any others for that matter. However, in order for South Africa to do that it has to not get involved (Mugore 2008).
- African nationalism was a movement of a small, Westernized black elite that emerged that now reap the same benefits as did the spoils of colonialism and they want to hold on to their power in any way that they can (M. Mbeki 2008b).

South Africa perceives its leading status in the case of Zimbabwe, as appreciated among the governments of its neighboring states and SADC as a whole. SADC members see Zimbabwe

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<sup>51</sup> No source in the public domain could verify this allegation.

as a member of the Southern African community and not a colony of the West, especially the US. With this in mind, Mbeki frequently called on the US to support him in his efforts but not to go above him. Mbeki was distraught when the US introduced the draft resolution in the UNSC proposing sanctions. He perceived this as complicating the Southern African strategy toward Zimbabwe, which was spearheaded by Pretoria and mostly by Mbeki himself. This helps explain, in part, why South Africa had blocked discussions on Zimbabwe in the Security Council in numerous different occasions. Moreover, South Africa has almost always been against the use of sanctions, such as the situation with Libya. Various ANC members thought by the US proposing sanctions against Zimbabwe that they were playing psychological warfare. They feel that the Zimbabwe is an African responsibility, therefore African institutions like SADC should complete the work (Kornegay & Wheeler 2008).

South Africa also knows that a strong and very much public anti-Mugabe stance by America only serves to make Mugabe and the ZANU-PF more defensive and antagonistic. They perceive their American counterparts as not fully understanding the complexities of Southern African political dynamics, and firmly reject their interventionist ways. Unlike the US who invaded Iraq, according to the ANC, they fully respect the sovereignty of nations. The ANC wrote on 23 June 2008 that:

It has always been and continues to be the view of our movement that the challenges facing Zimbabwe can only be solved by the Zimbabweans themselves. Nothing that has happened in the recent months has persuaded us to revise that view. A lasting solution has to be led by the Zimbabweans and any attempts by outside players to impose regime change will merely deepen the crisis (ANC 2008).

The ANC put to the rest the argument about the importance about their relations with other liberation parties who fought against colonialism and white opposition. The ANC document states:

The ANC believes that we have an obligation to contribute towards the search for a solution in Zimbabwe. This is a view informed by long-standing fraternal relations amongst the liberation movements of our region of Africa. We are confident that a solution consistent with our shared commitment to human dignity, human rights, the rule of law and the freedoms we all fought for, is attainable (ANC 2008).

### **3. Democracy promotion**

The US and South Africa are both committed to the promotion of democracy, although there is controversy of what the true definition of democracy is. The American system of democratic government is built on a system checks and balances and has enjoyed over 130 years of political stability. South Africa's model is of a 'quasi-federal' character inspired mainly by the German model. Even though it has only been 16 years since South Africa became a democracy, many refer to them as a 'mature' democracy due to South Africa's evolution into a state in the early and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century and the ANC being established in 1912. The US has been trying to spread its democratic values around the world for decades, while South Africa has focused on spreading democracy on the African continent since 1994. Yet both countries have praised and criticized each other regarding their respective roles in democracy promotion.

America's strategy of democracy promotion or 'democratic enlargement' was evident and consistent in the White House's 1994, 1995 and 1996 editions of the National Security Strategy, which is prepared annually by the executive branch for the US Congress. The document stated that the promotion of democracy was to focus on primary US strategic and economic interests and that America would also seek greater engagement with 'states whose entering into the camp of market democracies may influence the future of an entire region (The White House 1995/6).' Both the 1994 and 1995 strategies included both Nigeria and South Africa in this category; 1996 was only South Africa.

However, some Americans were beginning to wonder if US involvement in Africa was worth all the hard work, especially in the early months of 1997. A political commenter expressed

the opinion: ‘Aside from Americans’ good will – some might call it a missionary zeal – there is precious little to keep them engaged in Africa. There is no political mileage in it (Whelan 1997).’ Hesse (2001:123) argues that even some of Africa’s biggest advocates in the US foreign policy must have wondered, at least secretly, if the headaches were worth the distant benefits.

At the same time, the world witnessed Mandela’s textbook use of diplomacy in trying to end Mobutu Sese Seko's rule in Zaire in May 1997. This served South Africa's primary political and economic interests, but also satisfied the expectations of the West, especially the US.

Mandela persuaded Mobutu into announcing that he would leave office and by doing so, he achieved the appearance of an African solution for Africans and of South Africa performing as the regional superpower the international community wanted it to be (Valpy 1997:A1). However, it appeared as the Americans upstaged Mandela at the end by sending Bill Richardson, the US representative to the UN, to the scene with a letter from Clinton to Mobutu telling him it was time to go. Richardson was subsequently castigated for ‘muscling in’ just as South Africa was ‘poised for a major foreign policy coup (Cape Times 1997 in Bridgman 1999:208).’

Back in the US, Clinton and his Administration hosted a meeting between the heads of eight African regional organizations, plus 83 African ministers and their US counterparts in March 1999 (Abramovici 2004). The aim of the meeting in Washington was to strengthen the partnership between the US and Africa and encourage increased economic development, trade, investment, political reform and mutual economic growth.

Mbeki told Clinton and others that America should become serious and take ‘urgent and extraordinary steps’ to help Africa and the South get out of ‘an ocean of entrenched poverty.’ Moreover, ‘he cautioned the Americans not to delude themselves into believing that their country can become ‘an oasis of prosperity’ while the rest of the world experiences times of sheer ruin

(Monyane & Landsberg 2000). Mbeki held this belief, and was continually vocal, throughout his entire presidency.

### **3.1 US perspective**

The US believed that South Africa's peaceful transition to democracy made them the crown jewel example of democratic governance and economic practice. The South African government had continued to support the country's economic potential while establishing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was viewed as a crucial component of the transition to a full and free democracy. Moreover, America pictured South Africa inspiring the same peaceful transition in numerous countries in the region.

Almost since its founding, American democracy has seen the promotion of democracy and freedom in other countries as part of its unique identity and purpose. The self-perception of Manifest Destiny included belief in a mission to spread universal ideals and democracy was one of them. However, democracy promotion was, and still is, crucial to US national security and at the end of the day, to the protection of its own liberty.

Both Clinton and Bush made democracy promotion part of their respective foreign policies, even though this meant different things from each one's perspective. While Clinton was for the most part more focused on economic concerns, Bush placed more emphasis on military/security concerns. Bush felt that the concerted effort of free nations to promote democracy marked the beginning of America's enemies' defeat. Efforts to 'spread freedom to Iraq' and around the world under the Bush Administration have been perceived as a tool to end oppression, fight terrorism and promote increase prosperity in the developing world. The spread of global democracy and freedom was the theme of the Bush's second inaugural address and

remained at the near the top of his foreign policy objectives during his eight years in power (Bush 2005).

The US acknowledges development as an almost impossible task in the absence of true democracy, respect for human rights, peace and good governance. To bring this about in Africa, the Bush Administration has supported the AU's NEPAD by implementing its Millennium Challenge Account through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which is basically in harmony with the NEPAD objectives. The US perceives NEPAD as providing a framework for cooperation among African countries working to prevent conflict and promote democracy and human rights. In total, the Bush Administration had allocated around US\$1.5 billion for democracy promotion near the end of the second term through the Millennium Challenge Account (Epstein et al 2007).

The American perception of South Africa itself in promoting democracy has been somewhat frowned upon. Starting with its relations with Cuba, a communist country, and then continuing later on with Zimbabwe, the US now perceives South Africa as a less effective ambassador for democracy in their region and on the continent than what they originally pictured their future role to be in 1994. Nevertheless, the US still believes that South Africa is playing a significant role in promoting democracy on the continent.

### **3.2 SA perspective**

South Africans perceive their country to be unique. They made a stand against the apartheid government and won their freedom. In order to do this, the ANC's struggle for liberation received financial and logistical support for more than thirty years from a variety of countries around the world. However, prior to black South Africans winning their freedom, the atmosphere that existed between South Africa and its neighbors was relatively hostile. In fact,

the apartheid regime managed to create more enemies than friends in the Southern African region.

Mandela wrote in 1993 that just and lasting solutions to the problems of humankind can only come through the promotion of democracy worldwide (Mandela 1993), but he immediately furthered relations with anti-democratic regimes, such as Libya's Qaddafi. Moreover, South Africa learned early on that African countries that gave them support during the liberation movement would not take kindly to lectures about democratization and human rights. The most obvious example was in Nigeria, when Mandela spoke out about the murdering of human rights activists and was later lambasted by African leaders for it. Additionally, because of the white apartheid government's hostile and overall militaristic foreign policy, some still perceived Pretoria as just another Western country who would continue acting under a similar line. All of these factors helped shape South Africa's foreign policy when dealing with democracy promotion. They are unquestionably for the idea, but are careful not to play 'big brother' in Africa and careful not to offend old friends from the liberation days.

South Africa has been skeptical of America's democracy promotion campaign since the beginning, hitting rock bottom after the WOT and the Iraq War. Mandela, Mbeki amongst others, made this evident with numerous negative comments (Mandela 2003, Mail and Guardian 2002, PANA 2002). One vital element of this perception is the historical aspect. Many within the South African government remember that Vice President under the Bush Administration Dick Cheney helped sustain the Sani Abacha regime in Nigeria in the 1990s as the CEO of the oil services company Haliburton (Booker 2001). South Africa also remembers the CIA's support of the apartheid government and how they encouraged South Africa's invasion of Angola in the mid-1970s. To top the list, many members of the ANC, COSATU and the SACP believe Crocker's

‘constructive engagement’ policy prolonged apartheid's life during the 1980s, contrary to the American perception that the policy was largely responsible to bringing about freedom and democracy in South Africa (Grant 2008).

South Africa perceives the elevation of military/security concerns over democratic progress having a negative effect in parts of the world outside of Africa. South Africa sees the contradiction in rising American support for countries like Pakistan because of their support in the WOT while simultaneously pushing for democratic transformations in other parts of the globe. The Iraq War and human rights abuses by the US military have further destroyed the legitimacy of the American democracy-promotion cause, in South Africa’s point of view. Mr D J Sithole, ANC member and Chairperson of the PCFA notes that America’s human rights abuses at Guantanamo Bay, amongst others, were causes for anxiety. ‘Some of the worst problems experienced in the world today were partly caused by the US. It is important to raise these issues, so that the US could shape their foreign policy with a more humane dynamic,’ explained Sithole (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:12).

Other South African government officials have a different perception to some extent of American democracy when it comes to Africa. They believe the US is making a ‘huge contribution’ to the African Renaissance and NEPAD by spending about US\$5-billion annually out of its Millennium Challenge Account to assist development and technical assistance in various African countries (Benton 2007). They hope this kind of assistance will continue in the future. Perhaps former South African president F W de Klerk said it best:

The greatness of the United States does not lie in the undoubted strength of its armies, and it does not lie in the undoubted strength of its navy and its air force," he said. "It lies in the values and ideas of personal and economic freedom that it represents. If the United States can remain true to these ideals, I believe it will succeed in carrying out its historic global leadership role (De Klerk 2007).



#### **4. China in Africa**

A more recent phenomenon in US-South African relations has been the emergence of China in Africa. China has substantially increased its investment across Africa in recent years in return for access to oil, metals and other raw materials to fuel its immense, expanding economy. China has also ramped up their political presence, now having embassies in over fifty African countries. The current global perception is that China is seemingly challenging the hegemonic positions of the US, Britain and France in Africa.

Many African countries are on the fence. Some African commentators have pointed out that China and African countries are both developing and assisting in labor-intensive industries, which lead to competition in certain fields, such as the textile and apparel industry. The same commentators also cite the limited regard for environmental and safety standards of some Chinese companies as drawbacks of Chinese investment (Chinese embassy 2007). On the other hand, China provides infrastructure and loans to African nations for building their economies through trade and investment without any political and economic conditions ('business is business, politics is politics') (Aning and Lecoutre 2007:47). This is in sharp contrast to the EU, the IMF and the World Bank, all of which impose conditions on governance, human rights and economic reform (Diakonia 2007).

Trade is often perceived as where China could benefit Africa the most. According to US-African trade figures released by the US International Trade Administration in 2008, the US is Africa's largest single country market, purchasing 29.5 percent of the region's exports in 2006 (Diamond 2008). However, China came in second at 12.6 percent and is the overall largest individual country exporter to Sub-Saharan Africa with a growing market share of 8.9 percent and US\$19.0 billion in exports to the region. The document states: 'China's exports to the region

grew by an impressive 41.8 percent from 2005. Increased shipments of electrical and other machinery, vehicles (mainly motorcycles), woven fabrics, iron and steel products, woven and knit apparel, and low-end footwear comprised the largest share of China's growth in shipments to Sub-Saharan Africa (Diemond 2008).<sup>7</sup> The US market share in Sub-Saharan Africa fell in 2006; US\$12.1 billion in exports to the region.

Sino-South African relations have also risen during the time period. It was stated earlier that South Africa has tried to align themselves more closely with the BRIC countries, which provides them with more leverage with the West as their influence on the global stage rises. This closer alignment to China has also meant increased bilateral trade.

**Table 7.1 South Africa Trade with US and China 2007**

	<b>South African Imports</b>	<b>South Africa Exports</b>
<b>US</b>	<b>\$5.521 billion</b>	<b>\$9.054 billion</b>
<b>China</b>	<b>\$7.5 billion</b>	<b>\$3.64 billion</b>
Source: Alden (2008), US Foreign Trade (2009)		

Examining South African trade statistics, as seen in Table 7.1 above, South African imports of Chinese products were valued at US\$7.5 billion and South Africa exports to China valued at US\$3.64 billion (R23.7 bn) in 2007 (Alden 2008). South Africa imports from the US were valued US\$5.521 billion and South Africa exports to the US valued at US\$9.054 billion (US Foreign Trade 2009). According to South Africa's DTI (2008), this made the US the number one importer of South African exports.

Other geopolitical issues besides trade such as cooperation in multilateral fora come into play when analyzing Sino-South African relations. These issues will increase in magnitude in the future as South Africa and Africa will look towards Beijing as an alternative to Washington with its strict prescriptions for neo-liberal economic policies, as touched on in earlier chapters.

#### 4.1 US perspective

Bush proclaimed in his 2008 Africa tour that US and China could both pursue opportunities in Africa without stoking rivalry. 'I don't view Africa as zero sum for China and the United States. I think we can pursue agendas without creating a great sense of competition,' Bush said. 'Do I view China as a fierce competitor on the continent of Africa? No I don't (Charles & Zakaria 2008).' The State Department sees China's growing activity on the continent as a potentially positive force for economic development there, which is a goal they share with China and many others (Christensen & Swan 2008). The main thrust of the US is to engage Chinese officials to try to define and expand a common agenda for Africa that ultimately serves both American national interests and maximizes the benefit Africa derives from US and Chinese economic investment in the continent.

The US has some concerns about China's growing influence on the continent. One concern is that China is undermining efforts to encourage good governance (Polity 2008). Another is that there is a general lack of transparency regarding China's foreign assistance practices in Africa. America encourages Beijing to fully engage with other major bilateral and multilateral actors to ensure that aid supports the efforts of responsible African governments so its benefits can reach the people.

The US has been watching China-Africa relations closely, which includes South Africa. It became clear to the US by watching South Africa's behavior in the UNSC during 2007-08 that their views were more closely related to China's than their own. These matters included Myanmar, Darfur and Zimbabwe. Moreover, Washington had the perception that Pretoria had placed sovereignty over human rights and democracy in certain cases (i.e. Zimbabwe), which suggests their views were more closely related to Beijing's than their own (Alden 2008). A good

example is when China's ship containing three million rounds of ammunition for AK-47s, 1,500 rocket-propelled grenades and several thousand-mortar rounds originally reached South Africa. South African Defence Secretary January Masilela said the country's National Conventional Arms Control Committee had given approval for the transit of the weapons for Zimbabwe. 'If the buyer is the Zimbabwean sovereign government and the seller is the Chinese sovereign government, South Africa has nothing to do with that,' he said (BBC News 2008). Speaking in New York, Mbeki echoed his defence secretary's comments even though many western countries had placed arms embargos against Zimbabwe for its human rights violations (BBC News 2008). China and South Africa also share a common view on the need to transform the UNSC and the international financial institutions to better reflect developing country interests (Alden 2008).

One gets the impression from the US point of view that American diplomats are tired of the South African and other African media displaying the news as if the US is quickly faltering and that China will take over America's place in a relatively short period of time. Americans have constantly tried to dispel this myth. Christensen and Swan (2008) write: 'With the important exception of Sudan, where the China National Petroleum Company is the major operator, Chinese oil companies are relatively minor players in Africa. In 2006, total output by all Chinese producers was approximately one-third of a single US firm's (ExxonMobil) African production.' Nevertheless, the US perceives Sino-African trade prospects as very good, but they feel it will only be decades before the West, and many of Africa's former colonial powers, will be replaced as the continent's largest trading partners.

#### **4.2 SA perspective**

It is has only been recently that China and South Africa have sought to broaden their relationship. A bi-national commission was established in December 2001 that has assured

substantial government-to-government contact. In 2008, they celebrated the 10 year anniversary of their bilateral relations and held numerous bilateral visits. Alden (2008) explains that these close diplomatic ties have been matched by growing economic engagement with two-way trade rising from US\$800 million in 1998 to US\$11.2 billion in October 2007.

Foreign Minister Dlamini Zuma and trade and industry minister Mandisi Mpahlwa were in China's major cities, Beijing and Shanghai in the end of April 2008, celebrating the 10th anniversary of diplomatic ties between South Africa and China. This was an important visit after the acquisition in March of 20 per cent of Standard Bank, one of South Africa's largest banks, by the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China - the world's largest bank by market capitalization. This was viewed as ushering in a new chapter in Sino-South African relations and destroying the stereotype of China being interested in Africa's extractive industries and nothing more (Davies 2008). Chinese President Hu also met with ANC president Jacob Zuma shortly after where Hu hailed China-South Africa relations. He said the two nations enjoy frequent high-level visits, effective operation of various cooperation mechanisms and fruitful cooperation in various fields (Xinhua Economic News Service 2008).

Not all was bright in Sino-South African relations during the time period. In a speech in late 2006, Mbeki warned African leaders not to allow a 'colonial relationship' to develop with China (Baldauf & Schutz 2007). He has the perception that with China's global ambitions, it could strip Africa of its resources. Furthermore, Chinese companies can drive out local competition through importing their own labor and driving down cost or through cheap labor in China itself, thus hurting South African and African economic development. In addition, South African weapons producers are often in competition with their Chinese counterparts for markets in Africa. South Africa is skeptical when observers mention China lacks an ethical code when

doing African business. Freemantle (2008) mentions that all of Africa's corrupt leaders have enjoyed thriving trade with the West throughout their reigns. Freemantle explains that it was virtually impossible to do business in states such as Nigeria, Cameroon and Kenya during the 1970s and 1980s without engaging in improper practice - which in no way deterred the Western multinationals.

South Africa has the perception that Africa is the top global priority for China (Grant 2008). Meanwhile, they feel the US and Europe see Africa as burden (Grant 2008). South Africa sees the US being cautious and placing restrictions on their aid when China is willing to provide money with no strings attached (Grant 2008). South Africa further recognizes that there are extensive opportunities for greater cooperation between them and China and in the rest of Africa (Alden 2008).

China's growth in Africa is seen as a moderating force in a post 9/11 world, according to South Africa (Sachs 2005). In sharp contrast to both America's unilateral aggression and right-wing Islam's rejection of universal values, China believes that its national interest is objectively aligned with multilateralism and world peace, which is closely aligned to South Africa's thinking (Sachs 2005). China's growth in Africa is also often viewed as one of the main reasons for AFRICOM's existence (Esterhuyse 2008:115-116). Every time China provides massive amounts of aid and foreign direct investment, South Africa and others perceive it as lessening the influence of the US on the continent (Underwood 2008:12). They also look highly upon the high number of visits that Chinese diplomats have made to Africa. For example between 2006 and 2007 China's President Hu Jintao visited no less than 17 African countries, the most ever by any foreign head of state in such a time frame (Freemantle 2008). In comparison, George Bush made

only two visits to Africa in his eight years as president. Moreover, his most recent had a large emphasis on gathering support for AFRICOM.

## **5. Summary**

Zimbabwe was a crucial issue in US-South Africa relations over the time period. Starting from 2002 when America thought it was clear that Zimbabwean elections were rigged and South Africa did nothing, to America's ambassador to the UN, Zalmay Khalilzad 2008 comments calling South Africa's and Mbeki's actions a failure, the tension continued to mount. Mbeki, being the top South African foreign policy maker, was the key individual whom everyone looked at to solve the crisis. When the US started to 'intervene' in what Mbeki saw as his 'work,' his anti-imperialist tendencies came out, which became evident in his letter to Bush.

Regardless of that particular situation, both the US and South Africa are committed to the promotion of democracy. The US has supported AU's NEPAD by implementing its Millennium Challenge Account through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which is basically in harmony with the NEPAD objectives. Its goal is to further strengthen and promote democracy throughout the continent. However, there is a perception that Western democracy promotion is actually American interventionism. The Iraq War and human rights abuses by the US military have further destroyed the legitimacy of the American democracy-promotion cause, in South Africa's point of view.

China being a communist country that has substantially increased in presence in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has also made its way into the democracy promotion debate. In spite of that fact the US does not see China as a fierce competitor on the continent despite South African and African media portraying it that way. South Africa's voting record in the UNSC showed their views on Myanmar, Darfur and Zimbabwe more closely related to China's than America's.

These votes have also given Washington the perception that Pretoria has placed sovereignty over human rights and democracy in certain cases. On the other hand, China's growth in Africa is seen as a moderating force in a post 9/11 world, according to South Africa.

This chapter, and the three before it, revealed the issues of the highest significance in the US-South African relationship during the time period. This included a diverse number of issues related to such broad topics as economics, defense and health. More importantly, these chapters succeeded in providing the necessary background information in order to assess the validity of asymmetry theory.

The next chapter provides further analysis of the issues presented in previous chapters by focusing on and applying the main theoretical framework of asymmetry theory. This will allow for the relationship between the US and South Africa to be summarized and scrutinized. Final concluding remarks will be made in chapter nine.



## CHAPTER EIGHT: AN APPLICATION OF ASYMMETRY THEORY

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## 8. AN APPLICATION OF ASYMMETRY THEORY

### 1. Introduction

Asymmetry theory is put to the test in this chapter by utilizing the information presented in chapter two combined with the evidence offered in chapters three through seven. This data will also allow us to analyze how well the asymmetric relationship was managed from 1994 to 2008. The tenets of this chapter are laid out in the same manner as chapter two to reflect the same flow and for organizational clarity. In applying the theory in that same approach, we will be able to deduce whether those tenets have been met by discussing the empirical evidence to the validity or not of asymmetry theory.

### 2. Inattention and overattention

It is clear from table 8.1 that the relationship between America and South Africa will be proportionally more important for South Africa. Although an asymmetric relationship is interactive and therefore both sides have influence and can make mistakes, the stronger side is in the leading position (Womack 2003c:539).

**Table 8.1- US-South Africa Relationship**

2007-08	United States	South Africa	SA % of US
population (# of people)	307,212,123	49,052,489	16.0%
territory (km <sup>2</sup> )	9,629,091	1,221,037	12.7%
GDP (US\$ million)	13,840,000	283,071	2.0%
Military expenditure (US\$)	547,000,000,000	4,040,000,000	.74%

Source: Adapted from Womack (2006b:6) and data from IMF (2008), UN Statistics Division (2006), US Census (2009), SIPRI (2007, 2008)

Womack's (2001, 2003a, 2006a) theory of asymmetry explains that South Africa will be attentive or pay special attention to what the US says and does, while the US will not be as attentive to South Africa, or as quick to respond. This was the definitely case throughout our

time period, although the US was more attentive to South Africa than many other countries in the region due to **its** regional leader status. Furthermore, due to South Africa's peaceful transition to democracy and the hope the US had in seeing **it** serve as an example for other countries in Africa, further raised America's attentiveness towards them. Despite this, there were instances where the US was very quiet. For example, in the few months prior to the Iraq invasion in March 2003, the US remained almost completely silent in regards to South Africa, its citizens' protests and its government officials' comments. Additionally, Wheeler (2008) explains that the US embassy in Pretoria was almost invisible during the time period. 'They are almost never present at South African dinners and it is like they are in a shell,' Wheeler said. This lack of attention aided in creating misperceptions from both sides.

The US does fill more of South Africa's horizon (Womack 2003b:96) so all in all, the relationship was more vivid to South Africa. For example, during a South African Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee Meeting in September 2007 to discuss US-South Africa relations, the Chairman, Mr Sithole, expressed disappointment that the US did not send a representative to make a presentation. 'This was the second time that the US embassy had, for one reason or another that had not be stipulated, failed to except the invitation extended by the committee,' Sithole reiterated (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:1). He then posed the question perhaps the relationship should be reassessed? 'Maybe we should decide if these are the friends we want to have that don't want to discuss with anyone, or have only interests and therefore do not see a reason to build a relationship – but only to seek and pursue their own interests, and not share anything with somebody else,' stated Sithole (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2007:1).

Asymmetry theory proposes that South Africa's entire leadership will be attentive to the US and not just their American experts<sup>52</sup>. This was indeed true when analyzing the time period. In many instances such as the Iraq War, AFRICOM or any news regarding Israel and Palestine, leaders from every political party (i.e. ANC, ANCYL, DA, Cosatu and the SACP) would give their point of view or thoughts on the situation by giving statements to the media. The other logical side of coin is the US would not be as attentive to South Africa. This was indeed true. The most compelling example would be during Clinton's visit to South Africa when Mandela pulled him aside to discuss Libya and the Lockerbie bombing negotiations. As the one member in the room said it was clear Clinton knew nothing of the matter, therefore showing America's inattentiveness to South Africa's affairs (Judson 2005:13).

The relationship between the US and South Africa is even more complex than other bilateral relationships, according to asymmetry theory, given the diversity of regional situations and roles of regional powers. Table 8.2 compares South Africa to the next ring of states, Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe by comparing their populations, GDP and military spending.

**Table 8.2 South Africa's Regional Context in 2008**

2007/08	S. A.	Angola	Mozam.	Zimb.	A % of SA	M % of SA	Z % of SA
population (mil)	49.05	12.8	21.7	11.4	26	43	23.2
GDP (US\$ bil)	283.07	61.3	8.1	4.7	21.7	2.86	1.7
military (US\$ mil)	4040	2000	78	124.7	49.5	1.9	1.23

Source: US Census (2009), IMF (2008), CIA (2008)

This regional context, meaning South Africa being much more economically and militarily powerful than its neighbors and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, was undoubtedly a factor in the US-South Africa relationship during the time period. The SACU-US

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<sup>52</sup> In South Africa's case, the closest one can get to 'American experts' is the USA desk at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

negotiation was the most obvious example. Womack (2006b:4) notes that the economics of regions such as Southeast Asia and Africa do not match the cohesiveness of their geopolitics. In contrast to North America and Europe where most trade is interregional, in Africa it is much less. According to Womack (2006b:16), the region remains the first recourse for international cooperation, and since regional powers such as South Africa are in the default position of regional leadership, their roles should be enhanced by globalization. This was the thinking behind the shift in South African trade policy to encompass a more regional grouping via the SACU.

In theory it seems simple; increased trade for the entire SACU region will help unleash prosperity in the participating countries, as well as the rest of Africa, which will eventually reduce the very high unemployment rate and increase investment in South Africa. However, what was unaccounted was the asymmetrical levels of development between the US and SACU countries such as Lesotho and Swaziland when the free trade talks began. Most SACU countries did not even have laws to deal with such matters.

This combined with the sheer difference in the size of economies put the US in a definite advantage. They were the stronger side in the asymmetric negotiations with the FTA having much more economic benefit for the SACU countries than to the US. Womack dictates that because of this asymmetry, the differences in perspective can lead to a negative complementarity of bullying and victim roles (Womack 2006:7). As the stronger side escalates its attempts to force the weaker side into line, the weaker side perceives an even greater threat to its interests and even to its existence than the stronger side intends. This can result in stalemate because the stronger side cannot force the weaker side to submit. This is exactly what happened in the SACU-US negotiations, with SACU feeling bullied and threatened to sign on the dotted line.

## Relations with the UN and other multilateral institutions

Asymmetry theory says South Africa's leaders would be tempted to buffer its direct exposure to America's superior capacities by joining with the US in multilateral associations and agreements. UNSC records from 2007 show that South Africa voted with the US 98.2% of the time (US Department of State 2008a). The two occasions that they didn't were Burma, which received the most media attention, and the establishment of an international court to try the suspects in Rafik Hairir's murder<sup>53</sup>. More importantly, South Africa voted for sanctions against Iran under what was perceived as US and Western pressure.

In 2008, the Security Council considered 66 resolutions and adopted 65. UNSC records show that South Africa voted with the US 98.5% of the time (US Department of State 2009). The only resolution that was not adopted dealt with the ongoing political and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe. China and Russia vetoed that resolution, and Libya, South Africa, and Vietnam voted against. Table 8.3 below shows a brief comparison of America and South Africa's voting record in the UNSC over the 2007-08 period.

**Table 8.3 A Comparison of US/SA Votes in the UNSC 2007-2008** (US Department of State 2008a, 2009)

Year	Number of UNSC Resolutions	Percentage in agreement	Topic(s) of disagreement
2007	57 Resolutions considered	98.2%	Burma, Hairir's murder (Abstain vote by SA)
2008	66 Resolutions considered	98.5%	Zimbabwe

South Africa's behavior in the UNGA was somewhat different to the UNSC. South Africa conceded to the second method in multilateral institutions according to asymmetry theory, which was to join with other small states on matters of common interest or in regional associations.

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<sup>53</sup> Rafik Hairir was the former Prime Minister of Lebanon who was assassinated in February 2005.

South Africa taking the side of the BRIC countries, the developing world or Africa at a minimum was a common occurrence in the UN and other institutions. The problem here was America often perceived South Africa as allying itself with other powers to challenge the US. This included Iran, China and Russia, and as Womack states, this can be a risky maneuver. Luckily when the US escalated its attempts to force South Africa into line over Zimbabwe in the UNSC, South Africa did not perceive an even greater threat to its interests and even to its existence than the stronger side intends.

The UNGA voting records of the US and South Africa clearly illustrate the difference of opinion on some of the key issues, which were discussed in detail throughout the previous four chapters. US public Law 101-246 calls for analysis and discussion of ‘votes on issues which directly affected United States interests and on which the United States lobbied extensively (US Department 2008a).’ An important basis for identifying issues is their consistency with the State Department’s Strategic Goals. For the 62nd UNGA in 2007, 13 votes and 11 consensus resolutions were identified for inclusion in this section<sup>54</sup> (US Department of State 2008a). Of the 13 votes, South Africa disagreed on nine of the issues and abstained on the other four. Table 8.4 shows the detail of those votes.

Table 8.5 shows the full details for 2008. For the 83<sup>rd</sup> UNGA in 2008, 13 votes were identified as important. Of the 13 votes, South Africa disagreed on 11 and abstained on the other four.

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<sup>54</sup> The State Department (2008a:144) writes, ‘The tables that follow summarize UN member state performance at the UNGA in comparison with the United States on the 13 important votes. In these tables, “Identical Votes” is the total number of times the United States and the listed state both voted Yes or No on these issues. “Opposite Votes” is the total number of times the United States voted Yes and the listed state No, or the United States voted No and the listed state Yes. “Abstentions” and “Absences” are totals for the country being compared on these 13 votes. “Voting Coincidence” is calculated by dividing the number of identical votes by the total of identical and opposite votes.’

**Table 8.4 A Comparison of US/SA Votes in the UNGA 2007** (US Department of State 2008a)

<b>Important Issue</b>	<b>US Vote</b>	<b>SA Vote</b>
US Embargo of Cuba	N	Y
Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	N	Y
Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat	N	Y
Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices	N	Y
Human Rights in North Korea	Y	A
Human Rights in Iran (No Action Motion)	N	Y
Human Rights in Iran	Y	N
Human Rights in Belarus	Y	A
International Trade and Development	N	Y
Agricultural Technology for Development	Y	A
Report of the Human Rights Council	N	Y
Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma)	Y	A
Questions on 2008-2009 budget	N	Y

**Table 8.5 A Comparison of US/SA Votes in the UNGA 2008** (US Department of State 2009)

<b>Important Issue</b>	<b>US Vote</b>	<b>SA Vote</b>
US Embargo of Cuba	N	Y
Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	N	Y
Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat	N	Y
Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices	N	Y
Human Rights in North Korea	Y	A
Human Rights in Iran (No Action Motion)	N	Y
Human Rights in Iran	Y	N
Moratorium on the Use of the Death Penalty	N	Y
Combating Defamation of Religions	N	Y
Toward a New International Economic Order	N	Y
Report of the Human Rights Council	N	Y
Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma)	Y	A
Global Efforts to Eliminate Racism	N	Y

The UN voting records also a strong decline in the voting coincidence percentages.

Examining the entire voting records on all UNGA Consensus Resolutions from 1997 to 2007,

US-South Africa coincidence percentage dropped from 85.4% in 1997 to 68.1% in 2007<sup>55</sup> (US

<sup>55</sup> According to the US State Department (2008a:4), 'These figures, by presenting the percentage of voting coincidence with the United States after including consensus resolutions as additional identical votes, more



Department of State 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008a). Table 8.7 gives a complete year-by-year breakdown. If one analyzes the data further, one finds a large percentage drop on topics such as, for example, arms control, human rights and the Middle East (See Tables 8.7-8.9 below).

**Table 8.6 Voting Coincidence Percentages in the UNGA: 1997-2008** (US Department of State 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2008a, 2009)

Year	Consensus Resolutions	Percentage
1997	All 203 Consensus Resolutions	85.4%
1998	All 213 Consensus Resolutions	87.1%
1999	All 226 Consensus Resolutions	86.1%
2000	All 209 Consensus Resolutions	86.5%
2001	All 223 Consensus Resolutions	84.3%
2002	All 234 Consensus Resolutions	80.4%
2003	All 211 Consensus Resolutions	77.4%
2004	All 213 Consensus Resolutions	77.7%
2005	All 183 Consensus Resolutions	73.6%
2006	All 174 Consensus Resolutions	70.9%
2007	All 170 Consensus Resolutions	68.1%
2008	All 192 Consensus Resolutions	74.1%

**Table 8.7 Voting Coincidence Percentages for Arms Control in the UNGA 1997-2008** (US Department of State 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2008a, 2009)

Year	Percentage
1997	65.4%
1998	60.0%
1999	54.2%
2000	61.9%
2001	45.8%
2002	39.3%
2003	22.7%
2004	13.6%

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accurately reflect the extent of cooperation and agreement in the General Assembly. Since not all states are equally active at the United Nations, the report credits to each country a portion of the 192 consensus resolutions based on its participation in the 97 recorded Plenary votes. Each country's participation rate was calculated by dividing the number of Yes/No/Abstain votes it cast in the Plenary (i.e., the number of times it was not absent) by the total number of Plenary votes). However, this calculation assumes, for want of an attendance record, that all countries were present or absent for consensus resolutions in the same ratio as for recorded votes.'

2005	28.1%
2006	28.2%
2007	3.4%
2008	30.0%

**Table 8.8 Voting Coincidence Percentages for Human Rights in the UNGA 1997-2008** (US Department of State 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2008a, 2009)

Year	Percentage
1997	53.8%
1998	66.7%
1999	61.5%
2000	71.4%
2001	12.5%
2002	9.5%
2003	15.8%
2004	19.0%
2005	5.3%
2006	0.0%
2007	4.5%;
2008	0.0%

**Table 8.9 Voting Coincidence Percentages on the Middle East in the UNGA 1997-2008** (US Department of State 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2008a, 2009)

Year	Percentage
1997	22.7%
1998	19.0%
1999	23.8%
2000	9.5%
2001	28.0%
2002	25.0%
2003	4.8%
2004	5.6%
2005	5.9%
2006	4.2%
2007	0.0%
2008	0.0%

Tables 8.7-8.9 clearly show that there was a strong difference of opinion between the US and South Africa and that these differences grew larger over time. For example, the voting

coincidence for human rights in 1997 was 53.8 percent. This dropped to zero percent in 2008. Asymmetry theory proposes that one reason for this is voting pattern is that the UN provides a better public forum for South Africa to raise their concerns while at the same time it is not directly threatening the US. South Africa striving for acknowledgment of autonomy is another reason the theory suggests for the declining voting percentages in the UN.

### **3. Deference, autonomy and misperception**

The US has for the most part granted South Africa's wish of autonomy outside of the multilateral arena. Both Clinton and Bush put forth offers to train African peacekeepers, and not to have US troops patrolling the continent. Bush even had the support of American public to use the US military in Darfur, but adhered to Mbeki's request to only supply logistical and humanitarian support (The White House 2005). However, AFRICOM and the Zimbabwean situation were two main instances where South Africa perceived the US as crossing the 'autonomy line.' This was even more complex due to South Africa being the leader in Africa. Both situations gave South Africa the perception that the US was encroaching on their territory.

AFRICOM was viewed as a strong security issue in South Africa's eyes, as any nation would view it if another nation wanted to place a military base in their region. And as asymmetry theory dictates, security issues are often the most important in a bilateral relationship. Moreover, it was a larger concern for South Africa than the US. This perspective was highly tense mainly due to America's previous use of unilateral force in Iraq with South African officials believing the US might invade their country for its mineral resources. In all fairness, that statement adequately fits Womack's definition of 'hypersensitive' when it comes to a security threat against the less powerful country in asymmetric bilateral relationship. Additionally, AFRICOM

almost came across as an insult that South Africa could not handle security situations in their own neighborhood.

## **Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe being in South Africa's 'neighborhood' came under a similar line of thought to AFRICOM with the key differences being the history between the ANC and ZANU-PF and the fact that Zimbabwe is one of South Africa's neighboring countries. Womack's premise that neighboring states remain the regional power's point of most intense contact and the region remains the first recourse for international cooperation proved itself correct. South Africa placed much greater emphasis on having themselves and SADC handle the Zimbabwe situation rather than the UNSC. South Africa's perspective on US pushing for sanctions via the Security Council would have been similar to South Africa telling the US what to do if an outbreak occurred in Canada. From this perspective, one can somewhat comprehend Mbeki's letter to Bush telling him to 'butt out' of Zimbabwe (Gerson 2008:A13).

## **Defense issues**

On the other side of the spectrum, the US expects deference from South Africa. If a crisis arises, the US will be inclined to use its power to push South Africa into line. That is exactly what happened regarding the proposed arms deal to Syria in 1997. The US threatened to withdraw its US\$120 million aid package for 1997 if South Africa went ahead with the reported deal (Business Day 1997a). Furthermore, America was Pretoria's biggest donor at the time and more than 750 US companies operated in the country, employing upwards of 50,000 people (Mutume 1997). Another situation where the US tried to force South Africa into line was with their refusal to sign the treaty that would give its citizens immunity from prosecution by the ICC in The Hague by suspending military aid to South Africa.

America expecting deference from South Africa and not receiving it did cause times of 'rough patches' in the bilateral relationship with comments being made by government officials from both countries. America's head diplomat for Africa Jendayi Frazer acknowledged in 2007 that South Africa had not always deferred to the US and in certain instances almost acted as a counterweight to US power. 'It's been a rough patch...partly because they see themselves as a global power. Partly because they see themselves as the voice of the developing world,' said Frazer. 'I also think it's 'beat the big guy on the block,' she said. 'We're the big guy on the global stage (Zacharia 2007:2). South African Ambassador to the US Welile Nhlapo stated later in 2007 that there is a 'reality' that the US is the only superpower while there is a 'notion' held by some people that South Africa is a continental superpower. 'I think that notion needs to be nursed very carefully, and also for us to know that when you punch you don't punch above your weight,' he said (Mkhabela 2007:22).

Venturing back to America suspending military aid because of the ICC, this action was further in line with Womack's theory. The theory stipulates that the US would prefer aggressive norms when they conform to its preferences, and will avoid norms that impose restraints on its freedom of action. In addition, asymmetry theory states intermediate powers are the strongest supporters of multilateral legal regimes because they are powerful enough to be part of the 'establishment,' but vulnerable enough to want great powers to be bound by rules. It is clear that South Africa placed special emphasis of multilateral organizations, and its refusal to sign the article 98 treaty showed that they believed the US should be in the same boat as everyone else and should not receive preferential treatment. This would also add a greater understanding to South Africa's eagerness to have the US start destroying their nuclear stockpile and that Iran has

a right to peaceful nuclear energy; both are listed in black in white in the NPT from the South African perspective.

Womack states that beyond the bilateral relationship itself, a state can increase its sense of relative status by enhancing its collective identity with other states. It can also decrease the sense of status disparity by calling attention to the problems and deficiencies of the more powerful state; America in this case. South Africa did both in numerous occasions. It aligned itself with SADC, the AU, G-77, NAM, BRIC and IBSA during the time period. Moreover, it frequently protested US actions and policies since 1994.

Nonetheless, asymmetry theory argues that autonomy and deference in a bilateral relationship are in a delicate balance. As was previously stated, the US has not always acknowledged the special role of South Africa in its region, and South Africa has used its regional leadership to challenge the authority of the US. This concurs with Womack's belief that differences of concrete interests and perspectives, domestic political pressures, and misperceptions can lead to conflicting positions. This difficulty in maintaining a balance between autonomy and deference has caused friction with many outsiders believing some of South Africa's votes in the UN and other actions were just to spite the US.

Pushing and shoving in an asymmetric relationship can indeed result in characteristic misperceptions, as asymmetry theory stipulates. If South Africa extrapolates from America's bullying behavior to what the US could do to South Africa, then South Africa is likely to become paranoid toward the US. On the other hand, if the US extrapolates from South Africa's assertive behavior, the US will see South Africa as untrustworthy, which could ally with others and threaten the US. We witnessed this trend throughout the entire time period. From South Africa's relations with pariah states and arguments regarding trade issues under Clinton's years, to the

Iraq War and Zimbabwe under Bush's years, there was almost always disagreement on certain topics that has lead to pushing and shoving. However, we witnessed a serious decline in bilateral relations from 2002 to 2008 when the US and South Africa did not agree on a large number of the most crucial issues, which led to shouting matches via the media in both countries.

According to asymmetry theory, these tendencies will reinforce one another and will lead to misperceptions, which are likely to amplify. This occurred due to a strong build up of vital issues starting with Mbeki and HIV/AIDS then continuing with Zimbabwe, America's unilateral action against Iraq, disagreement on the ICC, South Africa's stance on Iran, Israel/Palestine issues, disagreement over aspects on the WOT, South Africa's voting record in the UNGA, disagreements in the UNSC and AFRICOM. Each topic is important on its own and one can see how the tension escalated reaching a climax in mid-2008. Moreover, this combined anxiety between Washington and Pretoria, and was further amplified by the stress of the straining relationship between the US embassy and the South African government. The latter tension was much closer to home for South Africa, therefore eliminating what Womack describes as a distance barrier that can help extinguish some of the anxiety felt by both sides. But, again this will be more felt by South Africa to the asymmetry in the relationship. South Africa's overall attitude toward the US will be sensitive to small changes in the tension of the relationship and South Africa will begin preparing for hostility with the US long before the US would finally declare hostility. This was noticeable in the beginning and middle of 2008 when numerous South African government officials openly acknowledged that the current US-South African bilateral relationship was a cause for concern.

The problem here, according to asymmetry theory, is many disagreements, especially on critical security issues and numerous misperceptions, are likely to produce a vicious circle a

negative complementarity of action and reaction leading to conflict. Without symmetry, interactions between the two are as likely to produce hardened and negative stereotypes of the other, as they are to produce better understanding. This began to occur from both sides towards the end of the time period.

Various Americans perceived South Africa as anti-American and others like, for example, journalist Michael Gerson (2008:A13) felt South Africa increasingly required a new foreign policy category: the rogue democracy. Many Americans interviewed for this thesis felt Mbeki and his inner circle had a large role in the near collapse of US-South African relations. ‘Mbeki was anti-American, or actually he **was** anti-western,’ stated Source Ten (2008). Source Seven (2008) said: ‘Lets just put it this way, Mbeki was never Pro-America.’

On the other hand, South Africa perceived the US at times as the biggest threat to world peace and a bullying global power who only wants to expand its economic and military power throughout the world, and will use unilateral force to do so. As Womack (2003b:113) states: if images are distorted by misperception then behavior will be correspondingly misdirected. And in asymmetric relations it is unfortunate that actions based on the misperceptions of each relational direction are likely to amplify one another.

#### **4. Managing the asymmetric relationship**

The empirical evidence presented does support the assumption in chapter two that this bilateral relationship would indeed be difficult to manage. But the question remains; with the overall difference of opinions on key issues and the misperceptions, how did the relationship not deteriorate past the occasion verbal disagreement and threat?



#### **4.1 Routinization**

Womack argue that routinization and neutralization stabilizes the relationship by removing 'fuel from the fire' and by creating an interest in a smoothly running relationship that can buffer the nervousness of South Africa, and the inattention of the US. Womack contends that 'inclusive rhetoric' can also help stabilize the relationship. The Clinton/Gore team was good with inclusive rhetoric, but it clashed with many realities of South Africans and Africans. For example, French Cooperation Minister Jacques Godfrain said in 1996: 'I welcome the fact that, after Washington cut development aid by 15 percent...and after President Clinton has not been once to Africa, after he made no mention of Africa in his address to the UNGA, a few weeks before presidential elections Africa becomes a priority of the American government (Hesse 2001:115-16).' Clinton's rhetoric in some ways helped to improve the relationship. However, over time Mbeki looked for more action from the US and less glorified talk. During the Bush Administration, Mbeki was more stern with the US continuously stating that the US and Western countries had to contribute more to assist Africa overcome poverty. Mbeki didn't want to hear promises, he wanted action.

#### **4.2 Diplomatic ritual**

Another main component that can assist in managing an asymmetric relationship is diplomatic leadership and ritual. Womack states the common pronouncements of mutual respect and the exchange of official visits help establish a bilateral political atmosphere in which alarmist interpretations of the other's behavior will appear to be less likely. The US and South Africa shared a large amount of significant diplomatic visits throughout the time period. Clinton's four-day state visit in South Africa in 1998 was one of these visits. He made stops in Botswana, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal and Uganda, besides South Africa during this historic

African tour. Clinton and his entourage comprised of 981 people in total (Hesse 2001:164).

Clinton was also apologetic while in South Africa- although he never explicitly apologized - for America's role in slavery. He apologized for the US having propped up anti-communist African tyrants during the Cold War, for America's failure to intervene in time to stop the massacre in Rwanda in 1994, and for US support for the apartheid government - while emphasizing its later role in helping bring it down through sanctions (Fabricius 1998).

South African leaders - some of them communists – were not entirely comfortable with Clinton's praise for past US efforts to end apartheid (Mallet 1998). Their feeling was that the ANC was supported by Moscow, not Washington, in its guerrilla war against white rule.

South African leadership made numerous visits to the US as well. Mbeki made a full state visit to the US in May 2000 where South Africa's role as peacemaker and player on the international stage was under scrutiny. South African media reports wrote that Mbeki's visit was full of 'glitz, glamour and pizzazz (Sowetan 2000).' Mbeki was welcomed by Clinton at the White House culminating with a strictly 'black tie and tuxedo' state banquet. Mbeki also held meetings with Gore, Governor George W. Bush, congressmen and senators and a special meeting was set up with the Congressional Black Caucus on Capitol Hill (Sowetan 2000).

April 2001 saw Foreign Minister Dlamini-Zuma's first round of bilateral talks with the new US Administration in Washington. She met with Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of State Powell where discussions focused on identifying mutual areas of co-operation between South Africa and the new US administration (PANA 2001a). Former President Clinton also made a return trip to South Africa in April to attend the Civil Society Initiative conference in Johannesburg, demonstrating his commitment to the country (PANA 2001b).

The visit by Colin Powell to South Africa in May 2001 was the most significant undertaking by the US government since Clinton made his high profile visit to the country three years earlier (PANA 2001b). Powell brought the message that the Bush Administration cares about Africa's problems, which drew mixed responses in South Africa, as many were suspicious of the White House's foreign policy. At a speech at the University of Witwatersrand, he told students and faculty: 'I am here today to say on behalf of President Bush that Africa matters to America, by history and by choice (Storbel 2001).' Students responded by questioning recent American actions abroad and even Powell's own military past. Moreover, as Powell prepared to leave the university in Johannesburg, a small group of students protesting US policies in the Middle East blocked his motorcade, finally letting his car pass after a half-hour confrontation filled with often tense times (Storbel 2001).

Bush was in South Africa in 2003 when he called Mbeki his 'point man,' and a president who was on top of things. Bush unreservedly backed Mbeki's quiet diplomacy in Zimbabwe, which some viewed as similar to Chester Crocker's policy of constructive engagement of the apartheid government. Lastly, Bush endorsed Mbeki's AIDS plan. On 1 June 2005, Mbeki and Foreign Minister Dlamini-Zuma were in Washington for political bilateral discussions. Mbeki met with Bush in the White House where a variety of issues were discussed including the forthcoming G-8 Summit that was hosted by Britain in Gleneagles, Scotland from 7-8 July 2005.

Analyzing the bilateral visits over the time period, it becomes obvious that with the end of the BNC came a drop in the amount of other high level American diplomatic visits to South Africa seen during the Clinton Administration. This included visits by Attorney General Janet Reno who visited on behalf of the justice and crime committee of the BNC. Overall, the very high level South African diplomats visited the US more than the very high level US diplomats

visited South Africa, which was to be expected. Table 8.10 below highlights some of the crucial visits by key US diplomats to South Africa (excluding Gore's and Mbeki's alternative visits twice a year as part of the BNC). Table 8.11 displays much of the same, but of South Africa's key diplomats visits to the US.

**Table 8.9- Significant US Visits to South Africa between 1994-2008**

<b>Key US Diplomat (s) Visiting South Africa</b>	<b>Year</b>
Vice President Al Gore, First Lady Hilary Rodham Clinton etc	1994
Secretary of State Warren Christopher	1996
Secretary of State Madeline Albright	1997
President William Clinton	1998
Attorney General Janet Reno (BNC)	1999
Defense Secretary William Cohen	2000
Secretary of State Madeline Albright	2000
Secretary of State Colin Powell	2001
President George W. Bush with Colin Powell	2003
First Lady Laura Bush	2005
Democratic Leader of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi	2006

Note: Does not include BNC/BCF visits unless otherwise noted  
Source: constructed by author based on information presented in thesis

**Table 8.10- Significant South African Visits to the US between 1994-2008**

<b>Key South African Diplomat (s) Visiting US</b>	<b>Year</b>
President Nelson Mandela	1994
Deputy President Thabo Mbeki (BNC)	1996
Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Aziz Pahad	1997
President Nelson Mandela	1998
President Thabo Mbeki	1999
President Thabo Mbeki	2000
Foreign Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma	2001
President Thabo Mbeki	2001
President Thabo Mbeki	2002
President Thabo Mbeki	2004
Former President Nelson Mandela (private meeting with Bush)	2005
President Thabo Mbeki with Foreign Minister Dlamini Zuma	2005
President Thabo Mbeki with Foreign Minister Dlamini Zuma	2006
Foreign Minister Dlamini Zuma	2007
ANC President Jacob Zuma and ANC delegation	2008

Note: Does not include BNC/BCF visits unless otherwise noted  
Source: constructed by author based on information presented in thesis

There were also continuous visits from 1994 to 2008 by various congressmen and other US diplomats to South Africa on top of the bilateral visits mentioned in Table 8.10 above.

Womack states that personal friendship among leaders, although important, may only be a temporary advantage. Insiders speak of the special bond between Clinton and Mandela and of the Trans-Atlantic telephone calls as ‘the leader of the free world seeks counsel from one of the millennium's moral icons (Sawyer 1999).’ Clinton and Mandela appeared to have almost a father-son relationship, according to an American source who was present in South Africa and relatively close to both presidents (Source Ten 2008). Mbeki and Gore were known to have built a close relationship as well due to the frequent interaction in the BNC. ‘This special relationship between leaders almost gave a sense of starting a friendship between both countries and you felt that. As an American in South Africa, I felt it and it was a good feeling of support (Source Ten 2008).’

Not all the personal relations between the two countries diplomats were as pleasant. This was especially true during the Bush and Mbeki years. There was an impression by US State Department officials that former South African ambassador to the US Barbara Masekela as very much anti-American. Wheeler (2008) describes Masekela as ‘literally and figuratively’ closing the doors of the South African embassy in Washington. Grant (2008) adds that Masekela would only establish talks with the black caucus, and would not deal with American big business. Masekela also came across as personally very insecure. An American based in the US at the time thought this perception was wrong. The source said that Masekela did not have enough competent personnel who could go to the important meetings and give public speeches. The source felt that Masekela almost fell in love with discussing the overcoming of apartheid and

would go around the US talking about it and living in the glory when she could have been present at more important functions; but anti-American she was not (Source Nine 2008).

At the UN in New York, many American's felt Dumisani Kumalo serving as South Africa's ambassador at the UN help heighten some of the disagreements in the UNGA and the UNSC. Kumalo was appointed in April 1999 and previously worked for the American Committee on Africa, which was described by Source Nine (2008) as one of the most anti-American NGOs in the United States. The source continued by saying Kumalo 'loves to stick pins and needles in the US and he really does enjoy it.' Another American feels that Kumalo loves representing the G-77 and the NAM. 'He drank too much of the third world Kool Aid,' said the source (Source Eight 2008).

South Africa was not without criticism of some of America's ambassadors to the UN. Most notably was Bush's pick of John Bolton. Kumalo said there is a perception among many developed countries in the G-77 that it appears 'Ambassador Bolton wants to prove nothing works at the United Nations (Lynch 2007a:13).'

Another relationship during that time period that could not be labeled as 'excellent' was that of Nelson Mandela and Vice President Dick Cheney. Mandela stated in 2002: 'Quite clearly we are dealing with an arch-conservative in Dick Cheney... my impression of the president is that this is a man with whom you can do business. But it is the men around him who are dinosaurs, who do not want him to belong to the modern age (Mail and Guardian 2002).'

Cheney also voted against a resolution calling for Mandela's release because of his alleged support for terrorism in 1986.

Nevertheless, chapter three elucidated that the presidents of the US and South Africa and their closest foreign policy advisers are the key individuals that should be focused on when

discussing foreign relations. In line with this thought, Bush and Mbeki were also known to have good personal relations. Cobb (2006) writes: ‘every year since George W Bush was first inaugurated in 2000, the United States president and South Africa’s Thabo Mbeki have had a conversation. It’s usually by telephone.’ Grant (2008) points out that Alec Irwin and Robert Zoellick got along ‘like a house on fire.’ Wilkerson (2008) thought that President Mandela in the early years of post-Apartheid South Africa, had a warm and productive relationship with Colin Powell and that this relationship carried over, to some extent, when Powell became Secretary of State and Mbeki was President of South Africa. These personal relationships and overall diplomatic ritual were significant in confirming the stabilizing effect of historical continuity by involving both leaderships in a general, commitment to stability.

#### **4.3 Neutralization**

Asymmetry theory also dictates that interactive behavior can ultimately make the difference between war or friendship. One way of achieving a close relationship is through bilateral or expert commissions. Again, the major benefit of a bilateral commission is not problem solving, but to remove problematic issues from the spotlight of bilateral politics.

The US and South Africa had two very different bilateral commissions in the form of the BNC during the Clinton Administration and the BCF during the Bush Administration. Bridgman (1999) states that the BNC was arguably more than just another joint commission established to normalize relations between the US and South Africa. As one of two full US BNC’s, the US-South Africa BNC sent the message that the US attaches a degree of significance to its relations with South Africa.

The BNC was formed and announced in October 1994 when Mandela visited Clinton in Washington. The BNC was to be co-chaired by the vice-presidents of both nations and was

established as a ‘top down approach intended to restart a moribund relationship (Scott 1998 in Cochran 1998:61).’ The BNC would meet approximately every six months and alternate locations between the US and South Africa. There were four main goals of the BNC:

- 1) to promote the US-South African bilateral relationship through a working partnership at the highest levels of government;
- 2) to enhance bilateral cooperation by establishing permanent and vigorous institutional partnerships;
- 3) to assist South Africa in meeting its reconstruction and development goals; and
- 4) to enhance the roles played by private investors and NGOs in strengthening relations between the two countries (Cochran 1998:61).

The BNC dealt with a large amount of decisive topics such as the Syrian arms deal that set the tone for the course of events when Mbeki hosted Gore for a meeting of the BNC in February 1997. Hesse (2001:13) explains that it was clear from the beginning that Gore and Mbeki wanted to ease tensions between their respective countries. Gore said: ‘Friends will sometimes have disagreements. Friends work through their disagreements in a mutually respectful way... It’s not for me to speak on a decision that is South Africa’s (The Citizen 1997).’ Mbeki stated: ‘No two countries would agree on everything, but we agree on most things that matter... (the proposed Syrian arms sale) has not been a threat at all to our relationship (Chicago 1997:3).’ Both individuals wanting to repair the relationship created what Hesse (2001:133) labeled a ‘spirit of reconciliation’ which led to the end of the US indictment against Armscor for its past activities and a joint communiqué being released regarding the proposed Syrian arms sale.

Again, the BNC meetings took place twice a year (totaling two weeks a year) and were high level. Gore and Mbeki chairing the commission was a very important aspect of the BNC.



Chapter three revealed that Gore was arguably one Clinton's closest advisers on foreign policy if not the closest in the entire Administration. Chapter three argued also that Mbeki was by far the most important entity when it came to South African foreign policy. Therefore, you had the two top individuals when it came to each countries foreign policy with immediate access to their president and with executive powers that lacked the veto power on the part of Congress over most BNC projects. In addition, Gore and Mbeki were able to discuss sensitive matters out of the hearing of the press or even that of other bureaucracies such as the State Department.

Grant (2008) reveals that the BNC was completely uneven. The US had a Secretariat, objectives, plans and goals while South Africa really didn't know what it was doing. 'The US knew what they wanted. South Africa was still struggling to change from a liberation party to a government and to get their feet planted,' states Grant. However, Grant highlights the fact that it accomplished numerous objectives and the most important aspect was 'they got things done.' BNC meetings have been credited for the resolution of the McDonald's trademark dispute, the Armscor case, and the Syria arms sale confrontation (Bridgman 1999:225).

There were some times of disagreement and tension especially towards the end of 1990s. The controversy and dispute over the pharmaceutical industry was one of those instances. The US, led by Gore, was directed to punish South Africa with the threat of trade sanctions if South Africa need not comply with US demands. This was one example where Gore was pressured by 'big business.' This also came at a vital time when he was beginning his campaign for the American presidency and needed the support and donations of those same pharmaceutical companies.

Another time of disagreement when was Mandela proclaimed in December 1997 that USAID funded groups that pushed a political agenda at cross purposes with the South African

government, citing a 1996 congressional staff report by longtime critics of the agency's South Africa program (Duke 1998:A30). Congress accused the Agency of 'extreme and unqualified meddling in South African policy-making and of 'squandering resources needed to fund basic development.' USAID administrator, Brian Atwood, denied Mandela's suggestion and revealed that his officials worked closely with South Africans in putting the US program together. Nevertheless, Atwood stated that USAID would conduct a 'special review' of its US\$70 million program to look at Mandela's concerns (Duke 1998:A30).

Bridgman (1999:244-45) points out that the BNC placed high-level attention on US-South Africa relations, while not necessarily a feature in US media reports, it served to focus increased attention on the bilateral relationship among the US foreign policy community and in South Africa itself. The most crucial element of the BNC was the senior level contact at frequent intervals, which provided a forum for the two countries to address any misperceptions or issues that otherwise, could have caused and ironed out many sensitive issues that could have caused considerable problems in the asymmetric bilateral relationship. In addition to the BNC, Source Six (2008) points out that there were separate high level disarmament meetings that took place between both countries that assisted in arms control cooperation.

With Mbeki becoming president and Gore losing the US election to Bush, the BNC transformed into the SA-US Bilateral Cooperation Forum (BCF). The first Secretariat meeting took place in February 2002, during which time ways in which the work of the 10 committees were coordinated and strengthened. The Agriculture, justice and anti-crime, defense, energy development, health, human resource development, housing, science and technology, and conservation and environmental matters committees formed the most important elements of the BCF's activities (DFA 2008b).

The first BCF meeting in February 2002 was held in Cape Town, with Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Walter Kansteiner leading the American delegation. Also present was the US National Security Council Presidential Special Advisor on Africa, Dr Jendayi Frazer. Pundits saw the high level interaction as creating a framework for the pursuit of mutual regional and international priorities. The BCF was seen as already making headway in promoting US investment in South Africa. For instance, bilateral trade expanded to more than US\$7 billion per annum and greater access existed for South African products to the US market (PANA 2002a). Other accomplishments included strides towards reducing pollution, protecting the environment, managing waste, improving agricultural practices, empowering and educating young people, enhancing the skills of young professionals, combating crime and terrorism and building military capacity (PANA 2002a).

With Mbeki and Gore gone, this type of the cooperation did not last. The BCF was obviously a completely different bilateral entity than the BNC. For example, the BCF occurred only once a year for a day or two at a time and was scaled down from vice-president level to senior official level. Most people questioned by the author were not even aware of the BCF and thought that the entity simply ‘disappeared’ entirely. It is believed that the disarmament meetings also came to an end shortly after Mbeki becoming president. With these dramatic changes occurring, a forum no longer existed to work out the possible kinks in the US-South African relationship.

### **Visas for ANC Members**

One key concern that was only resolved in 2008, and not by either the BNC or BCF, was the issue over the frequent hassle regarding American visas for ANC members visiting the US. US law requires that anyone convicted of a serious crime will need a waiver from the Attorney

General in Washington before being granted a visa. The US embassy in South Africa noted that granting a waiver to ANC members who had legitimate reasons for having been imprisoned is 'usually a formality (ANC Today 2002).' Regardless, a number of ANC members had experienced such difficulties. One such member was former Gauteng Premier, Tokyo Sexwale, who was unable to attend the public listing of gold conglomerate Gold Fields on the New York Stock Exchange following a delay in being granted a US visa (ANC Today 2002).

The ANC perception was that the visa issue revealed inconsistencies in US attitudes towards the struggle for democracy in South Africa. The ANC felt that the US had often paid tribute to those who fought for a democratic South Africa, but that the country's immigration policies and practices victimize visitors from South Africa who were imprisoned in the course of a just struggle against the apartheid system. The ANC said: 'It is unacceptable that members of the African National Congress who spent years in apartheid prisons for legitimate actions against an unjust system should be victimised in this manner (ANC Today 2002).' Furthermore, this kind of treatment flies in the face of the good relations that exist between South Africa and the US, and the valuable co-operation in economic and other spheres that has taken place between the two countries in the period since 1994, it said.

Finally 1 July 2008 saw the passing of the Anti-apartheid Visa Bill law by President Bush, which finally authorized the US government to lift the stigma against South Africa members of the ANC wishing to travel to the US. The issue reached borderline absurdity in 2007, when Barbara Masekela, South Africa's ambassador to the US from 2002 to 2006, was denied a visa to visit her ailing cousin and did not receive a waiver until after her cousin had died. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had called the previous designation 'embarrassing.' 'This is a country with which we now have excellent relations, South Africa, but it's frankly a

rather embarrassing matter that I still have to waive in my own counterpart, the foreign minister of South Africa, not to mention the great leader Nelson Mandela,' Rice told a Senate committee in April (Brown 2008).

#### **8.4 Societies and history**

Besides the previous techniques mentioned to neutralize the situation, asymmetry theory stipulates that general contact of the two societies spreads a sense of sympathy and links interests that reject extreme stereotypes and discourages hostility. This can be business, educational, or cultural. Former US ambassador to South Africa, James Joseph (1997) writes: 'it is impossible, therefore, to speak of United States - South Africa relations without speaking of the extraordinary range of individuals and institutions engaged with each other across a wide spectrum of these two democracies.'

A US government official at the US embassy in Pretoria shared similar thoughts to that of Ambassador Joseph. The individual feels it is impossible to talk about US-South African relations without discussing the great people-to-people relations (Source Four 2008). Having lived in South Africa for over four years, South African culture is noticeably similar to American culture. One of the key differences includes sport, which is still dominated by football (soccer) and British games such as cricket and rugby. However, South Africans strictly follow their American television programs like CSI, and even the Bold and the Beautiful. Moreover, Americans in South Africa have said it feels like home due to the large amount of shopping malls and the familiar symbols of McDonalds, KFC, Coca-Cola, Apple Ipad, and Nike.

USAID was largely responsible for bringing the famous US television series Sesame Street to South Africa. Takalani Sesame, the South African version introduced Kami, the world's first HIV-positive Sesame Street Muppet (Foster-Gross 2008). The goal was to teach South

African children basic skills and rules of behavior, and for them to understand and enjoy South Africa's multiracial culture.

Many South Africans have experience in the US, including some government officials who went to university there (Wheeler 2008). Younger South Africans are increasingly spending time in the US to study and to work as au pairs for 'host' American families. In fact, thousands of highly skilled South Africans have taken up residence in the US.

Amcham (2008) reveals that there are approximately 550 US companies with a current presence in South Africa, of which 340 are wholly-owned subsidiaries. Twenty-three percent of the US companies in the country are Fortune 500 companies. Additionally, US businesses here have contributed in excess of US\$5 billion in direct foreign investment (Source Four 2008). The US States with the most companies invested in South Africa in order of priority, according to Amcham (2008), are New York, California, Illinois, Texas, Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Furthermore:

AmCham has 192 members of which 79% are US companies, 17% are South African and 4% represent US-South African partnerships. Its member companies represent all sectors of economic activity and collectively provide either direct or indirect employment to several thousand people in SA. AmCham's members represent an investment of over \$11 billion in SA and spend more than R300 million per annum on corporate social responsibility, philanthropy and community development (Amcham 2008).

Besides businesses, US foundations, universities and churches have increased their activities in Africa. Bush's strong religious ties have also proved beneficial in Africa as the rise of Christianity across much of the African region has created sizeable reservoirs of pro-American sentiment. South Africa itself was a large Christian population with 29 684 861 adherents or 73.52% of the population (Religious Intelligence 2008). Many American Christian churches have come to South Africa as part of religious missions, which has more closely linked the two countries that both share Christianity as their largest religion.

Combined with US businesses, the volume of resources and contacts between non-governmental groups in the US and South Africa, and even Africa as a whole, vastly outnumbers the official government resources. American tourists are also visiting South Africa in record numbers. A recent survey by a top US travel magazine *Travel + Leisure* revealed that American tourists rate Cape Town as their third favorite city in the world (Magubane 2008). In addition, South African Ambassador Grobler pointed out in late 2007 that from 2005 to 2006 US tourist numbers increased from 68000 to over 73000, an increase of 7.4 %. (Benton 2007).

This general contact of the two societies has been an enormous aspect in stabilizing the bilateral relationship. Additionally, if a normal relationship existed for a long time, then asymmetry theory stipulates that common sense would tell the participants that the current crisis, like previous crises, can be resolved. How long a 'positive' US-South African bilateral relationship has lasted is a question of debate and largely depends on the perception of each side. For example, the large majority of Americans especially in the African-American community perceive their country as playing a huge role in helping free South Africa. However, from South Africa's point of view, most feel that the US prolonged apartheid through Crocker's constructive engagement and by the US government not supporting the ANC. This was evident in the very beginning of the time period as South African leaders - some of them communists – were not entirely comfortable with Clinton's praise for past US efforts to end apartheid.

Grant (2008) explains that after 1994, African-Americans spoke of how they fought side by side with the South Africans and how they were 'soul brothers.' According to Grant, the local South Africans hated this and it antagonized them. African Americans, especially in business, saw exactly how powerful apartheid was because when they went to implement training programs for local black South Africans, none of them could read or write. US companies had to

restructure their training programs to first include literacy training. It was soon realized that the only thing African-Americans shared with local South Africans was their skin color.

Numerous individuals in the South African government see the US as a white country that repressed its own blacks for centuries (although this has changed with the election of Obama), an ally of the old apartheid state and was against African liberation struggles. They remember that the US aligned with the apartheid government in supporting UNITA guerrilla fighters in Angola. Many ANC officials from that era simply remember America as the enemy and therefore have been skeptical of US-South African relations since 1994 (Source One 2007).

### **8.5 Friendship to hostility**

Analyzing the relationship as a whole, we see a change from hostility during apartheid to nearing friendship during Clinton Administration then slowly moving back to near hostility from before the Iraq war up until the middle to end of 2008. The stabilizing factors of society contact, bilateral commissions and diplomatic ritual combined with affects of asymmetry on the relationship will play a sizeable role of whether or not the situation does convert to hostility. However, in order for this to happen, Womack predicts this would usually require an incident that is taken as an affront to the America's status, honor and power such as the seizure of American hostages in Iran or due to the reframing of relations with South Africa as part of some larger crisis worthy of America's attention, such as the American claim of Cuban and Soviet presence in Nicaragua in the early 1980s.

Figure 8.1 below provides a summary of the crucial issues in the relationship and whether they acted as a positive or negative force. This was done utilizing the information provided in chapters four through seven. The farther the topic is listed to the left, the more positive it was. It is the exact opposite for the negative topics (to the right), or the issues causing damage to the



general relationship. Some particular issues were seen as neither ‘completely’ positive nor negative (ie Security and the WOT, China in Africa), and are therefore placed near the middle of the chart.

**Figure 8.1 Positive and negative factors of the US-South African bilateral relationship at the end of 2008**

<i><b>Positive</b></i>	<i><b>Negative</b></i>
Bilateral Trade	SACU-US FTA
People to People Relations	Relations in Multilateral Institutions
Both Constitutional Democracies	Friends vs. Interests (Pariah etc)
BNC/BCF/ Positive Relationship w/ Leaders	Struggle Against Apartheid
Democracy Promotion	AFRICOM
African Prosperity (NEPAD, SADC etc)	Israel/Palestine
Military Cooperation (ACOTA etc)	Zimbabwe
Security & WOT	China in Africa
HIV/AIDS	

Source: constructed by the author

## 5. Summary

Asymmetry theory has assisted in providing further explanations in certain situations such as the negotiation and collapse of the SACU-US FTA, which was one of the best examples of how asymmetry can and did play a large role in an essential area of cooperation in the US-South Africa bilateral relationship. The theory also proved beneficial in explaining why AFRICOM became such a concern between the two countries, especially from the South African perspective.

The theory provided a beneficial tool in examining the reality of managing the relationship between the US and South Africa. The theory enabled one to make sense of large amount of data and analysis presented in the previous chapters. It highlighted the importance of each individual topic such as Zimbabwe and the WOT, as well as giving a better understanding of how these issues combined could affect the overall relationship. It also gave consideration and showed the significance of state behavior in a multilateral setting in addition to a bilateral one.

Overall, it appears asymmetry theory is flexible enough to account for almost every outcome and proves itself useful in its ability to clarify and shed light on the relationship.

If it wasn't for the stabilizing factors of society contact, bilateral commissions and diplomatic ritual, combined with agreements on key economic and security issues, the relationship could have been in far worse shape then it was at the end of 2008. Nevertheless, the next chapter presents further concluding remarks regarding the theory and US-South Africa relations as a whole.

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## 9. CONCLUSION

### 1. Introduction

US-South African relations are now at a critical juncture. Using Nacerodien's analogy<sup>56</sup>, South Africa's foreign policy 'house' is nearly complete. The ANC-led government has slowly moved from being a liberation movement to cementing concrete foreign policy principles and guidelines. This has come at a time where the Bush Administration contributed more resources and accomplished more for Africa than any other president in US history. Ironically, as Bush made the continent a centerpiece of his foreign policy agenda, America's relations with the perceived regional leader and continental power in South Africa slowly deteriorated. This was mainly due to differences regarding issues that were highlighted as being some of the most important such as Zimbabwe, HIV/AIDS and others.

The US Department of State (2008b) writes: 'since the abolition of apartheid and democratic elections of April 1994, the United States has enjoyed an excellent bilateral relationship with South Africa.' Foreign policy analysts understand that by the US using this term they are being diplomatic. However, the fact of the matter is that the 'true' status of relationship at the end of 2008 was somewhat different than as described by the State Department. This is why it was imperative for the misperceptions and disagreements to be analyzed in order for both countries to fully grasp where the relationship stands and to make sure it does decline to a level of hostility. Moreover, the US and South Africa must be able to put

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<sup>56</sup> Nacerodien (2008) said the best way to describe the transition between the apartheid government foreign policy to the post-1994 situation (ie diplomatic relations with 20-30 countries to over 100) it is 'like renovating a house while living in it.'

aside their differences in the future as the relationship is of dire importance to not only both countries, but to Africa and the rest of the world as well.

This final chapter will first revisit the research questions raised about US and South African foreign policy and highlight the main topical attributes to the bilateral relationship. Following this is a brief overview of what was uncovered regarding self-perception in American and South African foreign policy terms, which assisted in the relational analysis in chapters four through seven. Lastly, and most importantly, this chapter will address the remaining research questions on asymmetry theory.

## **2. Research questions revisited**

There were many questions that this thesis sought to answer. For example, who played a large role in each country's foreign policy making and did it have an impact on US-South Africa relations during the time period? By using foreign policy analysis this thesis was able to uncover that vice-presidents Gore and Mbeki had a substantial role in foreign policy making during the Mandela and Clinton years. This did not change when Mbeki was elected president. In fact, the locus of South African foreign policy shifted away from the DFA towards the presidency. Bush, who also had a large role in foreign policy by forging his own doctrine and making drastic changes, replaced Clinton. Members of both countries' governments complained about Bush and Mbeki's inner circles.

These details had an effect on how the US-South African relationship evolved or changed from 1994 to 2008, which was related the second and third research questions. The BNC run by Gore and Mbeki was a significant factor. The commission helped downplay certain issues in some instances, or helped provide clarification in others. The BNC is discussed in detail below. However, Mbeki himself had a personal role in some of the key issues such as HIV/AIDS, the

African Renaissance, diplomacy over war, and raising South Africa's stature in the global arena. This helped put his country on a 'collision course' with Bush's 'you are with us or against us' type policies.

The main issues identified as being a 'negative' hindrance in the relationship for all or most of the time period the relationship were HIV/AIDS, Zimbabwe, AFRICOM, the SACU-US FTA, relations in multilateral institutions, and bilateral relations with certain countries including America with Israel and South Africa with Iran, amongst others. The HIV/AIDS issue did eventually move more to the positive side after pressure was put on Mbeki to back out of the limelight. Other topics shown to have a positive impact on the relationship included bilateral trade, cooperation in the security/military realms, and the shared interest in the worldwide promotion of democracy.

### **3. Self-perception**

An additional element of this study was to look not only at the perception of the other, but also the self-perception of each state. Analyzing one's self perception is key not only in international relations, but in all relationships. More importantly, this analysis enabled us to highlight any benefits or flaws in asymmetry theory due to the greater understanding of the bilateral relationship. The next two sub-sections provide a brief summary of both country's self-perception when it comes to foreign policy.

#### **3.1 America's self-perception**

The US is a superpower. It is a politically stable nation with the world's largest economy and military spender and the third largest country by population and land coverage. Their geopolitical affairs has also been referred to as US foreign policy exceptionalism in which the US self-image is of an exceptionally good nation that wants to spread its democratic values with

the rest of the world, which is inherently worthy of support by all. Although the US believes itself to be a unique country and who comprehend their true power around the globe, there lies a fundamental discomfort that the US has with being a 'full blown' empire. In the past, lobby groups, public opinion, certain individuals and other causes have had a large influence on how, when, where and why the US exercises its power.

Research uncovered that the purpose or 'mission statement' of US foreign policy is to create a more secure, prosperous and democratic world for the benefit of the American people. Ultimately however, 'national interest' in regards to foreign policy is defined as whatever policy makers say it is under the circumstance at any given time. During most of the Clinton Administration, Clinton was too keen to let domestic influences affect his foreign policy focus. Even centrists found him wanting, deriding his foreign policy as 'social work' that is too easily swayed by ethnic lobbies, public opinion polls, and media buzz. In the aftermath of both Somalia and Rwanda, American legislators had little incentive to view Africa as anything other than a continent of chaos and decline. This helped explain the relative lack of commitment and money to Africa despite a lot of talk from Clinton. This also assisted in determining the true motives behind various initiatives like the ACRI.

Moreover, if it wasn't for private lobbying elements interested in African issues coming together to pressure the Clinton Administration to change course regarding Africa, Clinton and his key foreign policy individuals may never have implemented economic reform and democracy promotion in Africa such as AGOA. However, it was uncovered that Clinton focused heavily on the economics and the cause of democracy mainly because he felt this supported US national security and America's economic goals in the wider international system (Cox 2000). Clinton

strongly believed that US security and strength was dependent upon its presence in the global economy.

After 9/11, Bush and his Administration felt the psychological shock of America's vulnerability and began intense national introspection and profound change to self-perceptions. This was combined with the fact that many of Bush's closest advisors leaned towards neoconservatism, where they have devotion to promoting democracy but that this often requires force thus not relying on international treaties alone. Spreading America's positive image of itself as the democratic hope of the world was part of the mission. They felt their goal to help spread democratic values would help defeat terrorism.

### **3.2 South Africa's self-perception**

Due to the atrocities committed during apartheid, South Africans and the ANC have had a similar sense of exceptionalism to that of the US. Nevertheless, the ANC faced the enormous challenge of transforming from a revolutionary movement in exile to a governing party. Both Mandela and Mbeki felt they should use their government, this exceptionalism, and their strong loyalty towards Africa to benefit South Africa and the various countries in the Southern African region. The two presidents followed various African traditions like ubuntu, which puts the African collective over the individual and a preference for persuasion over coercion. This is why reaching a decision was often seen as maddeningly slow, but when a decision was taken, it would hold. Like ubuntu, Mandela's prevalent approach to foreign policy was through diplomacy. He assisted in solving other countries conflicts and indeed he did use his saint like persona in places like Zaire and in issues such as the Lockerbie bombing. Even after his presidential term ended, he was still busy pursuing peace in various nations around the globe. Mandela indeed adopted this principle of universality that encompassed universal liberal ideals



and human rights. In fact, the DFA's 2003/04 annual report continued with one foreign policy guideline that was in line with Mandela's actions: Pursue friendly relations with all peoples and nations of the world.

South Africa struggled to balance their alignment with the rest of Africa during this time, serving as the 'gateway' on the continent between the Global North and South and trying to align themselves more closely with other regional powers such as India and Brazil. They desperately wanted to be viewed by the rest of the Southern Africa neighborhood as part of the overall group. However they saw themselves as the leader and promoter of a stable, prosperous and democratic Africa, which in turn carried certain roles and responsibilities. This task became even more difficult during Mbeki's presidency as he slowly tried to raise South Africa's leadership level from Africa to the status of larger and more powerful nations like China. The African Renaissance was part of this goal because Mbeki knew that South Africa could not by itself succeed in its plans to become a global player if it remained surrounded by poor undeveloped countries. In addition, Mbeki saw himself as an unofficial spokesman for Africa.

South Africa was slowly reorganizing and cementing its foreign policy while these events were taking place, but Mbeki was the key individual that helped South Africa to 'walk on two legs' in its foreign policy. He placed a large emphasis on economic and governance issues in Africa. It was in South Africa's key national interest to promote these two avenues for a basis for development. This would advance the interests of South Africa groups dealing with economic relations throughout Africa and will help mitigate the possible negative effects to South Africa's economy.

On the world stage, analysts believe Mbeki had embraced a pragmatic foreign policy driven as much by national interest as by humanitarian principle. Mbeki and Mandela continued

relations with countries that assisted the ANC during the struggle against apartheid despite the poor human rights records of many. They also used these relations to help balance power on the world stage, which has been a goal of South Africa's since 1994; they have also been pursuing a permanent seat at the UNSC. Looking at alliances like IBSA, NAM, and BRIC in the broader context of the international system, South Africa's foreign policy behavior could be seen as a countervailing force to the current hierarchy of the global order.

Besides South Africa's military role in peacekeeping and other missions, it still relied heavily on diplomacy during Mbeki's presidency. South African leadership would continuously attempt to bring rival groups together to end conflict and promote peace in various African countries and throughout the world. As mentioned earlier, Mbeki was by far the most important entity when it came to South African foreign policy. He established himself as almost a one-man foreign policy think-tank, but after analyzing the figures in chapter eight, it was clear that his worldview and role perception far exceeded the relative global power status of his country.

Comparing South Africa to Africa as a whole, their GDP was equivalent to nearly one third of the African GDP on a purchasing power parity (PPP) basis and to 38 percent of African nominal GDP at market exchange rate in 2003. However, on the global stage, as Vale and Taylor (1999) pointed out: South Africa is 'just another country.' It is a relatively small nation in global terms, but is an emerging middle power whose growth may be hindered by issues such as unemployment, education and health care.

#### **4. Asymmetry theory and the study of the US-South Africa relationship**

It was important that the earlier research questions be answered and the self-perception highlighted in order for this thesis to concentrate on asymmetry theory. In order to explain and

answer the remaining research questions of this thesis, this section will provide a final breakdown of the theory and of each of its sections.

As stated at the outset of this study, the current time period offers a remarkable opportunity to study perspective and differences in perception in the conduct of international relations. Largely ignored in the international relations theoretical literature has been the relations of states of greatly different capabilities, especially a study focused on a global hegemon [the US] and a regional leader [South Africa]. In this particular situation, asymmetry theory's fundamentally different analytic approach from contemporary international relations theory in the West, and especially in the US, appeared to be a new, refreshing and insightful way of analyzing bilateral relations. Despite its similarities to many western international relations theories, asymmetry theory begins from a different starting point and focuses on the fact that the bilateral relationship is two separate sub-relationships with both sides having a different perspective. This was important because the author recognized that the few works on US-South African relations in the post-apartheid era, most of which were written by South Africans and leaned towards the South African perspective, often focused their attention through the lens of either realist **or** liberal international relations theory.

The sub-sections below entail breaking down each precept of the theory to indicate how and why they have been successful or failed to assist in understanding this relationship between the US and South Africa and to show whether asymmetry theory is valid or not. This is followed by a brief summary based on these discussions to elucidate the value or non value of the theory.

#### **4.1 Inattention and overattention**

South Africa had to walk a tightrope with its relationship with the US. As indicated by an asymmetric relationship between a global and regional leader, the latter has to balance their

regional role with the relationship with the global power. South Africans on the one hand want American support, but at the same time they do not want to be perceived as a regional hegemon closely linked to the US and interfering in a sovereign nations business; or even worse, dictating them how to act. Therefore, South Africa appeared to be reluctant to be seen too much in Washington's company. This feeling was raised due to the centrality of attention it has with its neighboring and regional countries due to their proximity to South Africa.

The WOT is probably the best example of South Africa's balancing act. South Africa knew all too well that in order to continue to receive the full support of the US and its allies in its initiatives like NEPAD, it needed to assist in the fight against terrorism. Nevertheless, South Africa believed there are boundaries that should not be crossed in the WOT. This is a strong belief because of the ANC previously being labeled a terrorist organization. However, they clearly aligned themselves more on the side of the US in this global war than not.

There were numerous instances of 'shouting' matches between the two countries despite this alignment. Two major examples include the Iraq War and Zimbabwe. Negative remarks are dangerous in an asymmetric bilateral relationship because as the theory explains, all of the 'pushing and shoving' can result in characteristic misperceptions, where South Africa is likely to become paranoid toward the US. These remarks are one of the contributing factors of why the bilateral relationship slowly worsened. However, one positive aspect of the public remarks made against each other was that it helped create the perception throughout Africa and the rest of the world that South Africa is not a puppet of the US. As explained in previous chapters, Africa's perception of South Africa was of the utmost importance during Mbeki's presidency because of the weight he put on African unity. Furthermore, South African ambassador to the US Nhalpo

and South Africa's ambassador to the UN Kumalo, rarely completed a speech or media briefing without referring to the importance of acting in the best interest of Africa.

Again, asymmetry theory predicts that the new bilateral relationship would affect the structure of regional relations and it did in this case. USAID has worked with the SADC Secretariat since 1999, and signed agreements funding regional programs and/or technical assistance including advisors to the Secretariat and Ministers of Trade. Since 2000, USAID provided over US\$4.5 billion to SADC countries for bilateral and regional programs, HIV/AIDS, and food aid (Brown, R. 2007). This amount does not include disaster assistance (ie US\$137 million provided to Mozambique following the floods of 2000-2001). Of that total, US\$842 million was provided to South Africa (Brown, R. 2007). This positive US relationship with regional entities (ie SADC) has added to the stability of the US-South Africa relations.

#### **4.2 Deference and autonomy**

Womack (2006a:213) states: 'The new context of normalization is accepted as a continuing reality, and pursuit of opportunities displaces hedging.' Normalization is supposed to then evolve into normalcy, which Womack proclaims might be called 'mature asymmetry' because it is grounded in a learning experience and it has the capacity to be long term and stable. However, in mature asymmetry, the deference of South Africa to the US and America's acknowledgment of South Africa's autonomy should become embedded in mutual expectations. This has not taken place in recent years. Regarding the latter, this was evident by the early to mid stages of AFRICOM and numerous South African votes in the UNGA.

The deference of South Africa to the US has been an issue since 1994 although it escalated vehemently during Mbeki's time in office. Mandela almost continuously told Clinton that the US would not dictate who South Africa was friends with. With Mbeki, his focus

expanded from Africa to the developing world. He wanted his country to aspire to an ever-greater role as a player on the world stage. As this occurred, the resentment to US power in the global arena grew. In fact, research showed there were relatively few disagreements that concerned strictly the US and South Africa (ie HIV/AIDS), but what both the US and South Africa did abroad hurt the bilateral relationship; Iraq, Israel/Palestine and Iran. Analysis of the UNGA voting records cemented that finding.

#### **4.3 Misperception, routinization and neutralization**

Using Womack's terminology, the normalization that took place between the US and South Africa after the 1994 elections was profoundly important. The commitment of funding and the establishment of the BNC was a bold move beyond hostile stalemate. Shortly after these important events, Gore was asked at a meeting in Cape Town why the Clinton Administration placed so much importance on South Africa. He responded:

First, we are on the same journey, trying to create a non-racial democracy with justice and economic opportunity for everyone regardless of gender, religion or ethnic origin. If South Africa succeeds, it will have a global impact (by demonstrating a model of community that works for all its citizens), Second, if South Africa succeeds economically, it will not only create a model for development, but it will be a beacon of hope for the whole continent. A strong South African economy could become the engine of growth, which powers other countries, especially in Southern Africa (Joseph 1997).

However, the relationship between the ANC and the US prior to the 1994 elections was full of mixed feelings and an almost constant skepticism of each other, especially the fact that the State Department labeled the ANC a terrorist group until the organization was legalized and became a prominent political party in 1990. These feelings did not miraculously disappear after 1994. Womack (2006a:212) explains that normalization is a process rather than an event. The relationship was stable, but the bullying and paranoia continued over certain issues such as South Africa's relations with pariah states and the long dispute with pharmaceutical companies, but under a general flag of truce.

Womack (2006:212) writes: ‘Eventually, however, memories of hostility fade and new challenges are faced together.’ This was partly true with US and South Africa because the memories of the apartheid era were still alive in many South African government officials’ minds because they personally fought against the apartheid government. They had the perception of the US being more hurtful than helpful during that chaotic time. It is self-evident for a country where the anti-hegemonic feelings against a superpower such as the US still run deep within both liberation and National Party factions.

During Clinton’s years, he provided a lot of talk and very little action when it came to Africa. This was balanced by the fact that South Africa was still finding its feet with its foreign policy and that many misperceptions could be cleared up by the BNC. No US vice president in history and no domestic cabinet secretaries have ever devoted as much time to the well-being of another country as these officials had committed to South Africa (Joseph 1997). Nearly half of the US cabinet was present at the 1999 BNC meeting in Cape Town, which was unheard of (Source Ten 2008). Moreover, the BNC provided a vehicle for speedy communication between government officials who might not normally speak directly to each other. Joseph (1997) writes: ‘When there is a problem or an opportunity in agriculture, trade or natural resources, for example, the South African minister involved can simply pick up the telephone and call his US counterpart directly because of the relationship of friendship and respect that has been established through the Commission.’

Despite the BNC being downgraded and its resulting negative effects, the economic relationship grew tremendously in the last few years of the Bush/Mbeki presidencies. Table 4.1 presented in chapter four showed that US exports grew from US\$2.1 billion in 1994 to almost

US\$6.5 billion in 2008. More impressively, US imports from South Africa grew from just over US\$2 billion in 1994 to around US\$10 billion in 2008.

#### **4.4 Diplomatic ritual**

One fundamental aspect in asymmetric modalities is leadership. Because asymmetry is not a problem to be solved but rather a situation to be managed, it was important that good relations were maintained between Clinton and Mandela, Gore and Mbeki, and Mbeki and Bush. According to Womack (2006a:250), provocative behavior by one side can lead to misinterpretation and thus escalating behavior on the other side, and that in turn can start a cycle of negative complementarity. Despite several outbursts by Mandela and Mbeki, this did not occur in part because of the good relations between leaders. In fact, the leadership relations were essential in creating the atmosphere for peaceful relations and in securing the benefits of cooperation. There were many examples of the specific effects of leadership on US-South African relations. Clinton's visit to South Africa in 1998 and remarks of admiration by both leaders helped cool the air during a time of numerous disagreements. In fact, Clinton and Mandela at a minimum had much more than a head of state relationship, and still do.

Bush's visit in 2003 came at an equally crucial time with the Iraq war, ICC, HIV/AIDS and Zimbabwe all being issues that needed resolving. Moreover, one cannot diminish the extensive amount of official and non-official visits by Mandela, Mbeki and other South African officials to the US, and its positive affects on the relationship. For example, Mbeki visiting the US to make an appearance at President Reagan's funeral in June 2004 (Mbeki & Marks 2004) said a lot.



#### **4.5 Societies and history**

Another stabilizing factor has been the positive people-to-people relations between the US and South Africa. The 14-person congressional delegation accompanied by a 21-person delegation from the Washington D.C.-based Faith and Politics Institute that visited South Africa in 2003 showed the shared religious values of the two countries. The vast number of US businesses, collaboration between educational institutions and South African culture being very similar to US culture has encouraged a spirit that has continued on to today, thus providing a key contributor in promoting a stable relationship.

#### **4.6 Friendship to hostility**

Numerous disagreements and misperceptions due to the structural affects of asymmetry have arisen during the time period. Chapters four through seven highlighted those issues. However, due to factors such as routinization, diplomatic ritual, and societies and history, the US-South African relationship has slowly moved to one of normalcy instead of war.

Womack (2006a:223) explains that normalcy does not have a clear and eventful beginning, but is marked by the adjustment of both parties to an ongoing and stable framework for the relationship. Several key events have indicated that this process has indeed taken place. First, after the beginning of the Iraq War in 2003 and a fierce display of verbal attacks by South African officials, both sides publicly stated that the war would not damage the multi-sided US-South African relations. Second, in July 2004, US Ambassador Hume revealed that defense relations between the two countries had been normalized. Thirdly, South African acting deputy director-general Gert Grobler stated in September 2007 that South Africa's relations with the US have reached a point where the two countries can 'agree to disagree' while still working together on common programs. However, Grobler went on to say this did not imply that differences of

opinion in certain areas and that the relationship was a constructive one, but one that remains a complicated and complex one that the two countries will have to work on all the time.

That is the essence of normalcy; it is not perfect. Problems are expected to continue, and crises will emerge. But as Womack reveals: ‘both sides commit themselves to the expectation that the mutual benefit of the relationship outweighs its negative consequences and that differences can be handled within a peaceful framework (2006a:223).’ The evolution from normalization to normalcy also brought with it the end of serious disagreements. The best examples are the Syria arms sale confrontation, the Armscor case, disputes over HIV/AIDS and the passing of the Anti-apartheid Visa Bill law.

Various American and South African interests also coincide with another, which has helped improve the relationship and will continue to do so in the future. There is a fundamental ideological resonance between the two countries. They stand together to change political regimes to democratic systems and to uphold human rights. Meanwhile they are both committed to internal, regional and global economic growth. Womack (2006a:253) states: ‘Not only do these commitments create a common set of priorities, but they direct diplomatic attention away from zero-sum confrontations and toward mutually beneficial cooperation.’

The post-9/11 issue of global terrorism is a major concern for both countries, as South Africa had previous problems with ethnic separatists such as PAGAD. Furthermore, the WOT and its goal of making sure Africa does not become a safe haven for terrorists overlaps with the South Africa’s goal of peace and prosperity in Africa by helping to create a safe environment for foreign investment. The US also supports South Africa’s vision of an African Renaissance. They want to work with South Africa to reverse the poor image of Africa and assist in development activities such as NEPAD.

It was pointed out earlier chapters that during the first decade of the new South Africa, the US over was this country's largest bilateral partner, contributing nearly five billion Rand between 1994 and 2003 (Brown, R. 2007). In 2006 alone, the Washington provided around 4.6 billion Rand in all categories of foreign aid and assistance to South Africa – for public health, Peace Corps, Law Enforcement and Rule of Law assistance, human capacity building, trade development, economic policy capacity building, military-to-military initiatives, good governance, customs and immigration cooperation, NGO and Self Help grants, anti-narcotics efforts, cultural and educational exchanges, among others (Brown, R. 2007). The bilateral partnership in combating HIV/AIDS has also grown stronger in the past few years with Mbeki slowly and eventually totally disengaging from the debate. In 2008, US funding for HIV/AIDS programs in South Africa came close to matching the South African government's own budget for dealing with the epidemic and the US House of Representatives had approved a nearly US\$50 billion aid package to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS in the developing world over the next five years

Asymmetry theory maintains that asymmetry continues to affect the relationship, but both sides become practiced in handling the perspective and interests of the other. Asymmetry theory predicts that only an event that would redefine the situation as novel could create the conditions for a serious crisis. But again, America is more powerful than the South Africa, in the sense of having greater capabilities, and the disparity of capabilities shapes the difference of interests in the relationship. However, according to Womack (2006a:235) normalcy is a negotiated relationship, not an imposed one. Negotiation implies different interests and perspectives as evident in chapter eight. Successful negotiation involves reaching a consensus that is not necessarily identical to the interests and perspective of either the US or South Africa, but the

outcome must be consensual. A coercive act by either country would challenge the basis of normalcy.

#### **4.7 Value of asymmetry theory**

Asymmetry theory arose out of Womack's insights of China and Vietnam during numerous trips he made to both countries. Womack soon realized that the great capacities between two countries created an asymmetric framework for the relationship that shaped every aspect and every phase. As such, it was well-suited to examining foreign policy in the international political arena in a time where most international relationships are asymmetric, including the US and South Africa. Womack's assumption that most asymmetric relationships are negotiated and not simply dictated by the stronger side was indeed proven correct. However, the real value of asymmetry theory has proven itself in its illumination of the dynamics of the relationship.

The theory focuses on analyzing the relationship as perceived differently by each side. Given those regional powers by definition face asymmetric relations from the strong side within their regions and from the weak side in a broader context, analysis of asymmetry was appropriate. It helped shed light on how South Africa's commitment to Africa and its experiences with its neighbors played a role in its relations with the US. This included the problems associated with the SACU-US FTA negotiations. Asymmetry theory proclaims that although regions are becoming more open because every state has greater exposure to global interactions, neighboring states remain the points of most intense contact. This helped explain the importance of Zimbabwe to South Africa and why it was necessary for them to take the lead in handling the situation themselves.

Asymmetry theory also assisted in providing further explanations in certain situations. For instance, an outsider examining AFRICOM might perceive the only reason why Africa was relatively hostile about the idea of a US military base in Africa was because of how the US and the USSR used the continent during the Cold War. However, asymmetry theory helped shine light on the fact that South Africa strives for acknowledgment of autonomy. Undoubtedly this factor does play a significant role as the theory pointed out.

Taken together with the context of the self-perception of each state and the subsequent historical, national, regional, and global foreign policy analysis of US-South African foreign policy, the theory provided a useful tool in examining the reality of managing the relationship between the US and South Africa.

One shortfall found with asymmetry theory is that it tends to overlook personalities. For example, using the theory only, it would be hard to understand the HIV/AIDS crisis in the bilateral relationship because one would not be aware Mbeki's personal demons and how it shaped the outcome. The theory would not explain Mbeki's distaste for large multi-national drug companies and Western imperialist powers. It would not explain that it was never the government of South Africa or Mbeki's political party the ANC that denied the link between HIV and AIDS or denied giving South African citizens antiretroviral drugs. It was Mbeki; and it is estimated that more than 330,000 people died prematurely from HIV/AIDS between 2000 and 2005 due to his [and therefore his government's] obstruction of lifesaving treatment, and at least 35,000 babies were born with HIV infections that could have been prevented (Roeder 2009:26).

Mbeki's stance on the topic greatly affected not only government to government relations, but relations with NGOs, churches and others as well. Again, this would be almost impossible to comprehend using asymmetry theory alone.

Regardless, analysis utilizing asymmetry theory as an aid has indeed proved value in understanding the positive and negative factors that has helped create a relatively stable relationship despite the disparities of the country's sizes and the misperceptions created by the asymmetry itself.

## **5. The likely direction of the US-South Africa relationship**

The US-South African relationship has reached a level of normalcy, but it is still a relatively young relationship between the ANC-led government and Washington. Historical tendencies will continue to play a role in this regard. What this means in practice will be tested. An ANC-led government, with many individuals still skeptical of US foreign policy, will continue to damper the relationship in one way or another. With Mbeki no longer president, this could help remove what a US government official under the Bush Administration referred to as 'a political overhang with everything we did (Source Seven 2008).' Source Nine (2008) feels it is hard to predict because 'there are some Americans who are really mad with South Africa.'

The most foreseeable aspect of the future is that the relationship between the US and South Africa will remain asymmetric. The demographic and economic disparities outlined in chapter eight will remain roughly the same regardless of relative rates of growth, or even economic or political turmoil. In the immediate future, both countries will likely spend much more time of handling domestic issues than foreign policy issues because of the global economic recession. Due to this and other factors, the US has begun to reduce aid to various countries including South Africa to help confront these challenges. There is also the issue of presidential politics that Clinton was so apparently aware of; a first term president always wants a second term. The same can be said of South Africa who needs to confront the growing domestic issues

of HIV/AIDS, xenophobia, unemployment, crime and the lack of the intellectual and skills resources needed to realize the African Renaissance.

This focus on domestic issues can prove harmful to US-South African relations if America becomes less attentive to South Africa. The negative effects of asymmetry can develop if the relationship is not properly managed. Nonetheless, South Africa has become the regional leader in Africa and the US perceives them as the key component in regional relations that represents strategic expectations of mutual cooperative interaction. Security issues will always play a part in this, but economic issues will grow. For example, although the SACU has not yet reached its end goal of a full FTA, this is likely to occur in the near future. Bilateral trade is also likely to expand between the two countries, as it has been growing in recent years. This positive economic relationship satisfies numerous foreign policy concerns, as well as appeasing the domestic constituents of both countries.

What also appears likely is that with the end of South Africa on the UNSC and if the Zimbabwe is resolved, disagreements will be much less public and discussed behind closed doors. With negotiation out of the spotlight, the US and South Africa will favor the resolution of as many issues as possible; which was a large positive factor of the BNC.

Unfortunately, it seems likely South Africa's activities as a regional power and its perceived rise to the top of the Global South, and its goal of aligning with the BRIC countries will continue to upset its bilateral relationship with the US. Among the group of leaders in the Global South, South Africa is the one of the most openly critical of US foreign policy, and it wants to be perceived that way by the rest of Africa. If America's relations with the rest of Africa improve as the memories of colonialism diminish, this will prove a positive factor in US-South African relations. However, the US should be careful not to impose on South Africa's

autonomy. One way this could happen is if US-Kenyan relations improve because of Obama's roots to such an extent that South Africa perceives this a threat. This could be exasperated with the departure of Mbeki and his focus on Africa and if Zuma with his leftist roots turns his focus inward. An important factor in any scenario is the regional pattern of stable bilateral relations where a multilateral organization of the smaller states such as SADC can negotiate with the US on a more equal footing. Then each participant has a greater confidence in its autonomy.

On the global stage, the issue of unilateralism vs. multilateralism will continue to play in a role in US-South African relations. The Bush Administration was blunt about not using multilateral organizations that went against America's interests. The revoking of military funding due to the ICC and the Iraq war were the two best examples of this. South Africa resents these types of action as well as the fact that they appear to use UNSC veto power for their own advantage. There is a sense of a 'new colonialism' in the world, which South Africa wants to end. They perceive the US as causing unnecessary mayhem in a delicately balanced world. Reform of the UNSC is a main step in changing this. South Africa's foreign policy goal of reforming international organizations to include the developing world could take decades to achieve, but South Africa and other developing countries at this moment in time feel the whole planet will benefit if the US used multilateral institutions to address global challenges instead of what is often perceived as aggressive, militaristic unilateral power. If America chooses the latter, which is unlikely under an Obama Administration, it is likely South African officials will continue to publicly object to US foreign policy actions. America should choose the former and one avenue the author can see the two working closely together on is climate change.

South Africa is expected to continue making more alliances outside of Africa similar to IBSA. They will also improve its bilateral relations with other countries such as China and



Russia. The Sino-South African binational commission formed in 2004 is a clear indication that both countries plan further economic and political cooperation. The effort of South Africa to improve ties to China is not an action against the US, nor actions directly against US interests, nor actions that America itself would disapprove of. However, South Africa must demonstrate to the US that this relationship is not to 'spite' them but that this will be beneficial to South Africa's economic growth and the economic future of Africa. Nevertheless, with asymmetry theory, South Africa may see their growing relationship with China as providing a comfort buffer with its relations with the US. From America's perspective, they might see this growing friendship as similar to the balancing of smaller states against larger ones in order to maintain a 'balance of power.' This will not be a case of 'balancing against,' but rather 'balancing with,' as Womack (2006a:235) describes it.

A US government official mentioned that a substantial difference in US and South African foreign policy is that South Africa has friends and the US has interests (Source Four 2008). However, one South African source mentioned that the same can be said of the US; that they have friends such as Israel and the UK. He recalled the South African government feeling a strong sense of resentment before and after the Iraq War because of America's friends or 'the coalition of the willing' (Source Six 2008). Whose both countries 'friends' are (i.e US and Israel, South Africa and Iran) will be a standing bilateral topic that is unlikely to be resolved, but there is no inherent reason for the disagreement to produce an acute crisis. In many instances like Cuba, the US and South Africa have agreed to disagree. Regardless, if South Africa's relations with a so-called 'friend' threaten America's interests (ie economic or security) or vice versa, this can quickly escalate to a crisis. Iran and their quest for nuclear energy showed the US and South Africa how this might happen.

With most situations, there is a good and bad side. With America seeing a South Africa trying to be friends with all countries in the world, as well as their history of negotiation and diplomacy, the US could and should coordinate closely with South Africa in places like Palestine and with organizations such as Hamas. Pretoria is a leading force in the NAM and the G-77 with close political and economic ties with countries like Iran. In this sense, it is one of the few countries that can play an independent and unbiased role. However, the problem of asymmetry comes to play if the US is less attentive to South Africa, they will simply perceive South Africa's talking to organizations like Hamas as a country supporting an enemy of the US. Overall, if peace is eventually reached in places like Israel and Palestine, this will undoubtedly lead to an improvement in US-South African relations.

In the end, US-South African normalcy rests on a solid foundation of people to people relations, democratic values, the respect for human rights and open markets, leadership and the hope of a peaceful and prosperous African continent. Regardless of normalcy and its foundation, South Africa will sleep with its US eye open. Other strategic issues like mineral resources and sea lines of communication will grow in concern as the normalcy era continues. Womack (2006a:246) explains that normalized asymmetry does not imply a completely harmonious relationship but rather a stable one based on the general expectation of mutual benefit. More importantly, the longer a peaceful relationship continues the more stable it is likely to be. Sadly, the problem of different interests and differently perceptions will not disappear. Normalcy does not solve the problem of asymmetry, according to Womack (2006a:256), it merely provides the patterns for managing an asymmetric relationship for mutual benefit. The asymmetric bilateral relationship of the US and South Africa will remain a negotiated relationship. As the theory

predicts, the increased economic, political, and societal interactions have created and will continue to create new common interests, but they also create new frictions.

Differences of perception will continuously occur, and the US will have the constant temptation to nudge South Africa into compliance with its wishes. 'The capacity of normalcy to neutralize and negotiate differences, and to contain crises through diplomatic ritual and the overall momentum of the relationship, is the secret of its stability,' Womack writes (2006a:256). Managing the relationship also depends of the beliefs and perceptions of the leaders who are most intimately involved in each country's foreign policy. There were large contrasts between the Clinton and Bush Administrations, which greatly affected US-South African relations. And in this regard, it has to predict how well the relationship will be managed without knowing all the individuals who will be part of this difficult role in the future.

Nevertheless, perhaps former US Ambassador Bost (2007) described the future of US-South African relations best when he wrote:

South Africa and the United States can work together to resolve humanitarian crises when they erupt, as has happened in the Darfur region of Sudan. We can work together to fight the scourge of terrorism. We can work together to promote democracy. And we can work together to foster...And the United States fully understands that South Africa, as the regional economic and political power, is best positioned to take the lead in that [African] Renaissance. Truly, there is no better hope for a brighter future for Africa than a stable, prosperous South Africa.

## **6. Future research**

A study such as this produces a number of ideas for research, which can enhance the contribution made thus far. The application of Womack's asymmetry theory might be repeated in other studies, such as between the US and other key African states (ie Nigeria or Kenya) or regional powers on other continents. The current global matrix includes other significant global actors such as Europe and China, as well as marginal and extra-regional actors like Iran for India

or Nigeria for South Africa. Using asymmetry theory can contribute to a better understanding of these relationships; of US foreign policy and can add further data to the usefulness of the theory.

Addressing America's perception of their bilateral relations with certain countries by analyzing their choice of ambassador to that country would be a thoughtful exercise to establish. For example, it became clear that the quality level in America's choice to serve as ambassador to South Africa diminished during the Bush Administration. Ambassador Frazer was a highly respected intellectual with close connections to Condoleezza Rice and Bush himself. Prior to joining the Bush Administration, Dr. Frazer taught public policy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. She also worked as a political-military planner with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and as Director for African Affairs at the NSC, during her time as a Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow. Eric Bost replaced Ambassador Frazer in 2006 that previously served as Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services at the US Department of Agriculture and as Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of the Texas Department of Human Services. The difference between the two is clear, but how one would establish a valid and reliable system to analyze the differences between political appointees is a difficult question to answer.

Another subject for future study and one that might build on the study at hand would be an analysis of the importance of the individual on US-South Africa policy. This study attempted to ascertain the individuals who played a leading role not only in their country's foreign policy, but in the US-South African bilateral relationship itself. For example, Mbeki's role in both aspects was massive. Mbeki's US perceived 'paranoia' element of his personality came out on numerous occasions. He was also perceived by many as 'anti-American.' This in turn had a negative effect on the relationship. However, in other instances, we saw Mbeki's behavior as

vital in reassuring America that although South Africa has an independent foreign policy, it will continue to view the US as one of its most critical strategic partners. Mbeki reiterated this dichotomy during the two-day debate on his State of the Nation address at the opening of parliament in 2003. He noted that South Africa had neither the desire nor the intention of becoming enemies of the US (Hughes 2004:178). Mbeki asserted too that despite their differences, South Africa and the US maintained very 'good relations.' Moreover, the relationship could have quickly spiraled out of control if Mbeki himself did not caution in South Africa's opposition to the Iraq war; individuals should not communicate hostility towards the US, which many did. Political psychology would be the best avenue in achieving this goal.

Using this psychological approach in the international political arena could prove extremely useful for not only negotiating, but to assist in keeping a positive relationship between the countries foreign policy leaders, which will greatly contribute to better managing bilateral relations. This is particularly important in countries similar to South Africa where only a limited amount of individuals and groups have a majority say over the country's actions overseas. If the US had a full psychological and historical profile of Mbeki, similar to Gevisser's biography, would some of the disagreements like HIV/AIDS and Zimbabwe been better handled? Would there have been a better understanding of South Africa's stance on Zimbabwe? These are interesting questions that political scientists rarely talk about. It would be interesting for future researchers to uncover this avenue of political psychology that is rarely pursued.

Another subject, and one which might build on the study at hand, would be an analysis of the role the South African media has had on US-South African relations between 1994 and 2008. This thesis did not discuss the media, but it is a general consensus that most Americans have a negative and inaccurate image of Africa, which has become the reality in some people's minds.

Furthermore, members of both the US and South African governments brought up the issue that the South African media can often paint a slanted picture. Moreover, often both countries read comments and quotes by the other and don't have the ability to clarify their meaning or if they are even true. This was most apparent at the UN during 2007 and 2008 as well as with Frazer's comments in the beginning of 2007. US Ambassador Bost (2007) wrote: 'And as I can tell you from personal experience, the [South African] media are independent and lively -- not only does the United States frequently feel the wrath of editorialists but so too does South African officialdom.' But do the media affect US-South African relations in any way?

What affect will take place as ANC officials who fought during apartheid slowly retire from government? Will those negative images and perceptions about the US in Africa that were ingrained in many South African minds from the 1960s to the 1980s disappear or will these perceptions be replaced by more current US foreign policy decisions such as the Iraq War and the WOT in the minds of the new South African diplomats? These ideas also constitute a subject worthy of future research.

Finally, how can US and South African diplomat training be improved? South African government officials talked about how members from the US Embassy in Pretoria rotate every two years (can be extended in certain situations) and when they arrive in South Africa, their knowledge of the true relationship and situation is minimal. Some South African officials have even learnt to tell the Americans what they want to hear when they first arrive and only at the end of their term do the US diplomats realize exactly what he or she was doing at the time. Research into the US State Department and the DFA in regards to training, and bringing about ways to improve their systems, may yield important insights that could improve bilateral relations around the world.

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## **Annexure A**

Original message ----

>Date: Thu, 29 May 2008 00:27:54 -0700 (PDT)

>From: Scott Firsing <[stfirsing@yahoo.com](mailto:stfirsing@yahoo.com)>

>Subject: US SA Relations

>To: [lbwilk@wm.edu](mailto:lbwilk@wm.edu)

>

> Dear Professor Wilkerson,

>

> Good morning. My name is Scott Firsing and I am an  
> American currently living and working as an analyst  
> in South Africa. More importantly, I am a PhD  
> student at the University of South Africa in the  
> Political Science Department and I was hoping you  
> would comment on a few questions regarding my topic.  
> My current thesis title is "Asymmetry in  
> International Politics: US/South African Relations:  
> 1994-2008," which deals mostly with perception and  
> beliefs in foreign policy. I am hoping it will turn  
> into the most comprehensive work on our relations  
> since the birth of the new South Africa. I have  
> spoken to some individuals at the US Embassy in  
> Pretoria and their insight has been very informative  
> and beneficial. However, I still feel my thesis is  
> lacking that overall personal touch from the  
> American perspective mainly due to me being located  
> in South Africa with most one on one interviews  
> being done with South Africans.

>

>

>

> I know you are an extremely busy individual but  
> would greatly appreciate if you could take a few  
> minutes of your time to quickly answer a handful  
> questions that are attached in MS Word format. I  
> believe your insight will prove vital to my thesis  
> and to the US/SA relationship due to the sense of the  
> urgency I am receiving from South Africans who are  
> eager to fix the perceived ever worsening bilateral  
> relationship. If you would like to be used as a  
> confidential source, please let me know in your  
> reply email and your responses will be cited in my  
> work as 'Confidential source #3 from the US  
> revealed...'.  
>

>

>

>

> Thank you very much for your time and I will be in  
> contact upon completion of my work. Enjoy the rest  
> of your day.

>

>

> Best Regards,

>

> Scott T. Firsing

>

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## **Annexure B**

### **ASYMMETRY IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: US/SOUTH AFRICA RELATIONS: 1994-2008**

*Scott Firsing*

**Name: Col. Lawrence B. Wilkerson, retired US Army, former chief of staff to US Secretary of State Colin Powell.**

What are your perceptions of South Africa and its foreign policy in general?

**Since the end of Apartheid and the beginning of the rule of the African National Congress, South African foreign policy has seemed more focused on increasing trade and economic prosperity than any other objective—almost to the exclusion of other matters. While this is understandable—and praiseworthy in some regards—it is nonetheless disturbing when, for example, one watches as President Thabo Mbeki allows his fellow leader in Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, to inflict economic collapse and virtual tyranny on the people of that country. One wonders what single-mindedness of foreign policy purpose can be so important to Mbeki that he is willing to watch the continuing destruction of a fellow African country without doing anything substantive to help alleviate his neighbor's plight.**

Some officials at the US Embassy in Pretoria feel South Africa is anti-American, do you agree or disagree and why?

**I find it hard to believe that there would not be at least a little anti-Americanism among the leaders of South Africa, if not among the people in general. After all, one of Nelson Mandela's most ardent supporters was Cuba's Fidel Castro, and the U.S. has practiced the most insane foreign policy vis a vis Cuba and has in the process excoriated Castro. Actions such as this do not make America any friends in the world, including in South Africa.**

How important is the ANC's relationship with the US during apartheid in current day US-SA relations?

**See my comment above with regard to U.S. Cuba policy. The fact that the U.S. was a leader in pushing for sanctions against South Africa—and in enforcing those sanctions—during the Apartheid period does not, in the minds of many ANC leaders, excuse the**

**otherwise sometimes inexplicable U.S. behavior, or the very real fact that the ANC and the U.S. often had very different goals and objectives.**

Do you feel that large trade and the overall economy is the key reason, which holds the relationship together? Why or why not?

**Unfortunately, yes. Just as unfortunately, such ties are becoming the only really binding ties between the U.S. and many countries in the world—largely due to the hypernationalist leadership in Washington over particularly the last seven years. But there is also the lingering suspicion, in my view, in many sub-Saharan African countries, including South Africa, that the U.S. often cares more about countries with majority white populations than it does other countries without such majorities. True or not, this is a profound perception I find throughout Africa.**

Various experts have stressed the importance of individuals in the relationship both positive and negative (ie positive= Gore and Mbeki and the Binational Commission during Clinton's years and Negative= SA Ambassador to the US Barbara Masekela and her so-called disengagement from America). Do you feel individuals such as these or any others that you may know have had a large impact on the overall US/SA relationship?

**Yes, I do feel that the people you mention—and others—have made the relationship better or worse, as strong individuals frequently do. For example, on the positive side, I thought that President Mandela in the early years of post-Apartheid South Africa, had a warm and productive relationship with Colin Powell and that this relationship carried over, to some extent, when Powell became Secretary of State and Mbeki was President of South Africa. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in the late summer of 2002 and at the University of Witwatersrand in the spring of 2001 where Powell gave his speech, this was apparent—and, with regard to the summit particularly, in some troubled times.**

I have narrowed down the key issues in the relationship in the following list in which I will clarify the American perspective, South African perspective and the outcome as of the end of 2008. Do you feel certain key events are missing from the list or do you feel there is something of

importance that may generally be overlooked by government officials that you would like to reveal?

- *SA Relations with Iran, Cuba, Libya Syria;*
- *UN reform/global governance (unilateralism vs. Multilateralism);*
- *Iraq;*
- *Israel/Palestine;*
- *Zimbabwe;*
- *Personal history (ie US government actions against the ANC during apartheid);*
- *AFRICOM;*
- *Peacekeeping in Africa;*
- *War on Terror;*
- *HIV/AIDS;*
- *People to People (US Businesses, NGOs, SA is a US culture, bilateral visits):*
- *SACU / Free Trade Agreement;*
- *Overall Economic Relations/Trade.*

**I would simply add what you have listed in your penultimate question: Particular individuals and their influence, positive or negative, on foreign policy and relations.**

## **Annexure C**

The author conducted focused (semi-structured) interviews to collect qualitative data for this thesis. The interview was open and the interviewee had a great deal of time and scope to talk about their opinions/experiences on a particular topic.

Sample of focus questions I posed to the anonymous sources and academics:

- 1) What is your perception of South African foreign policy (if American interviewee) or American foreign policy (if South African interviewee)?
- 2) What are your perceptions of US-South African bilateral relationship?
- 3) Various experts have stressed the importance of individuals in the relationship both positive and negative. Do you feel individuals such as these or any others you may know have had a large impact on the overall US/SA relationship?
- 4) Given your field of expertise, are there any examples you could provide that show the positive and negative side of the bilateral relationship?
- 5) I have compiled of a list of important topics in the relationship based on government documents and media reports (Showed and read the list to the interviewee). Which do you feel overall are the most important and why?

Annexure D



**THE PRESIDENCY: REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X1000, Pretoria, 0001

*Our Ref: 9/30/1/2 (184302)/2008 (Iz)*

14 May 2008

Mr Scott T. Firsing

Per E-mail: [stfirsing@yahoo.com](mailto:stfirsing@yahoo.com)

Dear Mr Firsing

We write to acknowledge with thanks receipt of your e-mail of 12 May 2008, addressed to President Thabo Mbeki.

Please note that the matter has been referred to the International Relations Unit in the Presidency for attention. The Unit will liaise with you in due course after considering your matter.

Yours sincerely

  
**Ms Mogotladi Mogano**  
Personal Support and  
Advisory Services to the President

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*Enquiries: Mr Robert Ngobeni*  
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## Annexure E

### List of Interviewees

Dr. Ken Baucom (USA). Dr. Baucom is a former De Beers Executive and current owner of the American School in Pretoria. He has spent the last 30 years living in South Africa, mostly serving the international community. He was interviewed on 17 January 2008 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Dr. Donald Foster-Gross (USA). Dr. Foster-Gross is a former USAID Education officer with most of his 20+ year career served in Africa. He was interviewed on 06 June 2008 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Ms. Luanne Grant (SA). Ms. Grant is the former Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce based in Johannesburg, South Africa. She was interviewed on 27 August 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Dr. Adam Habib (SA). Dr. Habib is a professor of political science and Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Johannesburg. He was interviewed on 20 June 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Dr. Edmond Keller (USA). Dr. Keller is a professor and chair of political science, Director of the UCLA Globalization Research Center-Africa and former Director of the James S. Coleman African Studies Center at the University of California-Los Angeles. He sent a completed electronic questionnaire on 28 May 2008.

Dr. Anthony Lake (USA). Dr. Anthony “Tony” Lake is the current Executive Director of UNICEF and served as President Clinton’s National Security Adviser from 1993-1997. He was interviewed on 17 November 2008 in Washington DC, USA.

Mr. Will Morris (SA). Mr. Morris is a former South African Air Force intelligence officer. He currently serves as a consultant on physical security issues. He was interviewed on 15 January 2008 in Midrand, South Africa.

Dr. Joseph Mugore (Zim). Dr. Mugore is a Senior Advisor in the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa. He was interviewed on 05 February 2008 in Sunninghill, South Africa.

Mr. Fadl Nacerodien (SA). Mr. Nacerodien is the former Director of the USA Desk at the South African Department of Foreign Affairs. He was interviewed on 17 January 2008 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Dr. **Joseph** Nye (USA). Dr. Nye is Dean *Emeritus* of the Kennedy School at Harvard, Sultan of Oman Professor of International Relations, and a member of the Belfer Center Board of Directors. In 1994 and 1995 he served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. He sent a completed electronic questionnaire on 15 June 2008.

Congressman Donald Payne (USA). Congressman Payne won election to his eleventh term to represent the 10th District in the historic 111th Congress in 2008. He is a past Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. He was interviewed on 03 November 2008 in Newark, NJ USA.

Mr. Kurt Shillinger (USA). Mr. Shillinger worked for the Christian Science Monitor for nine years. Subsequently, he worked for the SAILA, first as managing editor of eAfrica, then as Research Fellow and Project Head of the Security and Terrorism in Africa program. He was interviewed on 04 June 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Source One (SA). The source is a former SAAF General. He was interviewed on 10 September 2007 in Centurion, South Africa.

Source Two (SA). The source is a former SAAF Pilot. He was interviewed on 25 October 2007 in Midrand, South Africa.

Source Three (SA). The source is a current member of the Tshwane Metropolitan Police Department. He was interviewed on 28 October 2007 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Source Four (USA). The source is current US Government official and a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. He was interviewed on 17 January 2008 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Source Five (USA). The source is current US military official. He was interviewed on 12 October 2008 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Source Six (SA). The source is a current international diplomat. He was interviewed on 29 October 2008 in New York City, NY USA.

Source Seven (USA). The source is a former high level US Government official during President George W. Bush's first Administration. He was interviewed on 14 November 2008 in Washington DC, USA.

Source Eight (USA). The source is a former high level US Government official during President Ronald Reagan's Administrations. He was interviewed on 14 November 2008 in Washington DC, USA.

Source Nine (USA). The source is a former high level US Government official during President Clinton's Administrations. He was interviewed on 14 November 2008 in Washington DC, USA.

Source Ten (USA). The source is a former high level USAID official serving over 20 years in the agency. He was interviewed on 17 November 2008 in Washington DC, USA.

Ambassador Thomas Wheeler (SA). Ambassador Wheeler served in the South African Foreign Service from 1961 to 2003; He joined SAILA as its Chief Operating Officer in 2003. He was appointed as SAILA's Foreign Policy Research Fellow in November 2006. He was interviewed on 20 May 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson (USA). Col. Wilkerson was a former Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Colin Powell. He is currently a professor of political science at George Washington University. He sent a completed electronic questionnaire on 30 May 2008.