

# **Regional Power Dynamics and Security Approaches: A Comparative Study of SADC and ECOWAS**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines regional power dynamics and security approaches within two prominent African regional organisations-:ECOWAS– Economic Community of West African States and the SADC– Southern African Development Community. Since Africa remains insecure due to internal conflicts, and terrorism, regional organisations have a vital role in stability. ECOWAS and SADC are particularly marked by their specific security mechanisms; however, they are located in different political, social and economic environments and thus perform differently in terms of management and resolution of conflict. Using the theoretical framework of power theory and the adoption of

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case study research design and content analysis, the research critically explores regional power dynamics and security approaches within SADC and ECOWAS. The findings reveal that while ECOWAS's interventionist policies enable swift action, they sometimes face issues of sustainability and regional buy-in. In contrast, SADC's consensus-driven approach promotes stability but can lead to prolonged conflict resolution processes. This study contributes to the broader discourse on regional security in Africa, highlighting the need for adaptable strategies that address both immediate threats and long-term stability in diverse geopolitical environments. The study concludes that while both SADC and ECOWAS employ different strategies in Western and Southern Africa, yet the approaches are similar in many ways. Consequently, the two organisations though having the common strategic object of creating stability at regional level have significantly different operating models defined by their respective historical, political and socio-economic circumstances. These differences define their security actions, the coordination of the states which are members of the union, and their performance in the handling of conflicts.

**Keywords:** ECOWAS, SADC, Regional Power, Security, Dynamic

### **Introduction**

As a new strategic structure of the world after the Cold War, the outstanding importance of the regional security paradigm has been recognised in academic and political discourses. This is attributed to the concept of increased integration occasioned by the fact that more states are currently cured from first-generation contentious ideologies of the earlier part of the century. It is also based on the nature of the modern threats being generated by intra-state conflicts which lead to civil wars, insurgencies and terrorism with repercussions for the region. Some of the perennial issues which have affected Africa are: weak states and residual impacts of European colonialism which continuously endanger state integrity and human welfare; Liberia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Burundi,

Rwanda etc are examples of state that have experienced conflicts. As shall be deduced, regional responses to these conflicts within the continent vary based on the ability of the regions in question to muster resources with which to stem the situation. Available data reveal that on average ECOWAS and SADC are more sensitive to conflicts and threats of the use of force than other continental organisations (Ateku & Owusu-Mensah, 2023). Such answers are given according to the comparative comparison of the different regional formations within the continent.

This discourse, therefore, focuses on examining the signs of “power” and its relationship with regional security and comparing and contrasting ECOWAS and SADC. It is made of six sections, of which the first is the introduction. Section two analyses relevant literature, section three explains the research approach used in the study and section four provides the power indices of ECOWAS and SADC concerning regional security. The result of the study is presented in section five and the final section elucidates the conclusion of the paper.

### **Literature Review**

Regional security can be defined as the process whereby through government action, a set of perceived common threats in the global system is neutralised by the use of apparatus (Akindoyin & Akuche, 2023a). Power, conversely, pertains to the mobilisation of both real and intangible resources by people or collectives to exert their will over others within a certain relationship (Akindoyin & Akuche, 2023a). Morgenthau (1967) outlines and analyses the indicators of power on the international relations of geography, food, resources, including the industrial power and military strength, readiness, and leadership. Other conditions include distribution and growth rates in population, character and morals of the nation and efficiency of the policies of diplomacy and administration. These consequences bring about structural power relations between states and regions, hence victory of the hierarchical power system. This leads to an imbalance of relations between states and regions since regions lack equal numbers of resources. Power is therefore central to realism analysis, for acquiring as well as using power. Taking into consideration the work of Morgenthau (1967), realists are inclined to believe that international politics is all about the interests submitted in real power, and all international

relationships– a struggle for power: to dictate or to maintain the current policy. The pacifist criticism fails to capture how the acquisition and application of power is necessary for states within a security complex in order to manage risks as defined by regional actors (Peou, 2021). Powers possessed and wielded by states create status and rank in the international system, and determine specific membership in this or that subgroup, for instance, permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) or the Group of Seven (G7), inter alia (Abbondanza & Wilkins, 2022).

Originally, power was defined by a state's defensive and offensive strength, which is considered as 'hard power' (Akindoyin & Akuche, 2023a). This refers to the degree of sophistication of the military equipment and firepower, and the player's capability to employ them in, offensive or defensive quarters. This view has dominated the discourse in the academic and amongst policymakers for over four centuries, although it was arguably at its peak in the Cold War era (Khoo & Qingmin, 2021). According to Nye (Tsuprykova, 2020), soft power is synonymous with an indirect approach, psychological manipulation, that changes the attitudes and behaviours of other states as opposed to threatening actions such as military or economic power, which reflects the practice of post-Cold War government public diplomacy. It encompasses the capacity to accomplish tasks without force or remuneration (Tsuprykova, 2020). Indicators of such attraction encompass culture, morals, and foreign policies. Cultural soft power applies to dominant societal activities, and these are art and education, literature preferred by the political class, mass-consumed entertainment and the sports industry like pop music, cinema, professional football, television soap operas, films. The researcher explores the role of national actors along with institutions, values and normative practices towards foreign states – rule of law, democracy, accountability and social justice. In foreign policy, soft power has to do with the ability of a state to maintain legitimacy and moral authority in its relations with other entities in the international system (Gill, B., & Huang, 2023).

Thus, soft power is considered to be the second layer of power, which comprises the elements, traditionally viewed as non-coercive, like the capacity to set agenda and to operationalise the ability to make other states

want what the power wants (Akindoyin, 2024b). The aim is to secure reliability and maintain international support of socio-political projects. However, Marti (2022) has noted that several scholars have criticised what he described as problems of soft power conception, institution and politics in order to engage the new changes in the discourse of international security. He opined that experts have identified what they considered to be ‘smart power’ as a modern way of dealing with the weaknesses in regional security complexes (Marti, 2022).

Bakalov (2020) defined smart power, hence making it possible for an actor to achieve the foreign policy goals both powerfully and effectively by integrating the “hard power” and the “soft power”. Smart power is focused on the application of policies that harmonise the elements of hard and soft power to construct integrated grand strategies. The merger is therefore inevitable because of their nature to prompt and support each in the practice of contemporary global warfare as depicted by the US-led war in Iraq. In conclusion, power is defined as the capacity to effectively employ physical and non-physical resources to empower oneself and compel change in another individual or organisation to support one’s intended goal (Morgenthau, 1967). As a tool of security, power comes out clearly in the birth of hegemons, and power, within an international system, ultimately defines the position of hegemons. The post-WWII had the Allied Powers at the centre and the defeated Axis Powers- Germany, Italy, and Japan could not occupy a similar status. The term “power” was given to the United States, Russia, France, Britain and China, as these countries were given the authority of the “I give voice” in the UN Security Council, coupled with veto power over its decisions.

Thus, these nations formed hegemony within their territories and enabled the formation of “spheres of influences” (SOI) during the cold war years (Akindoyin, 2024). Therefore, the United States contributed to the formation of the Organisation of American States in 1948, which has offered general security system in America for countries; also helped in creating the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) for the security demands of both sides of the Atlantic.

Similarly, during the Cold War, Russia dominated Eastern Europe and successfully forged the Warsaw Pact; later after the disintegration of Soviet

Union, it framed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to maintain the amity-security complex in its “Near Abroad” and nearby areas (Miles, 2024). A good example is the role of power in regional security in North East Asia where China has risen to challenge the US and is now centrally located in cooperation between the Koreans. North Korea’s contumacy in the region is attributed to the attainment of nuclear technology and arms, which has increased its authority in the regional and international security systems (Ng, 2021). The maker’s location of Germany, Britain, and France inside the European Union is therefore linked with their positions as powerhouses in Western Europe. Although its population and its area of territory is quite small compared to its Arab neighbours, Israel assumes the posture of power in the Middle East, complemented by Iran’s nuclear arms race to assert its importance in the Middle East region (Ng, 2021). The deterrability of the relationship in the Indian-Pakistani and Chinese conflict, in the enmity-security complex over the territory of Kashmir, is largely credited to attainment of nuclear balance between all the three, along with other regional factors (Ng, 2021).

Nigeria’s dominance in West Africa and South Africa in Southern Africa on security matters depend on these two countries’ comparative powers within the regions (Aleyomi, 2022). As such, power is an essential resource for the existence of an enmity security complex and is essential when building a regional security structure. The structure and functioning of the regional security mechanisms are also important because of the applicability of “hegemonic stability” concept in the security regime (Aleyomi, 2022). According to the feature of scale, the capabilities of scaling up dominate the emergence of a hegemon inherently in all aspects and their conduct. The importance of a hegemon is discernible as the “leading nation” in the creation and operation of regional security systems.

This explains why Nigeria and South Africa are important for underpinning the creation of the ECOWAS Standby Force in West Africa and the SADC Standby Force in Southern Africa. On the same note, using “consensual hegemony”, Brazil championed the formation of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) as a “cooperative security” in the Latin American neighbourhood in order to rein in the United States’ dominance in the neighbourhood, which is seen as collectively threatening.

This lays down a structure for Security of South America outside of that of the US-dominated organisation, the OAS (Uriburu, 2024). The main roles of the Western Super Powers in the creation and management of the Organisation of American States, NATO Response Force and Joint Expeditionary Force mainly stem from their super power status and as “lead nations” in their areas of the world respectively. These “lead nations” have really emerged as true guardians of regional security. Smart power applied in the context of the United States, with the assistance of NATO, to the Balkan crisis throughout the 1990s. The United States set the course by presenting the conflict in the former Yugoslavia as a regional threat in the ability to drag other international actors into the conflict given their transnational and religious features; therefore it sought support for the Peace Support Operation (PSO) from other NATO member states in Western Europe (Mediu, 2021). Nigeria similarly led the securitisation of illegitimate governmental transitions, and call for democratic administration within ECOWAS as depicted in the revised ECOWAS treaty of 1993. This explains why Nigeria spearheaded the process of reinstalling President Tejan Kabbah, following the Johnny Koromah coup in Sierra Leone, even during the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha in 1997. In addition, South Africa has led securitisation of anti-human security incidents through Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO). An example is the Lesotho conflict where South Africa intervened in 1998 (Munira, 2021). Another facet of power in regional security is converting major socio- historical narratives in a way that influences those in the region as well as global viewers. They serve to provide the above-mentioned actors epistemic endorsement of their activities in the processes of securitisation and desecuritisation of issues and threats. In Middle East, Israeli continues to defy the international communities’ demand to release this region or its surroundings as their ancestral and Biblical promised land.

These stories positively echo among Judeo-Christian people all over the world and justify the continued colonisation and growth of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as the desire to aggressively declare Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state. The nature of its occupation of the Palestinian territories is seen in the Arab World as imperialism by the Western powers on Islam; thus, resistance must be waged

in Jihadist fashion, as the current incarnation of Israel is a result of the Post World War II partition of Palestine (Munira, 2021). Therefore, the attitude of the people of the world towards Palestine's issue is highly biased and no solution can be made regarding the conflict in the region. Regarding the US Global War on Terror, President Bush tried to explain to the Muslims that America did not have an enmity with Middle Eastern people or people across the world, but fighting against Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups in the region. The desire to spread this story led to the emergence of Al-Hurra television, Radio Farda as well as Radio Sawa which are intended to deliver this point of view to people of Farsi and Arabic origin in Iran as well as other Middle Eastern countries concerning the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein in Iraq (Munira, 2021).

Also, in South America, United Nations Sustainable Urbanisation Resilience asserts that there is a need to promote "cooperative-security of the hemisphere," and the "South America for the South Americans" in order to eliminate the hegemonic power of the United States, which sets the reasons for the formation of a new independent regional security organisation and mechanism alongside the OAS controlled by the United States. These narratives have enabled the erection of the Union of South American Nations (UNSUR) as the most preferred conflict solvers in the region for the last decade displacing the United States from the regional security systems (Dos Santos, 2021). In Africa again, similar related stories, based on the Rwandan genocide, led to the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity.

The debate as to the need for the continent to abandon the "non-interference" provision of the OAU Charter for the "non-indifference" principle in the Constitutive Act received international attention and approval. This applies to the rhetoric of Pan-Africanism and the expression, "Africafred's problems by Africans" that has enabled the AU and its conflict management structures to be considered as the primary actors in the management of the conflict theatres on the continent. Likewise, in the course of the political crises of 2016/2017, ECOWAS' narratives of the recalcitrant Yahya Jammeh posed a threat to the sub-region. This narrative explained the intervention of the ESF in the conflict in Gambia as well as the political asylum granted to Yahya Jammeh to Equatorial Guinea in January 2017 (Akindoyin & Badru 2024c).

Thus, although the context of a regional security complex provides the main driving force for creating a regional security organisation or mechanism, power-knowledge remains the key factor that shapes the relevant mechanism. Power is the control of sound military capabilities, economic indicators, superior technology, resources, diplomacy, popular values, and good leadership. Power consists of both physical and non-material things needed in the setting up and launching of a fast deployment capability of a regional standby force.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Power Theory is chosen as the framework for this study. It is seen as the capacity of an individual or organisation to exert its influence over others in any type of connection (Martin, 2024). Power theory has its background in the scholarly works of Joseph Frankel, Hans Morgenthau and Arnold Wolfers. As Wolfers (1962) posits, power is the capability to ensure that the people do what one wants, rather than the converse, which constitutes coercion by threat of deprivation. It is the ability to fulfil one's desires despite resistance and to affect the actions of others to achieve one's objectives (Rankel, 1973).

Morgenthau (1967), on the other hand, stressed that power refers to a psychological relation between the holder of the power and those who are affected by the power holder's power. Akindoyin (2024) stressed that power means being able to make someone be somewhere he would not want to be, do something he would not otherwise do. There are two types of power that are derived and measured by a number of tangible and intangible assets of a nation or region.

From the above scholars, the fundamental tenets of power theory encompass:

- i. Might consists of a nation or a group of nations' capacity to employ the physical and non-physical assets of a country to manipulate the behaviours of others.
- ii. Power is defined as the sum of an action type, or the valour of a coalition of nations.

- iii. A freedom or capability is, in the first instance, measured by the strength of the armed forces, technological and economic resources and manpower to mobilise them for self or collective gains.
- iv. Power is relative as security and numerical strength of nations or groups of nations involved in the calculation as stated above.
- v. Because the power relationship is a shifting affair, so to speak, power changes with time and development; but even in its latent stage, power has worth psychologically.

Power theory and “hard power” application have been criticised by pacifists who consider and reject the use of any form of force or power ever in human relations (Swenson, 2024). “Hard power” scholars have been criticised especially by Liberalists in light of the fact that the Power Theory offers only a single-factor approach that overlooks other forms of interactions as well as more common cooperation that is seen within.

However, the discovery of “soft power” and “smart power” by scholars in recent years has improved the usage of the Power Theory in sociopolitical culture (Swenson, 2024). The importance of this study is based on the fact that currently there is no comparative evaluation of the competence of ECOWAS and SADC regarding their regional security.

### **Methodology**

This discourse uses a case study research design, which appropriately examines and evaluates the relationships between the elements under consideration. This paper succeeds in associating the power indices of ECOWAS, and SADC to regional security and exploring how the two interventions occur to achieve regional security in the two regions. It also provides the corresponding grounding for other studies utilising power and regional security in Africa and other regions. This paper focuses on ECOWAS and SADC in particular, but questions raised apply to Africa as well as the world at large. This research only collects secondary data from relevant literature in the form of textbooks, journals, publications from various international organisations, and periodicals. Data were descriptive in nature and content analysis was used to obtain the research results.

## **Discussion of Findings**

### **Examining Regional Security and Power Dynamics: A Comparative Analysis of ECOWAS and SADC**

ECOWAS was created by the Treaty of Lagos signed in 1975 with the aim of initiating convergence of West Africa's economies. At first focusing only on economic issues, in the early 1990s, then later shifting to issues of political stability and peace in response to exceptional events in the region, including the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Increasing economic integration is key to ECOWAS with interest in political and security aspects evident, by the formation of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), a standby force for the resolution of conflict within the region (Akuche & Akindoyin, 2024).

On the other hand, SADC was formerly the loose integration grouping known as the Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC), formed in 1980. The idea was to reduce dependence on the apartheid economy of South Africa in the region. In 1992 SADC was instituted to give prominence to economic integration and cooperation following the termination of apartheid regime in South Africa. At the moment, SADC objectives are economic cooperation, development of infrastructures, and being a forum for peace and security in the region with less preference toward the use of force compared to economic cooperation (Akuche & Akindoyin, 2024).

### **Institutional Structures and Membership**

This community has fifteen member countries and operates through many institutions such as the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Community Parliament, the ECOWAS Court of Justice, and others. The military and its peacekeeping organ, ECOMOG has equipped ECOWAS with the capacity to act in matters of internal conflict or state failure, it has placed it at the vanguard of regional security (Akuche & Akindoyin, 2024). The structure of the organisation enables flexibility of actions or decisions in cases that require militant approaches during emergencies.

SADC is made up of 16 members; it has institutional formations which include, the Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Council of

Ministers and several other sectorial and directorate committees focusing on trade, social and economic development, and physical infrastructure among them (Akuche & Akindoyin, 2024). The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation's main task concerns peace and security, although the organisation does not have a well-formulated military intervention capacity like ECOWAS. It has preventive diplomacy, conflict management and peace by way of mediation as its key activities.

### **Economic and Developmental Mandates**

As an economic community, ECOWAS aims at the implementation of a customs union, the formation of a common market and the coordination of fiscal and monetary policies of the member countries. The organisation also puts into practice the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) and has moved towards the attainability of a single currency dubbed "eco" though there are challenges presently (Akindoyin, 2024d). Despite making Compania Espanola de Seguros de Creditos a la Exportacion (CESCE) an economic organisation, the speed at which economic integration has slowed is due to the instability of economic structures among the member countries, their dependence on foreign inputs, and greater focus on politics and security.

The SADC gives priority, to commerce, development and investment to a fairly good extent. SADC Free Trade Area (FTA) which was launched in 2008 has aimed at deepening regional trade through removing most of the tariffs. The organisation has recently developed a prescriptive Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) to align such goals which focus more on infrastructure, industry, and trade. The SADC mainly focuses on economical problems, as the strategy states, which with few exceptions, avoids military orientation unlike the ECOWAS (Akindoyin, 2024d).

### **Roles in Regional Peace and Security**

Vestibular functions of ECOWAS in the region's security encompass proactive and reactive functions. According to Cottiero (2021), ECOMOG, the peacekeeping force of the ECOWAS has been accused of intercession in various conflicts within the sub-region such as in Liberia (1990), Sierra Leone (1997) and Guinea Bissau (1999). Though these interventions have remained quite sensitive at times, they have been very useful, especially in the region, in order to bring back order after political instabilities which may

lead to violence and threat across borders. Because of ECOWAS's prepared security technique in the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, with the Peacekeeping Force, it can act fast to deploy and depicts ECOWAS as a leading regional organisation in the African peace-keeping missions.

This is different from the approach that SADC has in organising its security, diplomacy, non-intervention and conflict-solving. This includes SADC-led mediation in Lesotho in both 1998 and 2014 with military and political problems getting diplomatic solutions instead of using force (Cottiero, 2021). It still lacks quick reaction force like that of the ECOWAS. SADC advocates for the strict use of peaceful-conflict solving measures and the body's desire to respect the sovereignty of its member states puts limitations on how forceful it can be in intervening where there is extreme conflict within a member state (Cottiero, 2021).

#### **Structural Mechanisms for Peace and Security**

The ECOWAS essentially depends a lot on its ECOMOG (ECOWAS Monitoring Group), a force dispatched to resolve wars within member states. ECOMOG has been active in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Basso with military force to put down the fighting.

**Early Warning System (ECOWARN):** ECOWAS created ECOWARN, a highly advanced conflict early warning instrument to help identify and contain conflicts. This tracks indications of conflict and deploys early warning systemic counter-actions.

**ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF):** The Enhanced Standby Force (ESF) is a ready-for-quick-deployment peacekeeping force of ECOWAS.

**SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation:** This organ is responsible for peace and security, for example in diplomacy but often supports state sovereignty.

**SADC Brigade (SADCBRIG):** As it was the case with the ECOWAS, the SADC also fostered the establishment of SADCBRIG as a query selector.

**Early Warning System (REWS):** REWS in SADC is charged with the identification of emerging security threats; however, it is relatively less advanced than ECOWARN— especially in terms of averting conflicts.

### **Key Interventions in Peace and Security**

#### ***ECOWAS Interventions***

**Liberian Civil War (1990-2003):** ECOWAS launched its first large-scale intervention in the civil war (1990-2003). The decision to deploy ECOMOG restoration of the state was vital because Liberia experienced a devastating civil war for years. While a lot of people had a problem with ECOMOG's intervention, it played the role of heralding peace in Liberia, and therefore democracy (Cottiero, 2021).

**Sierra Leone Civil War (1991-2002):** In a similar fashion, ECOWAS intervened in Sierra Leone, using ECOMOG as a counter-force against rebels to restore order, and put the government into power. As will be discussed under the analysis of the implementation of the ceasefire agreement, this intervention demonstrated that ECOWAS is willing to employ military force to maintain order and safeguard citizens (Cottiero, 2021).

**Mali (2012-present):** The measures that ECOWAS has taken in Mali show that the organisation is fully aware of the importance of regional stability. After a coup and the emergence of Islamist insurgencies in northern Mali, ECOWAS endorsed the creation of African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) before becoming a wing of the United Nations.

#### ***SADC Interventions***

**Lesotho Crises (1998, 2014):** SADC actions in Lesotho, especially in 1998, entailed using troops to maintain law and order after the political upheavals. While ECOWAS tried to install its representative in Liberia's government or negotiate a cease-fire in Sierra Leone, SADC's intervention was more delicate: it aimed at bolstering the government and offering political facilitation (Cottiero, 2021).

**DR Congo Conflict (1998-2003):** During the Second Congo War, Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia, SADC members sided with the government of Congo. This intervention revealed a structural approach to security by SADC by using alliances which may be viewed as quite dissimilar to that of ECOWAS. However, these operations were state-led and not SADC-directed (Cottiero, 2021).

**Mozambique Insurgency (2021-present):** However, in the recent past, SADC has been more action oriented in its intervention in Mozambique counterinsurgency against Islamist militants in the Cabo Delgado Province. SADC sent a regional intervention force, the SAMIM (SADC Mission in Mozambique) indicating a keener security role for the organisation. However, there is still the problem of cooperation.

### **SADC and ECOWAS: Approaches to Conflict Resolution and Mediation**

ECOWAS does not exclude the use of force and at the same time does not reject diplomacy. That is why frequently, it applies military power alongside with mediation and negotiations to maintain peace. For example, in 2017 ECOWAS mediated The Gambia case when the then president, Yahya Jammeh after losing elections, refused to relinquish power. Even though ECOWAS arranged the negotiation process, they organised a standby force to ensure that Jammeh leaves power (Afolabi, 2020). Intervention by ECOWAS is usually multilateral, which most of the times has the approval of the member-states and a high degree of permissive attitude towards the infringement state's sovereignty, especially for human rights' violations and unconstitutional change of government.

However, SADC has preferred to use political diplomacy rather than force to prevail on the parties to a conflict to take a particular course of action. Lesotho organisations are its main interests, where diplomatic attempts were made to ensure that there is peace without necessarily infringing sovereignty (Afolabi, 2020).

While SADC has attempted to respond to these conflicts as a regional organisation, its intervention modality is somewhat passive unlike the ECOWAS reaching the point of non-intervention only if the stability and security of the region is under immense threat. For instance, SADC was

less forceful in dealing with the politics of crises in Zimbabwe in the year 2000s, but preferred to offer to mediate and negotiate.

### **SADC and ECOWAS: Comparative Analysis of Successes and Challenges**

#### ***Successes***

**SADC:** Arguably attained moderate success in the following: The partial appeasement of conflicts in Lesotho as well as lately, the insurgent threat in Mozambique. SADC procedure tends to promote regional synergy and has regard for sovereignty, factors that are generally considered by member states.

**ECOWAS:** Achieved the delivery of peace and democratisations in Liberia, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. The organisation has sought to brand itself as a proactive actor in the enforcement of peace in West Africa by receiving credit for some muscular responses to conflict.

#### ***Challenges***

**SADC:** Frequently, it has to deal with a lack of resources in member institutions and the dominance of one or several states. This has sometimes created confusion where there should be clear policy responses as witnessed in the Zimbabwe case. One of the major shortcomings that characterised SADC to a certain extent has been its strong policy on non-intervention.

**ECOWAS:** The organisation is usually faced with some of the major challenges including those in the areas of funds and resources, transport and logistics and political cohesion. The self-interest of all the members sometimes works against the overall interest of the group. However, Mali is still a worry, considering that ECOWAS has intervened, but hardly gained stability yet.

#### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, on the comparative study of regional power dynamics and security approaches of SADC and ECOWAS, it becomes clear that while they both employed different strategies in West and Southern Africa, yet, the approaches are similar in many ways. Consequently, the two organisations

though having the common strategic object of creating stability at the regional level have significantly different operating models defined by their respective historical, political and socio-economic circumstances. These differences define their security actions, the coordination of the states which are members of the union, and their performance in the handling of conflicts.

ECOWAS has transformed as a security key player mainly for the fact that the region has been subjected to political uprisings, coups, and civil strife, especially in Mali, Nigeria and Burkina Faso among others. ECOWAS' actions amount to rapid responses to internal conflicts best epitomised by the dispatch of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) and mission. These responses are, however, limited by financial considerations, the interests of individual member-states, and the reality of logistical capability. Furthermore, ECOWAS fully supports democratisation and constitutional government and threatens or uses sanctions and military force in response to antidemocratic changes. As a result, through the development of cooperation with global actors, including the United Nations and the African Union, ECOWAS has acted proactively to enhance the task of regional security.

On the other hand, SADC's actions have been influenced by a more conciliatory diplomacy which stresses on diplomacy, mutual consensus as well as recognition of state sovereignty. While ensuring that there is close-knit cooperation among member-states, this approach often slows down the decision-making process when the need to intervene in a crisis arises. SADC's approach to managing the political crisis in Zimbabwe and managing the insurgency in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province supports political approaches and a gradual build-up of force, which, although sometimes slower, corresponds to the region's preference for negotiating a military solution. This approach, however, may reduce SADC's ability to react fast in situations that require intervention through the use of force.

The study also reveals that even though ECOWAS and SADC have achieved some measure of success in the provision of regional security, deeper weaknesses need to be resolved to enhance efficiency. The ECOWAS needs to enhance its internal solidarity regarding security ventures and sufficient funds mobilisation, whereas SADC has to define ways of appropriate interventions without infringing upon the sovereignty of member-states. Symbiotic relationship between the two organisations brings together

a chain of resources and strategic priority for a better framework of security in the African region. In the end, the regional power relations and security perspectives of ECOWAS and SADC have revealed Africa's regionalism complexity which requires innovative and context-responsive security approaches to deal with insecurity in Africa.

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