AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC)’S EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE MECHANISMS FOR PEACE AND SECURITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

BY

ARDAY CHARLOTTE NAA ODEY

(10275933)

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEGREE.

Legon

July 2015
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my original research under the supervision of Dr. Amanda Coffie. All references to works by other authors have been duly cited and acknowledged. I further declare that no part of this work has been presented anywhere for any other purpose.

Date: ………………………….………………….. Date: …………………………………………..
Signature: ………………………….………………….. Signature: …………………………………………..
Name: ………………………….………………….. Name: …………………………………………..
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God, my source of strength and grace. This dissertation is also dedicated to all the wonderful people in my life, especially Lady Cynthia, Daddy KT & Mama Gifty, Cynthia, Charlene, Smith, Philip, Yaw Boateng and Yaa Boatemaa; I cherish you. This is also for you, Cookish; you live on.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank God for his boundless grace which enabled me to start and complete this dissertation. I am very grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Amanda Coffie for her indispensable guidance in shaping this work. Thank you, Dr. Coffie. I am also grateful to Daddy KT and Mama Gifty for all their prayers and support, my desire for higher learning could not have materialized without them. I thank Prof. Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu and all the dedicated lecturers of the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy for all their valuable input. To Smith I say God bless you, thank you for all the support. I further express my deepest gratitude to my mother, Lady Cynthia and my lovely sisters Cynthia and Charlene. You are just awesome and I appreciate you for everything. God bless you. To my brother Philip, I say thank you, you are peerless. Thank you so much, Dr. Boampong, Mr. Amartey, Jemima, John and Michael. I also thank all my friends for their care and support. Finally, to those who contributed in diverse ways to who I have become today, you can be assured that your sacrifices have not gone unnoticed. God richly bless you.
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: SADC’s Organisational Structure………………… 31
Figure 2: SADC’s Organ …………………………………… 34
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASF</td>
<td>African Standby Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>All Basotho Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNP</td>
<td>Basotho National Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEWARN</td>
<td>Conflict Early Warning Response Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEWERU</td>
<td>Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEWS</td>
<td>Continental Early Warning System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWARN</td>
<td>ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLS</td>
<td>Frontline States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGAD</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Authority on Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISDSC</td>
<td>Inter-State Defence and Security Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>Institute for Security Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOMIC</td>
<td>Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Global Political Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD</td>
<td>Lesotho Congress for Democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARAC</td>
<td>Monitoring System for Central Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCO</td>
<td>Ministerial Committee of the Organ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC-M</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change - Mutambara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC-T</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change - Tsvangirai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICOC</td>
<td>National Intelligence Coordinating Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLANEM</td>
<td>Planning Element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Peace and Security Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REWS</td>
<td>Regional Early Warning System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADCC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Coordination Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIPO</td>
<td>Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANEP</td>
<td>West African Network for Peacebuilding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WARN</td>
<td>West Africa Early Warning Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZANU-PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZESN</td>
<td>Zimbabwean Electoral Support Network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

DECLARATION .............................................................................................................................. i
DEDICATION ................................................................................................................................ ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................................................................................ iii
LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................................ iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .......................................................................................................... v
ABSTRACT ..................................................................................................................................... x

CHAPTER ONE .............................................................................................................................. 1
RESEARCH DESIGN ..................................................................................................................... 1
  1.0 Background ............................................................................................................................. 1
  1.1 Statement of the research problem ............................................................................................ 2
  1.2 Research Questions .................................................................................................................. 4
  1.3 Research Objectives ................................................................................................................. 4
  1.4 Scope ....................................................................................................................................... 5
  1.5 Rationale ................................................................................................................................ . 5
  1.6 Hypothesis ............................................................................................................................... 7
  1.7 Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................................ 7
  1.8 Literature review ...................................................................................................................... 9
    1.8.1 Early warning and early response mechanisms: Conceptual clarifications ......................... 9
    1.8.2 Africa’s quest to effectively deal with conflicts. ................................................................. 11
    1.8.3 The quest to achieve a Continental Early Warning System for Africa ................................ 12
    1.8.4 Community of insecurity: SADC’s struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa .... 14
    1.8.5 SADC and the creation of a security community.............................................................. 15
    1.8.6 Has SADC’s security co-operation really failed? .............................................................. 16
    1.8.7 Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 17
  1.9 Sources of Data ...................................................................................................................... 18
  1.10 Research Methodology ......................................................................................................... 18
  1.11 Arrangement of Chapters ..................................................................................................... 19

CHAPTER TWO ........................................................................................................................... 23
AN OVERVIEW OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY STRUCTURE OF SADC ............... 23
  2.0 Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 23
  2.1 The African Union and the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) ............................... 25
  2.2 ECOWAS and ECOWARN .................................................................................................. 26
4.1 Summary of findings

4.1.1 SADC’s role in the post-election violence in Zimbabwe in 2008

4.1.2 SADC’s early warning and early response mechanism in Zimbabwe (post-election violence of 2008)

4.1.3 SADC’s role in the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014

4.1.4 An assessment of SADC’s early warning and early response mechanism in Lesotho (2014)

4.2 The strengths and weaknesses of SADC’s security structure

4.2.1 Strengths of SADC’s security structure

4.2.2 Weaknesses

4.3 Conclusions

4.4 Recommendations

Endnotes

BIBLIOGRAPHY
ABSTRACT

The attainment of peace and stability is a necessary condition for sustainable development. Many states across the globe have come together to form regional and sub-regional groups to protect their common interests and achieve their common goals through concerted effort. Because of the possible clash, which differences in state interests and goals may present, there is the need for these regional bodies to be sufficiently equipped in every area to enable them function at their optimal level in the collective interest of all the member-states. The Southern African Development Community is responsible for promoting the well-being of the people of Southern Africa and safeguarding their survival. There exist many factors that can threaten the survival and well-being of the people of Southern Africa. Conflicts, especially violent conflicts can have devastating effects. For this reason, it is of great importance that a mechanism is put in place to detect such threats early and act speedily to prevent their escalation into bloody violence. This mechanism is the early warning and early response mechanism. SADC like other sub-regional organisations in Africa instituted this conflict management mechanism but has received limited attention from scholarly studies. This study therefore aims at investigating SADC’s early warning and early response system to ascertain its readiness and ability to achieve its objectives; its structure, how it functions and its strengths and weaknesses. To achieve this, the study examined SADC’s application of its early warning and response mechanisms in two selected cases of conflict situations. They are the 2014 political impasse of Lesotho and the 2008 post-election violence of Zimbabwe. The study employed qualitative research methods, particularly multiple case studies and a content analysis of relevant documents to obtain findings which informed the conclusions of the study. The conclusion affirmed the study’s hypothesis that notwithstanding SADC’s weak early warning practices, its rapid deployment of early response strategies has contributed to peace and security in Southern Africa.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.0 Background

The maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa is of great importance as these conditions are necessary for sustainable development to take place. Although a condition of peace and stability is not always achieved, there exist procedures, methods and mechanisms to predict, forewarn, prevent and manage tensions, which have the tendency to escalate into violent conflicts.\(^1\) It has therefore become imperative for the regional and sub-regional organizations in Africa to put in place a system to avert violent conflicts.

One of the methods developed to prevent conflicts from escalating into war is the early warning and early response mechanism. Early response has to do with those initiatives that occur during the latent stages of a perceived potential armed conflict with the aim of reducing, resolving or transforming the conflict.\(^2\) According to Austin, a mechanism (early warning mechanism) deals with the individual units of an early warning system such as data gathering, formatting and analysis based on the assumption that there is a relationship between these units which enable the system to operate.\(^3\)

The regional and sub-regional bodies of Africa such as the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have early warning and response mechanisms in place with the basic object of detecting signs of conflicts and effectively ‘managing’ them to prevent them from escalating into war. It is noteworthy that ideally, early
warning systems are functionally effective but even in cases where early warnings fail, early response can still function.⁴

This study focuses on the early warning and early response mechanisms of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the sub-regional organization located in Southern Africa. SADC developed from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) and the Treaty and Declaration, which facilitated this development were signed by the Member States in 1992.⁵ SADC is made up of fifteen countries. One of the key objectives of SADC is to “promote and defend peace and security.”⁶

In spite of some achievements made by SADC in the area of ensuring effective conduct of peace and support operations in the Southern African region, it is still contending with some challenges that impact the defence sector. Some of these challenges as noted by SADC include: armed conflicts within member-states, terrorism, developing policies and capacities to ensure that the region maintains trained units ready to be deployed in peace support operations in the region or under the auspices of the AU and the United Nations (UN).⁷ SADC also faces difficulty with implementing the policy (doctrine) that will enable the interoperability of the Defence Forces.⁸ Assessing SADC’s experience with the post-election crisis in Zimbabwe (2008) and the political impasse in Lesotho (2014) will provide practical and useful insight into SADC’s response capabilities to conflict situations in Southern Africa.

1.1 Statement of the research problem

The tendency for conflict to emanate is high in the SADC region for many reasons, among them is the existence of a number of challenges, which SADC admits have to be surmounted.⁹ Again, many wars of independence were fought and practices such as the
Apartheid in South Africa contributed to the security tensions in the Southern African region. Post-Independence and democratization processes have led to security challenges and conflicts; indeed some countries in the region have recorded varying degrees of serious conflicts\(^\text{10}\) in the past even as late as the 2000s, for example the Angolan civil war which ended in April 2004.\(^\text{11}\) The post-election violence, which occurred in Zimbabwe in 2008 and the recent political impasse in Lesotho are also worth citing. This is because both crises posed security challenges and threats to Zimbabwe, Lesotho and the Southern African region at large. For example, high levels of violence took place and there were high numbers of population displacement in Zimbabwe following the post-election crisis. A total of 200,000 people were displaced, while 20,000 homes were destroyed in Zimbabwe.\(^\text{12}\) Again, some 10,000 people suffered injuries.\(^\text{13}\) It is, therefore, prudent to carry out more research into the nuances of such conflicts and the available peace and security structures. This will improve the access to credible information which will in turn inform measures to be put in place to mitigate the emergence, resurgence or protraction of such conflicts. An investigation into the existence and availability of research on early warning and early response mechanisms in Africa revealed that much work has been done on early warning and early response mechanisms of other regional and sub-continental organizations like the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), while very little research exists on SADC’s system.\(^\text{14}\) There has been quite a number of scholarly works dealing with issues of peace and security in the SADC region, however, many of the existing literature on the SADC region have to do with its peace and security structure in general. Information on its early warning and response mechanism is scanty as compared to that of the other regional and sub-regional early warning mechanisms such as the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN). In the light of
the above, the findings of this work will provide useful information to help fill the gap in literature, especially, with regards to SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms.

1.2 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following questions whose answers will provide more insight into the topic of early warning and early response mechanisms in the SADC region:

1. What is the nature of SADC’s early warning and early response system?

2. What has been the nature of SADC’s response to conflict situations in Southern Africa?

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of SADC’s early warning and early response system?

1.3 Research Objectives

The following constitute the objectives of the study:

1. This study aims at identifying and understanding the nature of SADC’s early warning and response system.

2. This research seeks to discuss SADC’s experience with regard to response to conflict situations in Southern Africa.

3. The study seeks to point out the strengths and weaknesses of SADC’s security structure as well as its early warning and early response system.
1.4 Scope

This study is set in the context of SADC and its conflict early warning and early response mechanisms in the last decade (2005-2015) and is limited to the Southern African region. The research uses the post-election conflict in Zimbabwe in 2008 and the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014 as focal points to discuss SADC’s experience with responding to conflict situations in the Southern African region. Both conflict situations have to do with tensions and disagreements emanating from power politics and problems of leadership that triggered general dissatisfaction amongst stakeholders and a sizable number of citizens. These two countries were selected because they constitute recent cases of conflicts in the sub-region, which occurred during the decade under review (2005-2015). As such, an assessment of SADC’s performance through an analysis of these cases will provide current information, which can be useful in addressing future conflicts and improving SADC’s early warning and response mechanism.

1.5 Rationale

SADC as a sub-regional institution exists among other reasons to safeguard the well-being of the people of Southern Africa. To achieve this objective, SADC has instituted some policies which include early warning and early response mechanisms. The creation of an early warning and early response mechanism is a laudable initiative because evidence abound on its highly successful rate at preventing violent conflict. Examples of cases where early warning and early response were instrumental in preventing violent conflicts include the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development’s Conflict Early Warning Response Mechanism/ Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit (CEWARN/CEWURU) in Kenya in 2007 to avert an attack planned by the Kenyan Pokot warriors. Again, efforts made by Uwiano in Kenya following the election violence of 2008 to
forestall the subsequent eruption of more election-related violence can be cited. In the eastern part of Sri Lanka, the Foundation for Co-Existence Early Warning (FCEWARN) succeeded in preventing the intensification of the conflict in that area. However, in the case of SADC, questions remain unanswered on its effective application of the mechanisms. Some of the issues include the capacity of the officials to gather and analyse data, provide information and recommendations. Others are related to infrastructural and personnel capacity as well as the political will of SADC to efficiently apply the recommendations of the early warning unit.

It is important to note that some studies have been done in this area; one component, which has received limited attention is an assessment of SADC’s capacity to deal with potential security crisis in the region. Few authors have distinguished between early warning and early response mechanisms. The tendency has often been to lump them together instead of discussing both mechanisms separately. Owing to the important contributions of both early warning and early response to conflict management, it is necessary to carry out a study, which incorporates both aspects in the analysis. Additionally, other authors have also focused on the creation and evaluation of the policy frame work without undertaking case study analysis of SADC’s application to determine successes and weaknesses. Evaluating SADC’s conflict management capacity at the policy level has it strengths but it is limited because it lacks the capacity to determine the challenges or success at the level of practice. To address this limitation, the current study examines SADC’s deployment of early warning and early response capacity by analyzing two cases in the sub-region, which are the post-election violence in Zimbabwe in 2008 and the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014.
This study is also relevant because its findings will give an indication as to how these concerns have been translated into the policies which are being put in place and to fill the gap in literature.

1.6 Hypothesis

The current study is based on the following hypothesis:

Notwithstanding SADC’s weak early warning practices, its efficient deployment of early response strategies have contributed to peace and security in Southern Africa.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Liberal Institutionalism is the theory that guides this study. Liberal institutionalism argues that there can be cooperation in the international system to promote the general welfare of states. It further asserts that in order to foster peace in the affairs of the international community, states must cooperate and consequently ‘cede’ some of their sovereignty to create ‘integrated communities’ which will function for the promotion of economic growth and serve as a response to security issues with regional and international dimensions. The key proponents of the theory of liberal institutionalism include Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye. Liberal institutionalists share in the realist conception of the anarchical nature of the international system. Although liberal institutionalism recognizes that states are the dominant actors in the international system, it maintains that non-state actors also play a crucial role, which cannot be downplayed. In addition, liberal institutionalists are of the view that a clear hierarchy of issues does not exist in the international system. Unlike realism which prioritizes security issues, liberal institutionalism does not outline a list of issues in order of ‘importance’, as it were, it does not distinguish between the so-called hard and soft politics, and both deserve equal attention and emphasis. Again, liberal institutionalists advocate that
more focus be laid on international organizations and international regimes as these are founded on rules, norms and principles that help govern the interaction of states and non-state actors regarding many important issues. A focus on such international organizations suggests that a greater emphasis is being put on soft power and cooperation through the procedures of International Law and the machinery of diplomacy.\textsuperscript{24}

Like all other theories of international relations, Liberal institutionalism has also been criticized by theorists who do not share in its assumptions and beliefs. Helen Milner for instance criticizes this theory for neglecting the significant influence that domestic forces and policies exert in the promotion of a more cooperative strategy to tackle moral and ethical issues.\textsuperscript{25}

This theory has also been criticized by Devitt for failing to recognize the role that global political advocacy networks have had in international relations.\textsuperscript{26} The way states in the international system perceive each other depends on how they each deal with issues such as poverty and human rights.\textsuperscript{27} Mostly, advocacy networks deal with such socially-related issues. Further, the United Nations (UN), an inter-governmental body for instance, has been described as being a contradiction in itself. Thakur and Weiss argue that, the UN Charter on one hand admonishes all states to uphold and respect the sovereignty of all states, yet, the UN engages in peacekeeping operations and has used force in some instances where resistance is suffered in a bid to safeguard international peace and security.\textsuperscript{28}

Moreover, the inability of liberal institutionalists to agree on the role that free markets play in international relations is another area which has attracted criticisms. While some liberal institutionalists hold that there should be minimal government interference or involvement in
the global markets, other liberal institutionalists are of the view that government should intervene as much as possible to prevent the further deepening of the disparity between the rich and the poor.

In spite of the criticisms levelled against the theory of Liberal institutionalism, this study was guided by this theory because it explains the need for the establishment of an institution like SADC as a whole to safeguard the total well-being of the people of the Southern African region. Again, it explains the need to put in place an early warning and early response institutional framework to address challenges faced by SADC in its efforts to implement and achieve its objectives. Liberal institutionalism makes a better case for co-operation and concerted effort, necessary conditions for achieving SADC’s shared and collective goal of safeguarding regional peace and security.

1.8 Literature review

1.8.1 Early warning and early response mechanisms: Conceptual clarifications.

Conflicts, particularly of an armed or violent nature are ever-present and inevitable among and within human groups because of their interactions. These conflicts may emerge as a result of competition over scarce resources, differences in opinions and ideas, injustices suffered by a particular faction which incite them to revolt, for selfish and wicked reasons, corruption among other causes. The existence of such violent conflicts and the destructive effect they have on human lives and properties have necessitated the introduction and institution of certain conflict prevention and management mechanisms. These mechanisms are capable of detecting or identifying early signs of violence, sending out warnings and stepping in just in time to prevent these tensions and destructive conflict situations from degenerating into wars thus resulting in the incurring of greater collateral damages. The
mechanisms which have been put in place by sub-regional organizations to take care of these pressing issues are specifically referred to as early warning and response mechanisms.

This sub-section identifies some scholarly definitions of the key terms—conflict, early warning and response mechanisms for the purposes of clarification to situate the study within a context. The first concept of interest to this study is ‘conflict’. Although scholars differ in their definitions of conflicts, there are some common elements which run through most definitions. For instance, Francis considers conflicts as the pursuit of incompatible goals and interests by individuals or groups.29 Again, Hyden notes that conflicts can be viewed from two angles, manifest and latent, where the former makes reference to the use of force or violence, often leading to human casualties while the latter is rooted in “societal cleavages which may or may not break into open confrontations and negative exchanges”.30 A degenerated form of these conflict situations is what early warning and response mechanisms exist to prevent or manage. For the purposes of this study, a combination of Francis and Hyden’s conceptions of conflicts will be employed.

Two other concepts which need clarification are the concepts of early warning and early response. These concepts have been explained by different scholars. Woocher for instance differentiates between three components within early warning- first, there is an estimation of ‘the magnitude and timing of relative risks of emerging threats’, next, an analysis of the nature of these threats and a description of plausible scenarios then finally, the communication of warning analyses to decision makers.31 Further, Keyserlingk and Kopfmuller observe that early warning can be understood as “a part of mechanism that helps us to size up threats of early crisis by reporting such promptly to the appropriate decision-makers to take action”.32 Keyserlingk and Kopfmuller further note that “failure to respond
appropriately to stem the tide of the crisis might brew bigger consequences to manage.”³³ For them, what is of primary concern is the timely detection of signs of augmented or dysfunctional conflicts in order to initiate relevant preventive measures.

For Alexander Austin, early response thus refers to ‘any initiative that occurs in the latent stages of a perceived potential armed conflict with the aim at reduction, resolution or transformation.³⁴ Also, with early response, consultations are made while policies, plans and action are taken with the view to scale down or avoid armed conflict. It involves the taking of pro-active and re-active measures, early action and prevention to reduce tensions and the tendency that the conflict would escalate. This can occur within states (intra-state), between states (inter-state) or at multilateral levels.

1.8.2 Africa’s quest to effectively deal with conflicts.

Africa has experienced and indeed is still plagued with violent conflicts which seem to increase by the day. These conflicts include post-election violence, armed conflicts, terrorism, religion and ethnicity-based discrimination, insurgencies, local upheavals and muslim-extremist movements among others. The root causes of some of these acts of violence also appear to aggravate the already deplorable situation, many people continue to wallow in abject poverty, others remain targets of ethnic, racial and gender-based violence and these constitute conflict-provoking realities. The various regional and sub-regional organizations within the continent have sought to institute various mechanisms to deal with potentially dire situations of violent conflicts.

The African Union has established the Continental Early Warning system, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development has instituted the Conflict Early Warning Response
Mechanism and the Economic Community of West African States has the West Africa Early Warning Network. The early warning and response mechanism of the Southern African Development Community does not have an identifiable, single name as do the other regional bodies, this however does not suggest that the Southern African Region does not have a mechanism in place to ensure that conflicts do not escalate into war.

The Southern African Development Community, established in 1992 has as one of its main objectives the promotion of peace and security within the region. To this end, there exists provisions such as the Mutual Defence Pact of 2003 and the SADC Organ Protocol. The latter in Article 11(3)(b) makes provision for the establishment of an “early warning system in order to facilitate timeous action to prevent the outbreak and escalation of conflict”. This mandate however could be interpreted as being quite limiting, taking into consideration the lucid link to violence as compared to that of the other regional organizations.

The mandate could on the other hand be interpreted as one which seems to go beyond a streamlined view as it pays attention to issues such as drugs, natural disasters, the trafficking of small arms, food security and disease. The following sections present a review of some relevant literature on SADC’s security architecture. Each sub-section is preceded by the title of the academic research which serves as the caption for the sub-section.

1.8.3 The quest to achieve a Continental Early Warning System for Africa

In Jakkie Cilliers’ work, *Towards a Continental Early Warning System for Africa*, it is established that the African Union through its Constitutive Act and the Protocol on the Peace and Security Council has been mandated by the Member States to carry out a more pronounced role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. This role is
expected to be played in a more excellent way than it was during the Organization for African Unity’s era. Cilliers’ paper aims at presenting an overview of the Continental Early Warning System: its fundamental characteristics, and a brief history of how it developed and its current status. This overview will then provide a utilitarian background against which the performance and progress of warning systems across the continent can be reviewed.

Cilliers notes the difference between early warning and intelligence systems- the former according to her finds its roots in new human security-related ways of thinking, how leaders ought to protect the ordinary people in a State. Again, early warning information must be sent out and received on time by the relevant persons, must be valid and credible. Though early warning constitutes a precondition for timely response, it is not sufficient in itself to bring about effective response. Intelligence systems on the other hand are mostly shrouded in secrecy and function based on maneuvering around classified information.

Cilliers further notes the nuances of early warnings. Specific reference is made to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and their early warning mechanism. Cilliers carries out a discussion on the Conflict Early Warning Response Mechanism (CEWARN) of the Horn of Africa as well as the Early Warning Observation and Monitoring System for Central Africa (MARAC). Of particular relevance to this study is that part of the paper which makes reference to SADC. The structure of SADC is laid out in an organigram while the framework of the peace and security structure of the organization is provided. The author identifies the existence of a standby brigade and a Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre in Zimbabwe. In addition, Cilliers asserts that the proposed early warning system for SADC is quite different from those of the other regions. The author concludes by reiterating the fact that early warning and intelligence systems are not the same
and should not be regarded as such. Cilliers in “Towards a Continental Early Warning System for Africa” attempts to provide an elaborate exposition of the early warning systems of some sub-regional bodies in Africa. However, what remains to be added is a more exhaustive analysis of SADC’s early warning and response mechanism for the promotion of peace and security in the Southern African region.

1.8.4 Community of insecurity: SADC’s struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa.

In Community of insecurity: SADC’s struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa, Laurie Nathan provides a response to his critics, Dzinesa and Tjønneland. These two criticized Nathan’s Community of insecurity: SADC’s struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa.\(^{38}\) Nathan decries the error on the part of authors who make categorical and explicit judgements about the effectiveness of regional and international bodies with peacekeeping mandates without adequately discussing the criteria for appraising and analyzing the complications that have led to the making of those judgements.\(^{39}\) He further argues that ignoring these considerations is what leads to flawed or skewed evaluations, conclusions and predictions of those organizations.

Again, in Community of insecurity: SADC’s struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa, Nathan addresses the challenges in evaluating SADC’s peace and security endeavours and emphasizes the need to provide a clear criteria for assessment. Nathan also advises policy makers, academics and governments to pay more attention to the actual performance of the organization rather than on the declarations made and structures which have been put in place. In addition he advocates assessing SADC’s performance in terms of its stated goals and objectives. For him this is an analytically sound and fair way of assessing SADC’s performance. Nathan identifies some challenges with evaluating the performance of regional
organizations as follows: the problems of mixed results, the counterfactual, causality, expectations and normative orientation. He concludes by stating that the struggle for regional security should be interpreted as a struggle at the regional level.  

The current study agrees with Nathan that it is reasonably fair to assess an organization’s performance in relation to its stated goals and objectives. However, this study questions Nathan’s criterion for assessment. For instance, in the event that the organization in question has been unable to meet about seventy per cent of its aims and goals, would it not be too hasty on the part of the observer to conclude that the organization has failed or is ineffective without taking a closer look at what led to this ‘failure’? Again, Nathan makes a valid point when he recognizes that although SADC has the interest of the Southern African people at heart, it is facing challenges with fully harnessing its potential. This is mainly because SADC member-states are reluctant to surrender part of their sovereignty to SADC even though this is a prerequisite for regional integration. SADC is, therefore, unable to operate at its optimal level in many cases.

1.8.5 SADC and the creation of a security community

In SADC: Towards a Security Community? Naison Ngoma basically focuses on the principal instruments which have brought out the most essential changes to the progress and advancement of the regional structure of Southern Africa. The author asserts that the region has had a long history of conflict and has made several efforts to mitigate conflicts. He acknowledges an earlier work carried out by Van Aardt on whether the region was moving towards developing a security regime or a security community. Ngoma then does an analysis of some of SADC’s summits and protocols. He further argues that a security community in Africa ought to be established if a sustainable peace and security order is required. Ngoma
refers to a framework which places the emergence of security communities in three tiers- that which relates to causal factors; those factors ‘that facilitate the development of mutual trust and collective identity’ and finally, a tier that ‘reflects the actual development of trust and collective identity with two end states’. Ngoma concludes the article by noting that the Southern African Region is moving towards becoming a security community. Based on the criteria provided by Ngoma, this study posits that the Southern African region has to speed up efforts aimed at achieving sustainable peace and stability in the sub-region.

1.8.6 Has SADC’s security co-operation really failed?

Willie Breytenbach writes on the failure of security co-operation in SADC with reference to the suspension of the Organ for Defence, Politics and Security. In 2003, Ngoma argued that as per some stated indications the Southern African region is inclining towards (becoming) a security community. It is instructive to note that Breytenbach’s assertion predates Ngoma’s by some three years. In his work, Breytenbach begins by enumerating some countries in the Southern African sub-region, which had been suffering violent conflicts. He bemoans the inability of SADC’s security organ to effectively deal with these crises especially through prevention, early warning or management (mediation in peacemaking).

In *Failure of security co-operation in SADC: The suspension of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security,* Breytenbach set out to do an evaluation of the organizational framework in relation to the original thoughts which informed the establishment of the Organ. He also investigates how relevant the Organ is to tackling conflicts within the SADC region. Breytenbach is of the view that to forge ahead, there ought to be a ‘regional rethink about security co-operation’ since security co-operation has not met its intended objective.
For Breytenbach, a ‘new security’ approach will entail bringing security and development much closer under the control of the civilian Summit. Again, it is imperative that a functional and appropriate link be drawn between security, economics and human development in a reformed SADC.\(^{46}\) The capacity to get this done, however, will only be determined by time.

### 1.8.7 Conclusion

Although the works reviewed above are on the peace and security structure of SADC and have broadened our understanding of SADC’s security structure, the current study notes a limitation. This limitation has to do with the fact that very few authors have written exclusively on SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms. Even for those studies which have been conducted exclusively on SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms, very few authors have distinguished between these early warning and early response mechanisms in spite of the importance of both mechanisms to conflict prevention and management. To fill this gap in literature, it is important that studies which deal with both SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms be carried out to provide information about the nature, functions and capabilities of SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms. Again, the existence of such studies would be instrumental in the efforts to assess SADC’s contribution to peace and security in Southern Africa, with specific reference to the experiences of Lesotho and Zimbabwe in 2014 and 2008 respectively. Nathan appears to be the only author whose work deals with a critical part of ascertaining how functional or otherwise an organization and its sub-units are. Nathan thus provides some criteria for assessing an organization’s performance. Such an approach is necessary because it informs the evaluations and conclusions drawn about an organization. This study thus seeks to carry out an assessment of SADC’s early warning and response mechanisms to arrive at
findings which will inform discussions on how ready SADC is to deal with any potential situation of violent conflict in the Southern African region.

1.9 Sources of Data

This study utilized secondary sources of data which included relevant books, journal articles and official documents such as Treaties, Protocols and Communiqués. The study also obtained information from relevant news articles. Web-based research materials were obtained from academic journal databases while relevant news items and articles were retrieved from authoritative news websites which included BBC News, CNBC News, Pambazuka News and Newsline 365. The documents included Treaties, Protocols and Communiqués as well as web-based documents retrieved from the webpages of SADC and other regional and other sub-regional organizations.

1.10 Research Methodology

This study employed qualitative methods of research. Qualitative methods were chosen because this study aimed at deriving a deep understanding of the early warning and early response mechanisms of SADC through a careful examination of the actions and words of relevant actors as supplied in the data sources noted above. Case study research, particularly a multiple-case design was the chosen category of qualitative methodology as the two cases-the political impasse of Lesotho (2014) and the post-election violence of Zimbabwe (2008) were examined. The choice of case study research was justified by the need to employ a method which provided an opportunity to thoroughly interrogate SADC’s security structure, particularly its implementation of the early warning and early response mechanisms. The use of case studies also eliminated the tendency that policy documents would be merely analysed and presented as such a method was limiting because it does not address the implementation
component of the policy. The study also conducted a content analysis of relevant documents on SADC’s security structure and its early warning and early response mechanisms to arrive at the findings. These documents included SADC, AU and ECOWAS Treaties, relevant Protocols, Communiqués on SADC’s Troika Summits, SADC’s Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (I and II) and other related official Reports. The study further analyzed relevant web-based news articles, books, academic journals and official institutional reports to obtain the findings which informed the conclusions and recommendations of the work.

1.11 Arrangement of Chapters

This study is organized into four chapters. The first chapter is a presentation of the Research Design, which includes a background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions and research objectives which guide the study. Furthermore, the scope, rationale and hypothesis of the study are identified and a review on relevant literature is presented. The methodology and sources of data are also included in this chapter.

Chapter Two presents an overview of SADC’s peace and security structure. This entails an overview of the nature and functions of SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms. Again, an overview of the two selected conflict situations; the political impasse in Lesotho (2014) and the post-election violence in Zimbabwe (2008) is presented.

Chapter Three entails a discussion about SADC’s experience with regards to its response to conflict situations in Southern Africa. In this chapter, the role of SADC in each of the conflict situations is identified and an assessment of SADC’s role is carried out to ascertain how prepared or otherwise it was to safeguard peace and security in the Southern African region. These constitute the findings of the study.
The fourth and final chapter presents a summary of the findings and drew some conclusions based on the findings. In addition, the study makes some recommendations for policy makers and future researchers.
Endnotes

2 Austin, Alexander. "Early warning and the field: a cargo cult science?." Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2004. 129-150
3 Ibid
5 For more information please see the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community, 1992.
6 Ibid
7 The homepage of SADC’s website provides a list of these challenges under “Themes” and “Politics, defence and security.
8 Ibid
9 Ibid
13 Ibid
16 Uwiano is a Swahili word which connotes cohesion. For more information about UWIANO visit UWIANO Platform for Peace: http://www.cohesion.or.ke/index.php/programmes/uwiano-platform-for-peace.
18 The FCEWARN is the Early Warning Mechanism of the FCE and is citizen-based. For more information visit http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/HQ1195.pdf
27 Ibid
32 Keyserlingk, N.V and Kopfmuller, S. Conflict Early Warning Systems Lessons Learned from Establishing a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in the Horn of Africa. 2006.
33 Ibid
34 Austin op. cit
35 Cilliers op. cit
36 For more information see the Protocol on SADC’s Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation.
37 Cilliers op. cit.
40 Nathan op. cit
42 Ibid
44 Ngoma op. cit
45 Breytenbach op. cit
46 Ibid
CHAPTER TWO
AN OVERVIEW OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY
STRUCTURE OF SADC

2.0 Introduction

The existence of violent conflicts in some parts of the world and the destructive effect they have on human lives and properties have necessitated the introduction and institution of mechanisms which are capable of detecting or identifying early signs of violence, sending out warnings and stepping in just in time to prevent these tensions and destructive conflict situations from degenerating into wars thus resulting in the incurring of greater collateral damages. The mechanisms which have been put in place to take care of these pressing issues are specifically referred to as early warning and response mechanisms. The existence of various types of conflicts has informed the need to utilize tools which are analytical in nature to help understand the complexity of conflicts and thus put in place appropriate early warning and early response mechanisms.

In the process of putting such early warning and response mechanisms in place, it is important to ensure that nothing tampers with their functional capability and autonomy. Cilliers posits that “unless the early warning unit is independent, there will be a temptation to shape the analysis to support the preferred mode of action to be taken.”1 This suggests that it is important that these early warning and response mechanisms be institutionalized and operated to ensure that the ultimate aim for their establishment is accomplished. This chapter presents an overview of the peace and security structure of SADC and particularly identifies the early warning and response system in place with the aim of ascertaining how prepared SADC is to deal with potential situations of violence in the Southern African region. To do this, the early warning systems of the other regional and sub-regional groups namely
African Union, the IGAD and ECOWAS will be presented. The process of drawing references from these already-existing early warning and response mechanisms brings into sharp focus the similarities and differences between these systems. Again, drawing those references will help ascertain whether the existence of such a system in the Southern African region has been justified.

Recent happenings on the African continent have fueled the need to adopt and establish frameworks which will primarily be responsible for detecting early signs of armed violence and the timely transmission of signals for the appropriate action to be taken to reduce the potential that these acts of violence would turn destructive. The ‘awakening’ as regards the introduction of formal, institutionalized early warning and response mechanisms especially at the regional and sub-regional levels of Africa can also be attributed to human security concerns which have gained more popularity. Now more than ever, beyond the protection of state boundaries, the focus is on the individual, on people. How can their personal, physical and community security be assured? This people-centred approach together with the charge to secure regional and territorial integrity have seen the establishment of a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) by the African Union, the Conflict Early Warning Response Mechanism (CEWARN) of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Eastern Africa (IGAD); and the West Africa Early Warning Network (WARN) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The early warning and response mechanism for SADC is simply known as the Regional Early Warning System.\(^2\) This chapter therefore focuses on the existing structure.

The presentation in this chapter includes brief overview of the early warning and early response structures at the regional and sub-regional levels. This serves as a basis for
comparing SADC’s system to that of other regional organizations and to determine areas of similarities and differences.

2.1 The African Union and the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)

The African Union initiated the Continental Early Warning System in 2002. The Protocol relating to the formation and institutionalization of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union maintains that CEWS exists for ‘early responses to contain crisis situations so as to prevent them from developing into full-blown conflicts’. The CEWS is made up of two components which are the observation and monitoring centre also known as ‘The Situation Room’ at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa and is responsible for collecting data and analysing taking into consideration the appropriate early warning indicators. There are also the parallel observation and monitoring units at the sub-regional level such as ECOWARN’s and CEWARN’s responsible for linking up to the Situation Room. CEWS makes extensive use of reports obtained from information from open sources which points out potentially perilous activity. Such reports inform the decisions of the Peace and Security Council especially regarding the plausible deployment of the African Standby Forces. The Continental Early Warning System has been designed to provide standardized and timely reports on early warning together with effective policy options and has been successful in the area of enhancing cooperation and coordination between CEWS and the early warning systems of the sub-regional bodies such as ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC. Again, the analytical skills and expertise of CEWS have been improved and this is evidenced by the securing of full-time situation room staff and early warning analysts and officers.
2.2 ECOWAS and ECOWARN

ECOWAS was formed in 1975 and aims among other things, at “maintaining regional peace, stability and security through the promotion and strengthening of good neighborliness”8 The Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance mandates the establishment of a sub-regional peace and security observation system intended to provide early warning. Again, there exists an Observation and Monitoring Centre and four observation and monitoring zones with monitoring units within the sub-region. ECOWAS’ Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) employs the assistance of the West African Network for Peace building (WANEP), a Ghana-headquartered sub-regional civil society organization to enhance the data collection process for early warning usage. WANEP examines the data and draws up reports for the Observation and Monitoring Centre. ECOWARN is also supported by an Early Warning Department and Government Focal Points.9 A major achievement was when conflict broke out in Guinea in 2007; ECOWARN was instrumental in identifying the exact source of the grievances. This timely identification paved the way for defining the best practices for response to prevent the degeneration of such conflicts into full-scale violence.10

2.3 IGAD and CEWARN

The Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was formed in 1996 with an extended mission of helping member-states “to promote and maintain peace, security and humanitarian affairs…”11 Although IGAD may not have a special organ responsible for facilitating peace and security, it does have a Secretariat and has in place an extensive strategy for implementing various programmes.12 CEWARN was established in 2000 to check the ever-present situation of conflicts in the Horn of Africa and to do a timely and operative methodical anticipation of violent conflicts as it is more costly dealing with full-blown violent situations. The main strengths of CEWARN lie in the network of monitors and
responders in its three clusters- the Karamoja cluster which spans the cross-border regions of Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda; the Somali cluster made up of the cross-borders of Ethiopia, Keya and Somalia and the Afar or Issa cluster which spans the Djibouti and Eritrea regions.\textsuperscript{13} According to Nyheim, ECOWARN and CEWARN currently constitute the most developed early warning and response mechanisms in Africa, ECOWARN covers a broad area yet its impact is not deeply felt while CEWARN’s sphere of influence is relatively small yet it has deep coverage.\textsuperscript{14} Again, both systems are not pre-emptive in their responses and the micro-level sources and structural causes of conflicts are not dealt with.\textsuperscript{15}

\section*{2.4 The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC)}

The year 1980 saw the formation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) essentially to enhance regional cooperation through developmental projects carried out by concerted efforts, mobilise assistance for development and cut down the rate at which the member states were dependent on South Africa, where apartheid was rife.\textsuperscript{16} Twelve years later, and as apartheid and the Cold War were gradually fading out, the Conference was dissolved and the member states succeeded in putting together a Treaty and a Declaration to usher in SADC, an international body with legal status.

\section*{2.5 The objectives and rationale behind the formation of SADC}

SADC was formed to serve as a regional power whose duties went beyond economic cooperation and included political and security mandates. According to Nathan, four main considerations can be said to account for the move from SADCC to SADC.\textsuperscript{17} The increasing rate at which sub-Saharan Africa was being marginalized drew the attention of the Southern bloc. They were convinced that undergoing this “rebranding” would project SADC as a bloc
committed to integrating thus fortifying SADC member states in global political affairs and trade.

In addition, prior to the formation of SADC, Southern Africa was facing many challenges both social and economic. These troubles knew no borders and required greater and more concerted efforts at a supra-national level. Again, it was during this period that the Cold War ended and people had become more appreciative and tolerant of democratic ideas. Tensions which had previously existed between states had significantly reduced while long-standing disagreements and violent conflicts in Southern African countries like Namibia, Mozambique and Angola had been effectively dealt with. Also, apartheid which was the major cause of tension in the region had been abolished and establishing an inclusive regional organization was in order. In spite of the seeming encouraging happenings in the region, the civil war in Angola resumed in 1992 and member states’ transition to democracy was facing some setbacks, there was therefore the need to establish a forum to attend to the security needs of the region.

The objectives of SADC are spelt out in Article 5 of the Treaty and include, inter alia, the promotion and defence of peace and security in the Southern African region. The highest decision-making body of SADC is the Summit which comprises Heads of States or Government. This Summit is chaired by one of these heads on a rotating basis. There also exists a Treaty provision for a Council of Ministers responsible for SADC’s functioning and a Tribunal which hears and decides on cases. It is the responsibility of the Summit to appoint an Executive Secretary. The Secretariat of SADC has been established in Botswana.
2.6 SADC’s Security policy, Framework and Strategy document and the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security

The formulation of a security policy of a regional character was pursued by the Secretariat between 1992 and 1994. In 1993, the Secretariat drew up a document- the Framework and Strategy document which advocated the development of a new security order. This new order was not militarist and was based on norms which were democratic together with the embracing of defense doctrines which were not offensive and cutting down on the force levels of the military and expenditure.\(^{22}\) The document also reiterated the need to deal with those sources of conflicts and threats to the people’s security which were non-military.\(^{23}\) A Ministerial Workshop on Democracy, Peace and Security was organized and attended in Windhoek in July 1994.\(^{24}\) Present were ministers, members of non-governmental groups, officials and parliamentarians. It was at this workshop that the proposal for the establishment of a SADC Sector on Conflict Resolution and Political Co-operation was suggested. Some of the suggestions given at the workshop were however not welcomed by all the delegates. An example of such disgruntled groups was the Frontline States Coalition\(^ {25}\). The Frontline Coalition was a group which sought to secure the liberation of southern African countries and counter regional destabilization by Pretoria. Its members included Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This group suggested that an all-new body be set up, the Association of Southern African States to carry out the functions of a regional security body which was not linked in any way to SADC’s Secretariat. Again, many states were not in support of the democratic and anti-militarist norms. The Organ on Politics, Defence and Security was launched by the Summit in June 1996. This Organ was required to be operational at the Summit, Ministerial and technical levels, be set apart from other structures of SADC and encompass the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee, a creation of the Frontline States coalition.\(^ {26}\) The Chairmanship was to be rotated annually among member states.\(^ {27}\)
2.7 The institutional structures of SADC

SADC developed the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security to serve as a formal institution responsible for attaining and maintaining security and the rule of law in the region and to achieve the objectives of promoting and defending peace and security in the Southern African region. The formal structure of SADC comprises the Summit of the Heads of State; the Council of Ministers and the Standing Committee of Senior Officials. SADC’s Secretariat located in Gaborone, Botswana is headed by an Executive Secretary. This Secretariat basically deals with SADC’s administrative issues and is responsible for the implementation of decisions made by the Council and Summit. SADC also has national committees and national contact points in charge of technical issues at the national level. SADC’s organizational structure is shown in the diagram below. This diagram has been included because it provides graphical information on the institutional components of SADC at a glance and notes the link between the various components of SADC’s organizational structure to aid in the attainment of the primary goal of SADC. This goal essentially encompasses promoting peace, security and stability in the Southern African region.
2.8 The Organizational Structure of SADC

It is noteworthy that an institutional reform following an Extra Ordinary Summit held in 2001 saw the outdooring of a new structure comprising eight principal institutions and organs which are; the Summit Heads of State or Governments, Summit Troika of the Organ, SADC Tribunal, SADC Council of Ministers, Sectoral and Cluster Ministerial Committee, Standing Committee of Senior Officials, SADC Secretariat, SADC National Committees and the SADC Parliamentary Forum. These institutions now form part of the organizational structure of SADC.

Also, within the Secretariat there is the Department for Politics, Defence and Security. This Department is headed by a Chief Director who reports directly to an Executive Secretary and is made up of a Directorate for Politics and Diplomacy in charge of the Organ, a Directorate
for Defence and Security chiefly working with the SADC standby brigade and a Strategic Analysis Unit established to deal with political, security and socio-economic threats. The early warning Situation Room is also a sub-unit of this structure. An important requirement for appointing personnel of this Department is that they be citizens of SADC’s member states.\textsuperscript{32} The activities of SADC’s Organ on Politics, Defence and Security are chiefly guided by the SADC Treaty, the Protocol on Politics and Security Cooperation and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO).\textsuperscript{33} The following section therefore discusses each of these organs and their relation to SADC’s objective of early warning and early response.

\textbf{2.9 Politics, Defence and Security Organ}

The main aims of SADC’s Organ are noted in Article 10(A) of the SADC Treaty\textsuperscript{34} and include defense and military responsibilities, prevention of crimes, peace-making and the enforcement of peacekeeping, intelligence, foreign policy, conflict management, prevention and resolution and human rights’ protection.\textsuperscript{35} The Organ, through its military and defense capacities guards against instability, inter and intrastate conflict and acts of aggression; creates a security capacity which is collective in nature and takes into consideration the development of the Mutual Defence Pact. It also aims at keeping cross border crimes in check, pushing for a communal approach to domestic security and working closely with intelligence units as well as ensuring the enhancement of democratic institutions and practices. Peace-making efforts would see a regional peacekeeping capacity being developed while inter and intra state conflicts would be forestalled, contained and resolved. International law ought to be respected in the event that peaceful negotiations have been unsuccessful and enforcement actions have become necessary. Further, early warning of conflicts is of importance as is the management of conflicts that are external to the region yet have an impact on it. Moreover, the warding off, management and resolution of conflicts are key and
the Organ has made provisions for inter and intra state disputes to be mediated. With regards to human rights, early warning is once again of prime significance.

SADC’s Organ is run by a troika system. The term ‘troika’ basically connotes a group of three. At any point in time, the constituent members of SADC’s troika are the current Chair of SADC’s Summit of Heads of States, the incoming Chair who also serves as the Deputy Chairperson and the immediate past Chairperson. The Chairperson of SADC supervises the work of the troika. The chairpersonship is held and rotated annually among the Heads of States of SADC member countries. It is noteworthy that the Organ’s activities are informed and guided by three main committees: the Ministerial Committee of the Organ, Interstate Defence and Security Committee and the Interstate Defence and Security Committee. The Defence Sub-Committee, Public Security Committee; and State Security Sub-Committee make up the Interstate Defence and Security Committee.

2.10 The Harmonised Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ

There also exists a Harmonised Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ which is made up of five main strategic sectors. These are the Political Sector in charge of national government and foreign affairs; the Defence Sector, responsible for peace, security and stability; the State Security Sector connected to intelligence and security matters; the Public Security Sector responsible for protecting the civil society; and the Police Sector which has to do with law enforcement. The Strategic Indicative Plans for the Organ were introduced to engender a politically stable and peaceful setting to aid in the attainment of the socio-economic goals of the Southern African region. In order to attain that state of relative stability at all times to facilitate development, it is important that an early warning system exists where early warning signals can be sent out to alert the appropriate recipients of imminent danger or
threats. An early response mechanism is also essential to ensure that early action is taken to ultimately safeguard and enhance sub-regional peace and security. Having identified SADC’s Organ and how its constituent components facilitate the attainment of SADC’s objective of safeguarding sub-regional security, a visual representation of SADC’s Organ will be presented.

2.11 SADC’s Organ

The figure above (Figure 2) constitutes a graphical representation of the hierarchical distribution of the functions and offices of SADC’s Organ. It was included because it serves
as a graphical summary of SADC’s Organ and provides information on the offices and functions of the Organ at a quick glance. It also presents the various component units of the Organ and the specific matters that they deal with.

2.12 The Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO I and SIPO II)

In 2001, SADC’s Summit directed the SADC Organ to come out with a Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) to serve as a guide for implementing SADC’s Protocol during its first five years of existence. SIPO got approved in August 2003 and exists specifically to engender a politically stable and peaceful security environment which would enable the SADC region achieve its goals of socio-economic development, eradication of poverty and regional integration.43

A second Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO II) was initially drawn up in 2003 and modified in 2012.44 This plan is a strategic document which spans five years and makes provision for the institutional framework of SADC with regards to coordinating policy, implementing political, defense and security decisions. SIPO II has been successful in a number of areas which include inter alia, facilitating defense and security among SADC countries, launching and operationalizing the SADC Standby Force together with the establishment of the Regional Early Warning Centre responsible for detecting, averting and managing conflicts.

In addition, the Organ together with the SADC Secretariat is in charge of six main areas which are; politics and diplomacy, defense, police, state security, public security and regional peacekeeping.45 Politics and diplomacy have to do with governmental cooperation and the management of disasters while the military is included in the area of defense. Also, the
Organization of Southern African Regional Police Chiefs see to the security of civilians while state security is pursued with the support of the Regional Early Warning Centre. The Organ is responsible for the standby force and regional peacekeeping committee.

2.13 The structure of SADC’s peace and security architecture

The peace and security architecture of SADC comprises a number of people and offices. These are the Chair, a Troika made up of the chair, previous chair and incoming chair, a plenary Ministerial Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Public Security and State Security from all SADC member-states that are full party to the Organ Protocol. Also, there is an Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee made up of all Ministers of Foreign Affairs; an Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) consisting of all Ministers for Defence, Public Security and State Security with three sub-committees on Defence, State Security and Public Security together with various substructures which exist at the ministerial and functional levels. Again, SADC does not have a Peace and Security Council or Committee with reduced membership that acts on behalf of Member States as do AU and ECOWAS. SADC’s system makes room for all the countries to play a role in the peace and security structure beneath the level of the Heads of State. The troika exists to “steer” affairs such that decisions are arrived at based on consensus at the Summit level.

It is noteworthy that SADC’s Organ Protocol makes room for the establishment of an early warning system aimed at facilitating well-timed action to keep conflicts from breaking out or escalating. When South Africa was chair of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, the establishment of a regional early warning system and the SADC peacekeeping standby brigade was of utmost importance in 2004/2005 although the details of their progress is not readily accessible. Again, in July 2003, the Inter-State Defence and
Security Committee, in compliance with a directive from the Ministerial Committee of the Organ which met in July 2003 officially sanctioned the conceptual principles on which SADC’s early warning system was to be based. A year later, a team of experts from the SADC and Organ troikas was given the mandate to start up processes which will culminate in the establishment of a regional early warning system. In 2005, a workshop was organized in Boksburg to concretize arrangements put in place for the early warning system of SADC. The National Intelligence Coordinating Council (NICOC) is in charge of operationalizing the regional early warning system within South Africa.

2.14 SADC’s Regional Early Warning Centre

SADC possesses a Regional Early Warning Centre which exists to detect security threats and try to keep them under control. This Regional Early Warning Centre was set up following the recognition that a Regional Early Warning System had to be established to foresee and detect the ramifications of security-related problems. SADC’s early warning centre incorporated inputs from the early warning centres at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. The establishment of this centre was initiated by the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee under the directive of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ (MCO) at a meeting convened in July 2003 in Maputo. A team of experts was engaged to plan and physically establish the system. The Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ on Peace, Security and Defence gave legitimacy to SADC’s mandate to set up a Regional Early Warning Centre. Initiating the establishment of the centre was two-fold, the first phase had to do with the concept, structure, working system, administrative and financial issues while the second phase dealt with getting the Centre to function and be operational. The decision to execute the plans of establishment in this manner was reached at another meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ in July 2004.
The basic aim of SADC’s Regional Early Warning Centre entails the strengthening of the mechanisms of SADC in the forestalling, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with the stipulations of the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and SIPO.\textsuperscript{55} Again, the responsibilities of the Centre include compiling strategic assessment and analyzing data collected at the regional level. The Centre is also tasked with sharing information on major issues which threaten the security and stability of the region as well as proposing measures for averting, fighting and keeping such threats under control.

\textbf{2.15 The SADC Brigade}

SADC has also established the SADC Brigade to help in the deployment of troops for military interventions in grave circumstances or at the request of member states to help restore peace and security.\textsuperscript{56} A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was concluded among member states to provide a sound legal basis for cooperation in the establishment of this brigade, also known as the SADCBRIG. In accordance with article 5(2) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU), the Protocol on the Peace and Security Council (PSC) was established as a collective security and early warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa.\textsuperscript{57} Within the framework of article 13 of the PSC Protocol the AU Commission is mandated to establish an African Standby Force (ASF) which will consists of five standby brigades in each of the five regions in Africa.\textsuperscript{58} It is within this arrangement that the SADC Interstate, Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) set up a technical team comprised of military planners, which saw the establishment of the Planning Element (PLANEM) in Gaborone, Botswana, in April and May 2005.\textsuperscript{59} Like the other African regional standby forces, the SADC Brigade is part of the African Standby Force (ASF). The SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government is the mandating authority of SADCBRIG. In the sections that follow, the political impasse in
Lesotho in 2014 and the 2008 post-election violence in Zimbabwe will be discussed in fuller detail to pave way for the testing and analysis of SADC’s early warning and response mechanisms of the Southern African region in the third chapter of this study.

2.16 The political impasse in Lesotho

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a constitutional monarchy located in Southern Africa. Following the elections in 2012, the country had been governed by a coalition government made up of three parties- the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), All Basotho Convention (ABC) and the Basotho National Party (BNP) headed by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Sports. This coalition however has been described as weak and fragile and was reported to be in a state of near-collapse months prior to the heightening of the political unrest in Lesotho.

In August 2014, the Prime Minister of Lesotho fled the country with his family to save his life after what was described as an “almost coup d’état”. In the capital Maseru, the police headquarters and the residence of Prime Minister Thomas Thabane were surrounded by the military forces while some radio and television stations were shut down. After denying their involvement in the attempted coup, the military justified some of their actions. They stated that their surrounding the police headquarters and firing of gunshots was informed by their quest to disarm the police and prevent them from supplying arms to members of the youth who were preparing to interrupt an anti-Thabane demonstration which had been scheduled for the following week. Other reports also indicate that the police had been disarmed by the military.
The sources of the attempted coup have been said to date back to the 2012 elections which led to the formation of the coalition government headed by Prime Minister Thomas Thabane whose leadership has not particularly been spectacular hence the plan to put out a vote of no-confidence against him. Further this attempted coup could be traced to the fact that Prime Minister Thomas Thabane and the Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing had been engaged in a power struggle which culminated in the suspension of Lesotho’s parliament in June and the Prime Minister’s refusal to renew the contract of the Head of Lesotho Defence Force, Lt. General Kamoli. It was reported that Thabane suspended parliament because he dreaded the vote of no confidence which could be cast against him. Prime Minister Thabane is said to have the support of the police while Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing is backed by the army. Although it was reported that not many lives were lost, the security situation of Lesotho at this time was critical as gunshots were fired while military presence was heavy in many parts especially in the capital Maseru. Indeed despite the fact that Lesotho was scheduled to serve as Chair of SADC’s troika on politics, defence and security, this role was passed to South Africa by a unanimous decision because the conditions in Lesotho at the time did not favour a country responsible for directing sub-regional security matters.

2.17 The 2008 post-election violence in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a country in Southern African located between the Zambesi and Limpopo rivers. It shares borders with South Africa to the South while Botswana lies South West of it. Zambia borders it to the North West and Mozambique to the East. The March edition of the elections in Zimbabwe in 2008 took place at a time when the Zimbabwean economy was shaky; in spite of this the Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party, the ruling party headed by President Mugabe was still convinced that it still had the support of the masses and desisted from coercing people to vote for it. Indeed the top officials
of the security forces such as army, prison service and the police renewed their allegiance to President Mugabe and entreated their subordinates to do same. It took over a month for the official results of this first round of elections to be released. As the results took President Zimbabwe and his ZANU-PF by surprise due to its unfavourable nature, ZANU-PF contested them and demanded that they be recounted. The recount led the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to announce in May 2008 that Tsvangirai and his Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) garnered 47.9% of the votes while Mugabe’s was 43.2%. In accordance with Zimbabwe’s amended electoral laws of 2008, since none of the two candidates secured 50% +1 of the votes, a run-off had to be conducted and it was scheduled for June 27, 2008. The ZANU-PF then resorted to the use of violence to coerce people into voting for it as it sought to win the elections at all cost. Although Tsvangirai believed he had won the first round albeit by a narrow majority, he decided to present himself as a candidate for the run-off but pulled out of the race later on in a bid to protect his supporters from the possible cruelty that would be meted out against them by ZANU-PF if he won. Many allegations were made against the MDC- that they were supposedly sabotaging the land settlement programme, giving out bribes to influence the outcome of the elections among others. Members of the MDC and people believed to have voted for them in the first round suffered many brutalities, were driven out of their homes and were under constant threats. In some cases, senior officials of the MDC were forcibly taken away from their homes while some of them were assassinated. Again, the Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network (ZESN) made reports about how often its national election observers were threatened, assaulted and harassed by some of the supporters of the ZANU-PF.

The opposition party, the MDC was not totally innocent of the charges of violence as the members also engaged in some acts of aggression which included setting the homes of some
senior ZANU-PF official on fire. The runoff was held in June as scheduled with Mugabe being the only substantive candidate although Tsvangirai’s name still appeared. President Mugabe emerged victorious and was sworn in on the 29th of June 2008. Even after winning this second election, Mugabe remained determined to squash all opposition by continuing with his acts of brutalities. Although the Global Political Agreement which brought about a unity government was signed political turbulence still existed as ZANU-PF did not refrain from engaging in more violent activities.

2.18 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has presented an overview of the early warning and response mechanisms on the African continent with more focus on SADC’s structure. The CEWS of the African Union, CEWARN of the IGAD and ECOWARN of ECOWAS served as bases for drawing references for the nature and functions of SADC’s early warning and response mechanisms and whether the existence of such a mechanism in the Southern African region is justified. In addition, there was an exposition on SADC’s Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO I and II), the structure of the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee, SADC Brigade and the Regional Early Warning Centre. The identification of the structure and functions of all these component parts which constitute SADC’s early warning and response mechanism paves way for a more detailed discussion in chapter three about SADC’s experiences. This analysis is with regard to how effectively or otherwise SADC’s early warning and response mechanisms have been applied to situations which have the tendency to threaten the peace and security of the Southern African region. The 2008 post-election violence in Zimbabwe and the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014 serve as case studies to this end.
Endnotes

2 For more information visit: Regional Early Warning Centre. Southern African Development Community. http://www.sadc.int/sadc-secretariat/services-centres/regional-early-warning-centre/
5 See the CEWS Handbook.
7 Ibid
8 See Chapter II, Article 4 of the ECOWAS Treaty (1993)
14 Ibid
15 Ibid
19 Ibid
20 See the Treaty of SADC.
22 As stipulated in SADC, Southern Africa: A Framework and Strategy for Building the Community (Harare, January 1993)
23 Ibid
25 The Frontline States coalition, established in 1976 and disbanded in 1994, sought to secure the liberation of southern African countries and counter regional destabilisation by Pretoria. Its members included Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
26 See the Communiqué on the Summit of Heads of State or Governments of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Gaborone, June 28, 1996.
27 Ibid
28 Check SADC’s website http://www.sadc.int/ for more details
29 For more information on SADC’s Secretariat please visit: http://www.sadc.int/sadc-secretariat/
30 Figure 1: SADC’s Organisational Structure. SADC Secretariat. http://www.sadc.int/sadc-secretariat/.
31 Visit http://www.sadc.int/about-sadc/sadc-institutions/ for more information on SADC’s Institutions
32 Ibid
34 For more information visit http://www.afrimap.org/english/images/treaty/file423ac0d55628c.pdf for the Consolidated Text of the Treaty of SADC as amended.
35 See SADC’s website http://www.sadc.int/ for more details
36 Visit http://www.sadc.int/about-sadc/sadc-institutions/summit/ for more information on SADC’s Summit of Heads of State or Government.
38 Ibid
40 Ibid
43 Ibid
45 Visit the webpage of SADC’s Secretariat: http://www.sadc.int/sadc-secretariat/.
46 Ibid
48 Retrieved from a presentation made by the Department of Defence to the Joint Standing Committee on Defence on ISDSC in November 2003.
51 Check SADC Regional Early Warning Centre. SADC Secretariat. http://www.sadc.int/sadc-secretariat/services-centres/regional-early-warning-centre/.
52 Ibid
53 Ibid
54 Ibid
58 Ibid
59 Ibid


Ibid


CHAPTER THREE

SADC’S EXPERIENCE WITH REGARD TO CONFLICT SITUATIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF SADC’S SECURITY STRUCTURE

3.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter provided an overview of the nature of SADC’s early warning and response mechanism as well as a profile on the two cases under consideration: situations of conflict in two Southern African countries (Zimbabwe and Lesotho) which saw SADC’s intervention. This chapter entails an analysis of SADC’s intervention in the two crises. This analysis is necessary for the assessment of SADC’s security capacity and its ability or otherwise to resolve conflicts in the Southern African region. SADC’s early warning capacity is examined to ascertain whether signs of conflict were detected and how they were detected. This examination investigates how information which would have served to warn stakeholders about the imminent interruption of peace was disseminated and how fast or otherwise such information or warning signals were sent out. This work is thus interested in finding out whether or not SADC’s structures succeeded in providing timely early warning. In addition, this chapter discusses SADC’s response mechanisms. The study ascertains whether SADC’s intervention served its purpose of effectively managing and/or resolving the problems with respect to the profiled conflicts in Lesotho and Zimbabwe. Also, it will be important to find out if SADC could have prevented these crises especially the bloody violence following Zimbabwe’s elections in 2008. This analysis brings to light the strengths and weaknesses of SADC’s security structure, particularly its early warning and response mechanisms and whether or not this system is functional and actually operates in the way it was set up to. In practical terms, such an analysis also examines the real situation on the
ground- how SADC has dealt with matters of sub-regional peace and security in the past, what SADC has done or introduced to improve its capacity and efficiency and how future threats and actual disruptions will be effectively dealt with. From such an analysis, a projection of SADC’s level of preparedness to address potential situations of violence in the Southern region can be made.

The Southern African region like other sub-regions in Africa experiences conflicts within its member states and across national borders. These conflicts impact negatively on the political stability of the region. Some of the conflicts erupt as a result of contention over political power and natural resources. Many times, conflict resolution methods in this region tend to be skewed towards mediation and dialogue. According to Hartmann, this tendency can be attributed to the political history of the Southern African region; the independence struggles and disassociation from colonial rule as well as internal strife and civil wars.¹ The costly price paid to attain independence and self-rule is more than enough reason to hold on tightly to state sovereignty. The collective security threats often tend to be dealt with through the use of soft power tactics.² Decisions on deploying military intervention are often taken with a lot of caution. In fact, since SADC’s military intervention in the conflicts which broke out in Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998, no new military interventions had been recorded as at 2012.³ According to SADC’s Protocol of Peace, Defence and Security, the role of SADC as a sub-regional body goes beyond intervening only in inter-state conflicts.⁴ Its active participation in preventing, managing and resolving internal political crises by peaceful means through capacity building is required.⁵ Before any credible assessment of SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms can be done, it is important to have a yardstick by which SADC’s interventions in conflict situations can be
measured. The next sub-section discusses some of the criteria which inform the positive or negative evaluation of early warning and early response mechanisms.

3.1 Assessing SADC’s early warning and early response mechanism: what are the determinants of a good early warning and early response mechanism and the best practices?

In order to answer the question of how successful or otherwise an early warning and response mechanism has been, in practical terms, the study adopts the process of comparative analysis of best practices. Thus, the focus is on some best practices at other sub-regional, continental and global levels, which can be examined to serve as a basis for assessing how successful or otherwise SADC’s system is with respect to providing sustainable solutions. Notwithstanding the foregoing, although best practices exist, each region is unique in terms of demography and nature of conflicts as well as general perceptions of how a conflict plays out and should be managed. Thus, a strategy of conflict resolution which may have been very successful and hailed by all in one region may face challenges in another region due to the difference in conflict dynamics and nature and perceptions of stakeholders in the conflict. The following analysis will therefore take into consideration the variations in the context of the Southern African region. Furthermore, the scholarly works of some authorities in conflict analysis are explored to obtain useful insight into what constitutes a successful early warning and response mechanism. To achieve this the study adopts the prescription of the following authors.

First for Cilliers, essentially early warning should be concerned about what the conflict is all about and should deal with those factors which fuel the conflict and those which have the potential of calming heightened tensions. Again, early warning should aim at identifying which people are involved in the conflict and what policy makers can do about the conflict
situation. Nathan for instance posits that for an early warning system to be described as a good one it should be credible, accurate, timely, relevant and analytical and must be able to predict and warn. It also should be practically beneficial to the leaders and country officials who take decisions on early response or action. In designing an early warning mechanism, the exact needs of persons who are directly related to decision-making must be taken into consideration. (Such persons include officials who decide when and how conflict mediation and preventive diplomacy must be employed; officials who are actually involved in the mediation processes, officials heading post-conflict peace and reconstruction missions in post-conflict zones as well as persons tasked with assessing how feasible or otherwise a military peace operation will be as well as those involved in planning and carrying out the peace operation).

For Nathan therefore, early warning and response must go together at all times and early warning and response must go beyond anticipating and preventing conflicts to actually managing and resolving them. It is also important for those who design such early warning and response mechanisms to work closely with those who will use them and this collaboration must never be severed. Information must also flow both ways to help improve the system overtime and to ensure that a functional and appropriate mechanism is drawn up to meet the exact needs of the users of the mechanism.

Furthermore, over time, various views have been expressed about the work of SADC especially with regard to fulfilling its mandate of promoting peace, security and stability in the Southern African region. Some have criticized SADC as being “largely ineffectual… with a poor record of peacemaking” especially in some of the violent conflicts that plagued the Southern African region in the 1990s. On the other hand, in more recent times, the work of
SADC has been lauded for instance for sending facilitators and mediators to carry out peace talks to broker deals which seek to find lasting solutions to the problem. Motsamai for instance is of the view that SADC’s mediation efforts in Lesotho yielded positive fruits largely because the opposing parties were willing to pursue what was in the national interest and not their selfish individual interests.\textsuperscript{11} 

Several factors inform the classification of interventions in the form of early warning and early response efforts as successful or unsuccessful. Potential conflict situations and threats must be monitored closely and early warning signals must be sent out in a timely manner to the relevant officials.\textsuperscript{12} It is important that interferences are minimized so that the warning signals reach their destination in one piece so early action can be taken. Early warning does not end with sending out warning signals, further monitoring and analysis ought to be made.\textsuperscript{13} Policy-makers must be sufficiently resourced and motivated to act promptly and speedily; matters requiring urgent attention need not be politicized as every minute lost in delays means the situation is getting more dangerous and potentially life threatening. When such officials receive these signals, indeed even before these signals are received, the officials must have also been monitoring the conflict situation closely such that early action can be taken. It is important to add that early action does not necessarily suggest military interventions. Where such military interventions are uncalled for, several other methods can be employed, for instance mediation and other tools of preventive diplomacy as are frequently employed in the Southern African region.

In addition, the perceptions of the stakeholders or victims of the conflict are important in assessing whether an intervention has been successful or not. This is simply because, although the regional body may send in troops or mediators, such persons may only be
carrying out orders from superiors and upholding mandates given to them yet the stakeholders and citizens might be unhappy or dissatisfied with the manner in which things are being done. This may be because the situation is being further complicated or more lives are being lost and virtually no progress is being made. Another issue of concern worth mentioning is when the given mandate contravenes International Law. Can such an intervention be truly described as a successful one especially when the very persons it sought to protect are unhappy for one reason or the other? This notwithstanding, it is quite rare to find all factors necessary for an early warning and early response intervention to be described as successful in each and every conflict situation. Having taken all the prescriptions into consideration it can be concluded that generally, an intervention (early warning and early response) may qualify as having been successful if it meets the goals for which it was undertaken, if it meets internationally accepted standards, does not breach international law and if a significant portion of the populace is largely satisfied. Having established what constitutes best practices as per scholars and experts, SADC’s role in the post-election violence in Zimbabwe and political impasse in Lesotho are discussed below.

3.2 SADC’s role in the post-election violence in Zimbabwe (2008)

Prior to the elections in March 2008, in May 2007, former South African President Thabo Mbeki was charged by SADC to confer with the Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the two factions of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-Tsvangirai, MDC-T and MDC-Mutambara, MDC-M) to reach a political agreement. MDC-M had broken away from MDC-T in 2005 and was led by Arthur Mutambara. This mediation was aimed at ensuring that the decision to have a harmonized presidential, local government and parliamentary elections was upheld. Again, it sought to reach a consensus on the measures to ensure that the results were generally accepted and for the will of the people
of Zimbabwe to reign. Unfortunately, however these negotiations suffered a breakdown mainly after President Mugabe single-handedly chose and announced March 29 as the date for the general elections to be held. After the elections, there was an Extra-Ordinary meeting of SADC Heads of Government and their representatives in Lusaka in April 2008 to discuss the political developments in Zimbabwe. SADC offered to send election observers to witness the counting and verification processes. Again, SADC petitioned all stakeholders to stay calm and avoid displaying attitudes which will incense the already tense political atmosphere in Zimbabwe. It also encouraged the electoral officials of Zimbabwe to avoid undue delays and make the election results available to the public promptly. However, SADC’s recommendations were not adhered to as the results were released more than a month after the elections were held. According to the Electoral Commission, Morgan Tsvangirai got approximately 47.9% of the votes while President Mugabe got 43.2%. Since neither of the two obtained 50% + 1, a runoff was scheduled. Mugabe won the runoff overwhelmingly. Mugabe was the only candidate as Tsvangirai had pulled out of the race fearing that worse threats and violence will be meted out against his supporters if he won the runoff. This runoff was generally regarded as not being free or fair given the coercion suffered by some citizens of Zimbabwe in a bid to make them vote for Mugabe. Some of the concerns which were expressed included compelling people to wear ZANU-PF paraphernalia before they were allowed to move about freely, thus influencing their vote. Also there was the demanding of “fees” from persons who had denounced their support for MDC before they were allowed to resettle in their homes. The observer team of SADC added its voice to the disapprobation of the runoff.

A power-sharing government was sworn into office in February 2009 through the combined efforts of SADC and the AU in response to the numerous concerns raised about the
credibility of the elections. The formation of the inclusive government was preceded by the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in September 2008 by the leaders of ZANU-PF and the two factions of the MDC: MDC-T and MDC-M. Since March 2007, SADC had charged Mr. Mbeki to act as principal mediator in the year-long talks between ZANU-PF, MDC-T and MDC-M which eventually led to the power-sharing agreement and Mbeki’s appointment was approved by the AU. This power-sharing agreement sought to bring an end to the political and economic troubles of Zimbabwe and stipulated that the position of Head of State will remain in the hands of President Mugabe while Tsvangirai would serve as the Prime Minister and Mutambara as Deputy Prime Minister. It is noteworthy that the elections in March were greatly facilitated by the amendment of the constitution arrived at through the talks. The amendment of the constitution sanctioned the holding of harmonized elections.

As late as March 2011, the violence, which occurred after the elections in March 2008 was said to be still ongoing and this provoked a strong verbal response from the Troika of SADC on Politics, Defence and Security warning that all forms of violence and harassment especially against innocent citizens be halted. Again, following the AU Summit convened in Egypt in June of the same year; the AU Summit reached a consensus that SADC would resume the mediation efforts in Zimbabwe. SADC’s negotiation efforts yielded some dividends, notable among them is the GPA or coalition government. According to Raftopolos, the creation of the GPA by SADC was influenced by the quest to strike a balance between safeguarding its sovereignty as a sub-regional body thus warding off unwanted external interference. It also sought to meet those lawful demands of the collective people in Zimbabwe who could exercise their franchise. After the GPA had been signed, the signatories - the two factions of the MDC and ZANU-PF expressed concerns about how the
GPA will be implemented as it lacked a clear plan of action regarding its implementation. This challenge was attributed to SADC because it did not put in place an unbiased, independent structure to oversee the implementation process. Instead, the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) was formed to guarantee that the members of the coalition government will abide by the dictates of the GPA. Despite the formation and existence of JOMIC, the challenges persisted. While some attribute the ineffectiveness of JOMIC to the deficient interaction between SADC and JOMIC, others posit that this Committee was not effectively supervised by SADC. Thomas Deve posits that although Zimbabwe’s woes at the time could be directly traced to elections and their effect, SADC’s focus was rather on facilitating the establishment of a national unity government to contain the situation and prevent its deterioration. This is noteworthy as some of the best practices of early warning and early responses have indicated that conflicts are best resolved when the causes or sources of conflict are correctly determined and dealt with.

### 3.3 An evaluation of SADC’s intervention in the post-election violence in Zimbabwe in 2008

This sub-section aims at assessing SADC’s intervention in the post-election violence in Zimbabwe in 2008. In terms of early warning, available information suggests that in March 2008, SADC commissioned Mr. Thabo Mbeki to engage the leaders of the opposition parties, ZANU-PF and MDC in dialogue. These negotiations however suffered a breakdown mainly after President Mugabe single-handedly chose and announced March 29 as the date for the general elections to be held. After the elections were held in March and a runoff was scheduled for June, SADC again intervened at a point where the post-election violence in Zimbabwe had already set in. In this regard, SADC’s role can be described as one which sought to manage the situation and prevent it from worsening or escalating into more violence. As has been pointed out, SADC appears to favour mediation as a tool for conflict
resolution, it is thus of little wonder that after SADC’s Troika convened its emergency meeting, envoys such as former President Mbeki were dispatched to preside over dialogue between contending parties and to encourage all stakeholders and citizens to uphold the rule of law and especially SADC’s guidelines for holding free and fair elections in the Southern African region. In spite of the numerous challenges which Mr. Thabo Mbeki encountered, his efforts eventually proved successful. He got all three factions to concur with those essential electoral reforms which ultimately contributed to a noticeable drop in the previously high rate of violence which often characterized elections in Zimbabwe prior to the elections in March 2008. Although the political atmosphere became turbulent again with ZANU-PF’s reluctance to concede loss after the first round in March 2008 and the preparations to conduct a runoff in June 2008 were in place, negotiations and dialogues inspired by SADC persisted. The ruling party ZANU-PF was accused of committing widespread atrocities in a bid to force people to vote for President Mugabe to remain in power. There were moments where there were deadlocks and stalemates, no party was willing to acquiesce yet SADC’s persistence was rewarded as eventually a GPA was reached and signed in September 2008 and an inclusive government was formed in February 2009.

The establishment of the GPA was not without obstacles. SADC came under sharp criticism regarding its inability to provide structured external supervision for the implementation of the GPA. In addition, it appeared that the signatories were at liberty to interpret the agreement however they pleased or deemed fit and some abused this chance. A typical instance was when the office of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai was reported to have set up government structures similar to the already-existing structures. Again based on the findings, with regards to undertaking preventive measures to forestall the situation of violence in Zimbabwe, SADC’s performance has not been convincing enough. This is
because per the benchmark for successful early warning mechanisms, SADC’s intervention was not early or effective enough to prevent the post-election violence from occurring.

With regard to early response, SADC can be commended as it responded swiftly to the situation and intervention right on time to prevent the escalation of tensions and violence. SADC’s Troika was quick to dispatch an observer team to monitor events and a mediator to facilitate peace talks. Although the process of mediation faced some challenges it eventually yielded remarkable results which can be seen in the power-sharing deal which was brokered by SADC. In spite of the numerous casualties and targeted wide-spread violence, SADC’s response can still be described as timely because it succeeded in preventing the degeneration of the violence into a full-scale, all-out civil war in Zimbabwe.

3.4 SADC’s Response to The political impasse in Lesotho

In accordance with the aims of this study which include discussing SADC’s experience in terms of its response to conflict situations, this sub-section discusses the role played by SADC in the political crisis of Lesotho in 2014. It is noteworthy that SADC’s intervention in Lesotho dates back to previous political crises. About seven years prior to the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014, national elections were conducted in Lesotho in 2007 which ended in a political stalemate. The dispute was essentially over how seats were allocated in parliament. SADC at the time intervened by sending in a mission to provide mediation services. The mediation was presided over by Sir Ketumile Masire, a Special Envoy of SADC and the Christian Council of the Lesotho. The mediation generally facilitated talks to engage in electoral and constitutional reforms to provide legal and acceptable underlying conditions for elections to be held. The political impasse in 2014 was considered by SADC as a stalemate thus an emergency meeting was convened and it was decided that a facilitator
be sent out to help with talks and dialogue to restore peace.\(^ {47}\) A roadmap was drawn to help address the political challenges facing the coalition while measures to facilitate the reopening of parliament were discussed.\(^ {48}\) This roadmap included details on how to lift the ban on the convocation of Lesotho’s parliament and by which date this should have been achieved by the members of the coalition government and handed over to the King of Lesotho. Again, a team of observers was appointed to provide timeous advice as to how to resolve the impasse. This was to be an observer team on politics, defense and security and was directed by the Troika to be sent out to Lesotho for three months after which evaluation would take place all in a bid to promote peace and stability within the institutions of Defence and Security of Lesotho.\(^ {49}\)\(^ {50}\) The Communiqué issued by SADC’s Double Troika Summit noted as follows:

> Summit mandated the SADC Organ Troika plus Zimbabwe to urgently deploy the full SADC Politics, Defence and Security observation mission in Lesotho for a period of three months, after which it could be reviewed to ensure peace and stability within the Defence and Security establishments.\(^ {51}\)

SADC’s Summit also directed that the matter of dispatching the team of observers had to be treated with top priority.\(^ {52}\) It is important to note that SADC had been concerned about the situation in Lesotho since the suspension of parliament in June 2014.\(^ {53}\) The Chairperson of SADC’s Organ at the time, President Pohamba of Namibia met with the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Home Affairs in Namibia.\(^ {54}\) This meeting resulted in the release of a statement wherein an agreement was announced to make the required changes to ensure that the coalition operated without much difficulty in the interest of Lesotho.\(^ {55}\) The political tensions however continued to exist and SADC described the situation as a stalemate during its summit in Zimbabwe in August 2014.\(^ {56}\) In September 2014, the new Chairman of SADC’s Organ, President Zuma met with the three leaders of the coalition government- Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing of the Lesotho Congress
for Democracy (LCD), Prime Minister Thabane of the All Basotho Convention (ABC) and Minister of Sports, Thesele Maseribane of the Basotho National Party (BNP). It was at this meeting that the agreement to draw up a roadmap to deal with the situation and reopen parliament was reached. SADC also pledged to provide a facilitator and a task team to assist the leaders of Lesotho in upholding the provisions of the road map.

The Commonwealth of Nations did not remain silent on the matter. It also expressed the fact that it would not accept any change of government which was unconstitutional. The UN also added its voice to the “zero-tolerance for unconstitutional change of power campaign” and commended the earlier efforts of SADC and the Commonwealth of Nations.

Again, the stakeholders were admonished to uphold the provisions found in the three agreements which SADC helped reach. These were the Maseru Security Accord, the Maseru Facilitation Declaration and the Electoral Pledge. Actions which would undermine the conduct of free, fair and credible elections were declared unacceptable. The Facilitation Declaration was drawn up and signed to promote peace and stability in Lesotho. To this end, a SADC Facilitation Mission was set up to preside over dialogue and efforts to restore Lesotho to its former state of stability. This Mission aimed at securing the consent and commitment of relevant stakeholders with regards to reopening parliament on October 17, 2014 by the King of Lesotho. The Security Accord had to do with security reforms and efforts which were being made to safeguard the security of Lesotho to make for the smooth conduct of elections. It sought to improve cordial relations between the top officials and members of the Lesotho Mounted Police Service and the Lesotho Defence Force. The Electoral Pledge served to develop a conducive and favourable atmosphere to promote the conduct of elections in the country. By appending their signatures, the leaders were giving
assurance about their readiness and willingness to uphold the constitution and respect the rule of law.⁶⁸

3.5 An evaluation of SADC’s intervention in Lesotho

In assessing whether or not SADC’s early warning and response mechanism was functional and successful in the political impasse of Lesotho, all of SADC’s early actions to forestall or prevent the situation as well as those timely actions it carried out in response to the situation are considered. In the case of Lesotho, the facilitator was accused of trying to revive the coalition government instead of reconvening parliament.⁶⁹ From the meeting of the partners of the coalition government in Pretoria it could be gathered that the more pressing issue was that of reopening parliament yet later when the facilitator came in, he appeared to be “following orders” to prioritize matters of security.⁷⁰ The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in its report about SADC’s monitoring role over the political impasse maintains that the security situation in the country had reached a critical point as the security forces were involved in the political struggle and were on different sides. The military was supporting the Deputy Prime Minister while the police was defending the cause of the Prime Minister.⁷¹ The parliamentarians wished to see the reopening of parliament treated with more urgency as according to them, the coalition government had already collapsed.⁷² According to one of the legislators, Tlohang Sekhamane of the Mokhotlong constituency in Lesotho, although he had presented the position of the legislators- prioritizing the reopening of parliament to the facilitator sent by SADC, he doubted that the facilitator would succeed in resolving the situation because he was more concerned about “resuscitating the coalition government of the day to allow for the formation of another coalition”.⁷³ It is noteworthy that Sekhamane mentioned that the facilitator would be given a chance but if he failed the legislators would explore other democratic forms of resolving the situation of impasse on their own.⁷⁴ Some
questions which this statement may provoke are how exactly is democracy defined here and who sanctions what can be considered as a democratic way of resolving an impasse and what cannot?

SADC’s intervention to prevent a military takeover in Lesotho has largely been described as successful.\textsuperscript{75} The gravity of the situation drew the attention of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) which was expected to make the contenders in the power struggle aware of the fact that the African Union did not condone the unlawful ousting of constitutionally-elected governments.\textsuperscript{76} This served to buttress the position of SADC regarding the matter.

At an Extra-ordinary Summit of the Troika in February 2015, the political situation in Lesotho featured prominently on the agenda.\textsuperscript{77} SADC received a report and an update on the political state of affairs and in consultation with the SADC Election Advisory Council, approved the decision for elections to be conducted earlier than planned as the atmosphere in Lesotho was described as one which could withstand the pressures of elections.\textsuperscript{78} It also declared that it was committed to find a lasting solution to the challenges facing Lesotho especially as the leaders had reached a consensus on how to deal with those pressing issues.\textsuperscript{79} In line with ensuring a peaceful atmosphere for the conduct of free and fair elections, other member countries were asked to send in members of their police force to complement that of Lesotho’s while the observer mission was tasked to monitor or evaluate variables such as equal access to the press and state media, whether or not people were politically tolerant and whether or not people were truly free to align themselves with any group or organization of their choice.
3.6 The strengths and weaknesses of SADC’s security structure

3.6.1 Strengths

The centralized nature of functions and activities within SADC allows for SADC’s Secretariat in Gaborone to be directly involved in coordinating and keeping track of all the decisions and actions taken by SADC. This therefore eliminates the need to deal with the whims of different leaders of the governments of SADC member-states when the structure was previously decentralized. Also, unnecessary delays and red ‘tapeism’ associated with monitoring and collating information from the different headquarters of SADC’s sub-institutions have been reduced. In the post-election violence of Zimbabwe for instance, SADC’s plan of action in terms of response was mandated by an Extra-ordinary meeting of SADC Heads of States or Government, the highest authority in SADC. Following this summit, a clear plan of action was drawn with virtually no room for misinterpretations about SADC’s position on the matter and what had to be done to resolve the crisis. In addition, according to the communiqué issued by the Double Troika Summit of SADC on September 15, 2014:

“Summit urged the Leaders of the Coalition Government in Lesotho to uphold their commitments towards restoration of constitutional normalcy in the Kingdom…”80

SADC’s Summit further:

Mandated the Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Cyril Ramaphosa, supported by the Secretariat and a team of experts from Troika Member States, to act as SADC Facilitator to the Kingdom of Lesotho with clear Terms of Reference (ToRs) to facilitate the restoration of political and security stability in the Kingdom of Lesotho, in the short and long term.81

From the quotations above, the unity of purpose which characterizes centralized nature of SADC’s security structure with regard to its response to conflict situation can be deduced. Another notable strength of SADC lies in its preferred strategies of conflict resolution—mediation and other preventive diplomatic tools. These are strategies, which essentially
involve dialogues and peace talks and such interventions do not put the lives of the stakeholders or victims of the conflicts into any further danger as compared to military interventions which may pose a threat even to the lives of innocent citizens.

In spite of the foregoing, SADC’s Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ ushered in the Mutual Defence Pact, which aimed at assisting SADC in its efforts to safeguard and preserve regional peace and security. In addition, a Regional Early Warning Centre has been set up to assist in the anticipation, management and resolution of conflicts in the Southern African Region.

3.6.2 Weaknesses

To begin, mostly, member-states are more preoccupied with attaining state/individual goals and not goals of SADC and this can be attributed to the fact that there are no accordant principles to aid in cooperation at the sub-regional level. Furthermore, it appears member states are hesitant to cede part of their authority to the centralized system of SADC, this according to Nathan is because states are politically weak, do not trust each other nor have shared values. According to the available legal provisions, in spite of the existence of general guidelines and principles regarding the conduct of elections, election-related disputes should be resolved based on the national laws and this challenges the implementation capacity of SADC as it can really do no more than strongly recommend that members uphold and abide by SADC principles, it however cannot coerce them in any way to do so.

In terms of oversitting security matters that are sensitive in nature, SADC has been disqualified because it receives financial support from foreigners. In spite of the eagerness
of SADC to set up a mediation unit, it still remains to be achieved although the methodology and framework were approved in 2010. Again, the research revealed that the results of mediation efforts often lack effective supervision, for instance the GPA of Zimbabwe.

Another weakness of SADC’s security structure is that in 2010, an early warning system was introduced yet questions remain about whether or not SADC makes use of the early signals sent out and how timely or otherwise SADC’s response comes through.

SADC’s Secretariat appears to be deficient in ensuring that decisions and mandates are carried out to the letter while SADC itself appears to mostly react to conflicts instead of equipping itself to also foresee such threats and potential conflicts and take preventive measures or act in a timely manner to prevent their escalation into full-blown violence.

SADC’s standby force lacks the civilian component to oversee and satisfy the human security needs. Again, SADC is yet to establish a post-conflict reconstruction programme or mechanism to keep peace after it has been restored and this is quite critical.

In the formulation of the coalition government, important actors such as civil society, labour unions and other smaller political parties were not taken into deep consideration and this fueled the criticism of supporting political exclusivity which is not very beneficial for the pursuit and practice of democracy.

SADC apparently glossed over the need to clearly develop a plan of action regarding the implementation of the GPA; allowing the “warring” factions to figure things out for themselves was not acceptable.
3.7 Current undertakings of SADC to build its mediation capacity and effectiveness

SADC is still trying to develop its mediation capacity as mediation has been a more favoured approach in resolving conflicts in the Southern African region. Currently, mediation efforts under the auspices of SADC are mostly carried out by distinguished personalities such as Heads of States using their good offices. This notwithstanding, it remains important for a formal structure to be established beyond the acceptance in August 2010 of the United Nations’ (UN) Department of Political Affairs Africa 1 desk’s conception of a structure to oversee mediation of conflicts in the Southern African region. The UN hosts a Mediation Support Unit which makes it possible for mediators and other envoys to obtain the required expertise to help in their mediation endeavours and to promote the utility of preventive diplomacy. Preventive diplomacy is a concept that is attributed to the former Secretary-General of the UN, Dag Hammarskjöld. Preventive diplomacy essentially involves the employment of diplomatic action to prevent the degeneration of disputes into conflicts and to contain the spread of conflicts.

This structure is comprised of a Panel of Elders, a Mediation Reference Group and a Mediation Support Unit. The Panel will lead mediation missions while the reference group will make use of expert knowledge of and experience in resolving conflicts while the Support Unit will provide funds for logistics and technical services. The Mediation Support Unit, which is located within the Secretariat of SADC is responsible for tracking potential crises and providing response to early warning signs. Its mandate also covers the documentation of the outcomes and valuable lessons learnt as well as working closely with other international bodies.
3.8 Conclusion

This chapter sought to assess SADC’s early warning and early response mechanism using the context of two conflict situations, which saw the intervention of SADC as the focus of study. This aided in providing relevant information about how SADC fared concerning its intervention in those two situations to enable the researcher make a projection as to how prepared or otherwise SADC is to effectively deal with potential conflict situations in the Southern African region. SADC also offered to send election observers to witness the counting and verification processes in Zimbabwe and admonished the electoral authorities to release the election results promptly. Furthermore, a power-sharing agreement was brokered under the auspices of SADC through the efforts of its chief mediator former South African President Thabo Mbeki. In spite of the numerous challenges faced by the power-sharing deal (GPA), it sought to provide an avenue for the political and economic challenges of Zimbabwe to be addressed through concerted effort.

Moreover, this chapter noted SADC’s intervention in the political crisis in Lesotho. A facilitator was sent out to help with peace talks. Again, a team of observers was appointed by SADC and a roadmap, which included details on measures to be taken to lift the ban on parliament was drawn. SADC’s Troika also directed that a Defence and Security Mission be deployed urgently to Lesotho for three months after which a review of its efforts will be carried out in a bid to foster peace and security in Lesotho. SADC then admonished stakeholders to uphold the provisions stipulated in the Maseru Security Accord, the Maseru Facilitation Declaration and the Electoral Pledge.

This chapter also identified that in order to assess whether or not an early warning and early response mechanism is functional and successful, it is important have a standard or yardstick
against which this success will be measured. This yardstick may be found when the available
best practices around the world are taken into account. The study noted that SADC manages
to respond early enough to prevent the degeneration of the conflict into full-blown violence
with its concomitant problems. SADC’s response was also found to be relevant as in the two
crises, the situations were effectively managed and tensions were calmed. The strengths and
weaknesses of SADC’s structure were also noted in this chapter. The strengths include the
functional benefits of its centralized structure and system of operation and the frequent resort
to non-military approaches of conflict resolution, a strategy which does not further
complicate the already dire situation of the victims if a conflict. There are quite a number of
challenges which include the egoistic nature of member states who look out for their state
interests instead of working together to secure the sub-regional interest, problems of
resources and funding, lack of qualified personnel, lack of effective supervision of mediation
efforts, challenges with implementing policies among others.
Endnotes

2 Ibid
7 Ibid
9 Ibid
13 Ibid
14 More information is available in Dzinesa, G. A., and Webster Zambara. "SADC’s role in Zimbabwe: Guarantor of deadlock or democracy." Zimbabwe at the Crossroads, OSISA Newsletter, July (2011)
19 Ibid
28 Ibid


Ibid


Ibid


Ibid

For more information check the SADC keeping a close watch on events in Lesotho. ISS Peace and Security Council Report published on September 15, 2014.


For more information check the SADC keeping a close watch on events in Lesotho. ISS Peace and Security Council Report published on September 15, 2014.


58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

60 See ISS Peace and Security Council Report published on September 15, 2014- “SADC keeping a close watch on events in Lesotho”.


63 See the Communiqué by SADC Facilitator Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa: Maseru Facilitation Declaration

64 Ibid.

65 Lesotho: Statement by SADC Facilitator, Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa on the Signing of the Maseru Security Accord.


69 Public Eye Online “DC blasts Ramaphosa” available online at: http://www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/09/26/dc-blasts-ramaphosa/

70 Ibid.


72 Op. cit see 69

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 See 71

76 Ibid


78 Ibid.


81 Ibid
86 Ibid
87 Ibid
CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This fourth and final chapter of the study presents a summary of the findings and a conclusion of this research. In addition, recommendations regarding the way forward for SADC in its quest to safeguard peace and security in the Southern African sub region are presented. The work was guided by the theory of liberal institutionalism, which essentially argues that states can cooperate to promote their general welfare. Again, although this theory recognizes the dominance of states in the international system, it also posits that non-states actors can be significant actors in the international system. Liberal institutionalism thus advocates that more focus be laid on international institutions as these organizations affect state behaviour in several ways. Again, these organizations are founded on rules and principles that aid in governing the relationship between states and non-state actors regarding many important issues in the international system. Despite the fact that some criticisms have been levelled against this theory, it was still chosen to guide the study because it explains largely the need for the establishment of an institution such as SADC to oversee the attainment of the developmental, peace and security goals of the Southern African region. Liberal institutionalism also explains why an early warning and early response regime needs to be put in place to address the challenges faced by SADC in its quest to ensure a peaceful, stable atmosphere in the sub-region to facilitate development. Finally, due to the fact that security issues have the potential to cross borders, there is the need to find regional solutions to these security challenges hence the existence of SADC.
The study thus aimed at identifying and understanding the nature of SADC’s regional early warning and early response system, discussing SADC’s experience with regard to its response to conflict situations. The study also pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of its early warning and early response mechanism. To achieve the aims of the study, SADC’s early warning and early response mechanisms were thereby assessed using the post-election violence in Zimbabwe in 2008 and the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014. To answer the study’s questions and draw conclusions and recommendations, the study adopted qualitative research methods. A combination of case studies and content analysis of relevant books, journal articles, official documents, reports, communiqués and news items on SADC’s general security structure, the political impasse in Lesotho and the post-election violence in Zimbabwe were employed. These brought to light many issues, which informed the findings of the research that are summarized below.

4.1 Summary of findings

This study noted that SADC has an early warning and early response mechanism in place and sought to understand how it works. The study also pointed out how SADC fared with regards to early warning and response in Lesotho as well as how early warning and early response played out in Zimbabwe.

4.1.1 SADC’s role in the post-election violence in Zimbabwe in 2008

First, after the elections were held in March 2008, SADC convened a summit in April 2008 in Lusaka to discuss the political developments in Zimbabwe especially since the results had still not been announced. SADC issued a statement imploring the electoral authorities to release the
results and petitioned stakeholders and citizens to remain calm. It also offered to send election observers to witness the counting and verification processes. Since neither Mugabe nor Tsvangirai managed to obtain 50% + 1 votes to secure an outright win a runoff was announced in accordance with Zimbabwean electoral laws. The period following the announcement of the runoff was markedly turbulent as violence was widespread.¹ ZANU-PF loyalists were accused of threatening and acting violently against the supporters of opposition parties, especially the MDC. These among other reasons accounted for Tsvangirai’s withdrawal from the elections in June and Mugabe was presented as the only candidate. His massive win however did not impress SADC or other countries such as the United States and Britain as the runoff together with its results were condemned.²

4.1.2 SADC’s early warning and early response mechanism in Zimbabwe (post-election violence of 2008)

In terms of early response, to calm the still-heightened tempers, SADC proposed the idea of having a coalition government and succeeded in brokering a power-sharing deal. This deal was brokered after SADC through Mr. Mbeki mediated some long and hard talks among opposition parties- ZANU-PF, MDC-T and MDC-M. This deal was aimed at ending the economic and political strife in Zimbabwe. The arrangement therein stipulated that the position of Head of State would remain in the hands of President Mugabe while Tsvangirai would serve as the Prime Minister and Mutambara as Deputy Prime Minister. Despite the many set-backs faced by SADC, its intervention through its early response mechanism was still timely and largely successful as it prevented the conflict and violence from degenerating into an all-out civil war in Zimbabwe.

73
4.1.3 SADC’s role in the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014

Further, the political impasse in Lesotho in 2014 was another crisis which saw the intervention of SADC. This crisis was considered as a stalemate by SADC thus a facilitator was commissioned to preside over peace talks to restore stability in the country. A roadmap was drawn to help address the political challenges facing the coalition while measures to facilitate the reopening of parliament were discussed. SADC was also instrumental in the attainment of the Maseru Security Accord, the Maseru Facilitation Declaration and the Electoral Pledge. To this end, a SADC Facilitation Mission was set up to preside over dialogue and efforts to restore Lesotho to its former state of stability while the Security Accord had to do with security reforms and efforts which were being made to safeguard the security of Lesotho to make for the smooth conduct of elections. The Electoral Pledge served to develop a conducive and favourable atmosphere to promote the conduct of elections in the country. SADC received a report and an update on the political state of affairs and in consultation with the SADC Election Advisory Council, approved the decision for elections to be conducted earlier than planned as the atmosphere in Lesotho was described as one which could withstand the pressures of elections. In sum, SADC’s intervention to prevent a military takeover in Lesotho can largely be described as successful as SADC’s intervention provided timely assistance in restoring Lesotho to a state of normalcy.

4.1.4 An assessment of SADC’s early warning and early response mechanism in Lesotho (2014)

The study noted the importance of carrying out an assessment of SADC’s early warning and early response capacity in the political impasse of Lesotho in 2014. SADC considered the political impasse in Lesotho as a stalemate thus after an emergency meeting was convened (by SADC) it was agreed that a facilitator and a team of observers be sent out to help with talks and
dialogue to restore peace. This action points to the fact that SADC’s reaction to the political impasse was in the form of early response. SADC was instrumental in the drafting of the Maseru Security Accord, the Maseru Facilitation Declaration and the Electoral Pledge. These agreements were reached to generally promote peace and stability in Lesotho by condemning all actions that undermine the conduct of free, fair and credible elections. During the meeting of the partners of the coalition government of Lesotho in Pretoria, the issue of reopening parliament received a lot of attention. In addition, SADC declared its commitment to finding a lasting solution to the crisis especially as the leaders had reached a consensus on how to deal with the pressing issues. Consequently, SADC’s efforts to prevent a military takeover in Lesotho were largely described as successful as the political crisis was contained and subsequently resolved.

4.2 The strengths and weaknesses of SADC’s security structure

4.2.1 Strengths of SADC’s security structure

The centralized nature of functions and activities within SADC allow for SADC’s Secretariat in Gaborone to be directly involved in coordinating and keeping track of all the decisions and actions taken by SADC. This therefore eliminates the need to deal with the whims of different leaders of the governments of SADC member states, as was the case when the structure was decentralized. In addition, unnecessary delays and red “tapeism” associated with monitoring and collating information from the different headquarters of SADC’s sub-institutions have been reduced. A Regional Early Warning Centre has been set up to assist in the anticipation, management and resolution of conflicts in the Southern African Region. This centre is located in Botswana.
SADC’s preferred strategies of conflict resolution - mediation and other preventive diplomatic tools are strategies which essentially involve dialogues, mediation and peace talks and such interventions do not put the lives of the stakeholders or victims of the conflicts into any further danger as compared to military interventions which may pose a threat even to the lives of innocent citizens. SADC’s mediation structure is comprised of a Panel of Elders, a Mediation Reference Group and a Mediation Support Unit. The Panel leads mediation missions while the reference group makes use of expert knowledge of and experience in resolving conflicts and the Support Unit provides funds for logistics and technical services. The Mediation Support Unit, which is located within the Secretariat of SADC is responsible for tracking potential crises and providing response to early warning signs. Its mandate also covers the documentation of the outcomes and valuable lessons learnt as well as working closely with other international bodies.

4.2.2 Weaknesses

To begin, mostly, member-states are more preoccupied with attaining state/individual goals and not goals of SADC and this can be attributed to the fact that there are no conformable principles to aid in cooperation at the sub-regional level. A closely related challenge is that of ceding part of state sovereignty. Member states are hesitant to cede part of their authority to the centralized system of SADC, this according to Nathan is because states are politically weak, do not trust each other nor have shared values.3

Moreover, according to the available legal provisions, in spite of the existence of general guidelines and principles regarding the conduct of elections, election-related disputes should be resolved based on the national laws and this poses challenge to SADC’s implementation
capacity. For instance in Zimbabwe, SADC’s actions were constrained as its intervention in the electoral turbulence was limited by the available legal provisions of Zimbabwe. Next, SADC’s Secretariat appears to be deficient in ensuring that decisions and mandates are carried out to the letter while SADC itself appears to mostly react to conflicts instead of equipping itself to also foresee such threats and potential conflicts and act in a timely manner to prevent their escalation into full-blown violence.

As mediation has been identified by the study as a more frequently-used approach for conflict prevention in the Southern African region, it was further revealed by the study that SADC is still trying to develop its mediation capacity in the Southern African region. Currently, mediation efforts under the auspices of SADC are mostly carried out by distinguished personalities such as Heads of States using their good offices. Again, the study revealed that the results of mediation efforts often lack effective supervision, for instance the GPA of Zimbabwe. The signatories were left to interpret the provisions of the agreement and this is quite dangerous as misinterpretations could have ramifications for both SADC and the signatories. By glossing over the need to clearly develop a plan of action to oversee the implementation of the GPA, SADC was clearly allowing the “warring” factions to figure things out for themselves and this informed the sharp criticisms levelled against SADC in that regard.

Even though the use of SADC military troops to resolve conflicts is not very popular in the Southern African region, SADC’s standby force lacks the civilian component to oversee and satisfy the human security needs. Again, SADC is yet to establish a post-conflict reconstruction programme or mechanism to keep peace after it has been restored.
Moreover, in the formulation of the coalition government in both Lesotho and Zimbabwe, important actors such as civil society, labour unions and other smaller political parties were not taken into deep consideration and this fueled the criticism of supporting political exclusivity, which is not very beneficial for the pursuit and practice of democracy. In spite of the existence of many political parties in both countries, only the main political parties were considered for the coalition governments in Lesotho and Zimbabwe. In Lesotho, the ABC, BNP and the LCD formed the coalition government while in Zimbabwe, ZANU-PF and the two factions of the MDC signed the GPA.

4.3 Conclusions

In light of the findings of this study, the hypothesis stated earlier that ‘notwithstanding SADC’s weak early warning practices, its efficient deployment of early response strategies have contributed to peace and security in Southern Africa’ has been proven. In both cases (Lesotho and Zimbabwe), SADC’s early warning was not effective as it did not forestall the crises. SADC’s early response however was very effective as SADC was found to intervene speedily to prevent the degeneration of the conflicts into full-blown civil wars with negative trans-border implications for the Southern African Region. This assertion is further evidenced in the numerous occasions on which SADC served as a facilitator of peace efforts particularly through early response mechanism. In spite of the challenges faced by SADC, its response proved successful as it contributed significantly to finding lasting solutions to the crises. The two conflict situations cited in the work thus demonstrate the role that SADC played and continues to play to safeguard the stability of the Southern African region. Some practical examples include
the fact that although the process of mediation faced some challenges it eventually yielded remarkable results which can be seen in the introduction of the GPA, a power-sharing deal which was brokered by SADC. In addition, SADC’s mediation in the crisis in Lesotho generally facilitated talks to engage in electoral and constitutional reforms to provide legally-acceptable underlying conditions for elections to be held. In comparative terms, SADC’s early response mechanism is shown to function more effectively and reliably than its early warning mechanism does.

Next, through the study the contradictory clause in SADC’s Treaty which suggests that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all member-states must be respected thus SADC must not interfere with the internal affairs of its member countries was brought to light. In spite of the foregoing, it is also true that those same conflict situations which break out within the member states are the ones which can escalate and go beyond national borders. Such an occurrence may threaten the peace and stability of the entire sub-region yet SADC finds itself entangled by its own proclamation to desist from ‘interfering’ in the internal affairs of member states. As such, even in cases where clearly an early intervention would have been instrumental in either preventing the degeneration of the conflict to armed violence or managing and finding lasting solutions to the conflict, SADC may face some challenges in its intervention decision.

Further, the theory guiding this research, liberal institutionalism posits that states ought to cede part of their sovereignty to the “integrated communities” which are responsible for facilitating the attainment of sub-regional goals yet the situation in the SADC region is quite different. The study revealed that the leaders and people of SADC member states tend to hold on tightly to their
independence and sovereignty mainly because of the high cost at which these were attained. The willingness to “surrender” a tiny portion of this cherished sovereignty for the common good of the sub-region is virtually non-existent and this impacts negatively on SADC’s ability to garner the support it requires from its members to operate at its optimal best.

Notably, within the scope of review, the SADC region was found to favour mediation as a strategy for conflict resolution while military interventions were quite unpopular and less desirable because of the possible endangering of human lives, which mostly characterizes it. Even though mediation is widely accepted and practiced to resolve conflicts in the sub-region, to date the mediation capacity has not been fully developed and it is beset with insufficient funds and lack of requisite resources to enhance its effectiveness. Despite the challenges associated with this strategy of conflict resolution, this study notes that its success rate in the SADC region is remarkably high.

Moreover, this study also identified that in order to assess whether or not an early warning and early response mechanism is functional and successful, it is important to have a standard or yardstick against which this success will be measured. This yardstick may be found when the available best practices around the world are taken into account. In terms of early response thus, SADC manages to intervene early enough to prevent the degeneration of the conflict into full-blown violence with its concomitant problems.

The strengths and weaknesses of SADC’s structure were also noted in this study. The strengths include the functional benefits of its centralized structure and system of operation and the
frequent resort to non-military approaches of conflict resolution, a strategy which does not further complicate the already dire situation of the victims if a conflict. There are quite a number of challenges of SADC’s security structure, which include the egoistic nature of member states who look out for their national instead of working together to secure the sub-regional interests. Due to lack of shared values among states, some states fear that ceding some of their authority to SADC will legitimize SADC’s ‘unauthorized’ interference in the domestic and political affairs of these states.5 This undermines the goals of cooperation and affects SADC’s ability to function at its optimal level with regard to maintaining regional peace and security. There are also challenges with resources and funding, lack of qualified personnel, lack of effective supervision of mediation efforts, challenges with implementing policies among others. SADC’s early warning system is challenged in the area of sending out alerts and signals early enough to avert the conflict. The challenges cited above lend credence to the fact that SADC must continue with its efforts to fully develop its capacity to uphold its mandate and relevance in the Southern African region. Again, in spite of the existence of SADC’s Regional Early Warning Centre and other institutional structures which constitute an early warning and early response mechanism, obtaining relevant streamlined information for the purposes of analysis for this study was quite tedious. For example: unlike the early warning and early response mechanisms of other sub-regional bodies like CEWARN, ECOWARN the sending and receiving points for early warning signals or alerts within SADC cannot be readily identified. This meant that although it would have been ideal for verified data to be presented as early warning signals and early response actions from SADC’s Early Warning Centre, such information was not available. The nonexistence of such information meant that many official reports had to be read by the
researcher to deduce which actions constituted early warning actions and which constituted early response. This may have introduced an undesirable degree of subjectivity into the study.

Another area of concern is the closed nature of SADC’s system. Unlike ECOWARN and CEWARN, it is quite tedious to access relevant information about SADC’s early warning and early response mechanism. In order to run a reliable and credible system, information should be readily available and easily accessible to all who may need it; researchers and officials alike. In addition, given the current structure and the more favoured approach of mediation, some doubts remain about whether SADC is truly prepared in every sense of the word to effectively deal with potential conflict situations in the sub-region. The source of preoccupation lies in the fact that mostly SADC has only been able to explore and enhance its mediation capacity; what then happens when people no longer want to talk and want their weapons to fight for them? Is SADC ready to handle such a crisis?

The findings of this research indicate that SADC as an institution is still in the process of building its capacity in terms of requisite structures and personnel. The hesitation, which accompanies the possibility of the use of force and use of military interventions to keep peace and restore stability in the event of violence, indicate that SADC will continue to resort to mediation to resolve conflict situations. This study revealed that SADC hardly if ever sends out early warning signals of violence and threats of violence yet is quick to respond to such situations by convening summits and extraordinary meetings to discuss the way forward and eventually commissioning a distinguished personality to intervene and act as chief mediator in the series of dialogue and peace talks.
What occurs most often is that SADC’s existence and potency are felt with respect to how SADC responds to these situations. In order to enhance the performance of SADC in the sub-region, it is important that all stakeholders be willing and able to pool their efforts and resources together. Based on the findings of the research, the following are some recommendations, which can be considered and implemented to enhance SADC’s effectiveness in dealing with security threats in the sub-region.

4.4 Recommendations

The following constitute the study’s recommendations whose implementation will go a long way to ensure that the work of SADC, especially in the area of safeguarding sub-regional peace and security is enhanced. Also recommendations regarding ways to improve the work of future researchers are included.

1. SADC ought to pay more attention to the weak nature of its early warning mechanism by putting in place sustainable measures to boost its capacity to send out signals and alerts of potential conflicts to warn policy makers and other relevant officials early enough. These early signals can prove useful for preventing the eruption of conflicts altogether and/or preventing the degeneration of the crises into violent conflicts. Essentially, the capacity of SADC’s Regional Early Warning System must be revamped to enhance its effectiveness. SADC can consult its counterparts in ECOWAS and IGAD for instance to learn and adopt the ‘winning strategies’ for conflict prevention and management through the use of early warning and early response mechanisms.
2. A Mediation Fund should be set up and member-states encouraged to support. Transportation surcharges within the sub-region can also be adopted to obtain more funds for SADC’s operations.

3. The important role of civil society groups in conflict resolution cannot be undermined. Such groups and persons are often members of the communities where the conflicts or violence are taking place and may possess some vital insider information which may prove beneficial in finding lasting solutions to conflicts. It is therefore prudent to continue to consult and interact with such civil society groups in the process of attempting to resolve conflicts. These civil society groups must also take advantage of the opportunity provided by SADC’s SIPO, express interest and actually take steps to lend support to conflict prevention and mediation efforts in the Southern African region.

4. SADC should also consider providing a healthy blend of conflict-resolving strategies such that it does not solely rely on one strategy and be constrained in the event that favoured strategy is non-functional or breaks down. To this end, SADCBRIG should be properly resourced and always be on standby to intervene timely when the need arises.

5. In addition, SADC must address the issue of the closed nature of its system that impedes the easy access of required information for academic and other official purposes. Accessing relevant information and researching contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the system.
Endnotes

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Journal articles
Alden, Chris. ""A pariah in our midst’: regional organisations and the problematic of Western-designated pariah regimes–the cases of SADC/Zimbabwe and ASEAN/Myanmar."" (2010).


Internet sources


Southern African Development Community. http://www.sadc.int/


News articles


Reports


Communiqués

Communiqué on Maseru Facilitation Declaration
October 02, 2014.


Lesotho: Statement on the Maseru Security Accord. :


‘Communiqué of the Summit of Heads of State or Governments of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)’. Gaborone, June 28, 1996.

SADC Communiqués and role in Regional Elections: The Case of Zimbabwe. Thomas Deve, United Nations Development Programme in Alden, Chris. "‘A pariah in our midst’: regional organisations and the problematic of Western-designated pariah regimes—the cases of SADC/Zimbabwe and ASEAN/Myanmar." (2010).


Treaties


Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), 1993.

Protocols


Towards the Southern African Development Community; and SADCC, Theme Document (Maputo, January 1992)

Figures

Figure 1. SADC’s Organisational Structure. SADC Secretariat. http://www.sadc.int/sadc-secretariat/.


Papers presented at Conferences


Student Papers and Essays

