



THE WILLIAM DAVIDSON INSTITUTE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

POLICY BRIEF #46

**SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY:
THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL**

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December 2005

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INTRODUCTION

South Africa arrives at the dawn of its new found democracy in 1994 as a country deeply divided, with massive poverty and stark inequalities coinciding with racial cleavages in society. Due to three decades of institutionalized racial discrimination the country acquired pariah status in the global family of nations. It's suspension in the UNGA and other international institutions and its subsequent economic marginalization manifested increasingly in the isolation of its economy and it's reliance on import substitution, concentration of ownership of capital, distorted market functioning, rampant inflation and a generally un-competitive economy with massive unemployment bordering on stagflation.

Import substitution and protectionism raised the cost of production that undermined export lead growth. The absence of economies of scale domestically, due to unequal distribution of wealth and distortions in the ownership of capital provided little impetus for economic growth and broadening of the economic base. Steadily over the last two decades of its existence the apartheid regime experienced economic decline. In order to maintain itself in the absence of an advanced industrial base the country had to rely heavily on the importation of capital goods that required foreign currency, which was in little reserve due to un-competitive export performance. Increasingly the country had to rely on paying for imports with the exportation of un-beneficiated primary production that comprised more that 80% of its exports by the early 1980's with gold making up for half of the total.

Simultaneous with its steady economic decline, the apartheid regime was engaged in a multi fronted political battle to counter its growing international isolation and in a state of perpetual war with its neighbors, which it actively and violently destabilized through a concerted military campaign, whilst resisting an armed insurgency and internal campaign to make the country ungovernable.

By the late 1980's South Africa participation in all international organizations of note has been suspended, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and its original home in the Commonwealth of Nations. By the late 1980's its political isolation I the world had become virtually complete.

By 1994 Nelson Mandela assumes the Presidency of a new democratic South Africa, facing the challenge of racial reconciliation, the need for deep rooted institutional transformation and addressing the legacy of decades of institutionalized economic marginalization of the majority of the population, while reintegrating the country politically and economically into a rapidly changing world which had become politically uni-polar and economically multi-polar with globalization apace.

THE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND GEAR MACRO-ECONOMIC PLAN

The new democratic government of Nelson Mandela as leader of the dominant ANC party, made up of a broad social movement including labor, nationalists, communists, intellectuals and rural masses, set itself out to engage the challenges it face in a concerted program of Reconstruction

and Development (RDP). The objectives of the RDP was to meet the basic needs of especially the previously disadvantaged majority, building the economy towards export lead growth, democratizing state institutions to reflect and address the interests of the marginalized masses, developing human resources which were essentially underdeveloped during apartheid's infamous "Bantu education" era and nation building to achieve social cohesion through racial reconciliation.

Implementing an ambitious broad based reconstruction of the state, the redistribution of resources and opportunity in society required a vibrant economy that needs to grow at an annual rate of more than 5% in order to cut back on unemployment through absorption of labor through job creation. It was already calculated by the outgoing regime that full absorption of new labor entrants occurs at around 5% growth par annum. The figure remains current. To this end the new government set about the restructuring of the economy through formulating economic targets and parameters through a macro-economic plan to accelerate growth referred to as Gear (economic program for Growth Employment and Redistribution).

IN order for the new South Africa to successfully engage and reintegrate into the global family of nations and to competitively participate in a rapidly globalizing international economy required a massive exercise in international engagement.

TRANSFORMATION OF FOREIGN POLICY

The transformation of South Africa's foreign policy to reintroduce itself into the world as a leading country of the South and with the focus on its domestic policy challenges in alignment with its newly established values, and its manifestation in foreign policy principles, occurred in three distinct phases [Towards a ten year reiewP60] The first phase was to understand the global challenges facing the country and formulating policy responses consistent with advancing the national interest within the ethos of its new found democratic culture. The foreign policy principles and objectives were rooted in domestic economic and security requirements in order to realize policy objectives. The second phase followed on the requirements identified in the first in that it required the normalization of South Africa's diplomatic representation and the development of diplomatic capacity to embark on the ambitious goal of reinserting the country internationally in a competitive manner.

In the twilight of the old apartheid regime its diplomatic representation had been reduced to some forty odd missions (including its own aberration of diplomatic mission in so-called independent homelands within the country itself). After a program of sustained diplomatic expansion under difficult financial challenges representation after ten years of democracy stand at 107 mission with accreditation to some 118 countries with a team of around 2000 officers both professional and support staff.

Another dimension of South Africa's diplomatic expansion is its engagement with major international conferences and events by hosting more than 13 major events since 1996.

The program of diplomatic normalization and expansion coincides with the third discernable phase of launching its central foreign policy priority of a vision for the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment through the renaissance of Africa and the restructuring of the relationship between the developed North and the developing South. The objective being a just and equitable world in which the structural relationship between North and South is materially transformed to address the legitimate developmental interests of developing societies with control over their own destinies in a mutually beneficial world.

South Africa cannot be an island of prosperity in a sea of poverty and underdevelopment. Africa can not realize its true potential if the structural relationship with developed countries in the world that contradicts its rise through an international trade regime that favors the developed and allows it to dump agricultural produce in African markets at the destruction of domestic agricultural industries and protects its markets from competition through both export and production subsidies. Africa can not rise and realize its full potential by perusing its interests in an international political system that is dominated by the industrialized countries of the North and where its destiny is determined by those who caused its underdevelopment originally through colonization and a Cold War. Africa can not rise if it remains subject to an international financial system that through the IFI's forces it into structural programs without sharing the consequences socially, economically or politically or where its definition of risk sees to the allocation of capital to where it is already concentrated. Africa cannot rise, to the same extent that other developing countries cannot rise to their full potential, if it is bypassed by a rapidly globalizing economy that will only deepen and exacerbate the structural imbalances that already exists and that undermines its progress.

The drive for the restructuring of South-South and North-South relations is also premised on the question if the world can afford to forgo on the opportunity of two thirds of the global population as a growing market and contributor to global production and consumption. Africa alone has a population of 750 million underdeveloped consumers, let alone adding the figures for Asia, LAM and the Caribbean the Eastern Europe.

The fundamental assumption of South African foreign policy is that South Africa can only succeed in its full promise and provide life chances to all its people if Africa succeeds. South Africa's destiny lies in Africa and its path to prosperity lies through Africa. Africa's path to prosperity lies in its reintegration into a rapidly globalizing economy and a world that is equitable and fair and just. The world's prosperity lies in peace, security and stability for all. Hence, South Africa's pursuit of a peaceful nation in a stable and peaceful and prosperous region and continent as part of a world that is at peace through equity and justness. Hence the central focus on Africa in the rollout of the foreign policy a new and democratic South Africa. By the end of fiscal 2006 South Africa will have diplomatic representation in every country in Africa.

REVERSING THE DECLINE OF AFRICA

If Africa was to be central to South Africa's foreign policy, and if Africa was to re-awaken its awesome potential, things could not continue on the same trajectory that has been partly to blame for Africa's demise since de-colonization. Africa required an institutional infrastructure that

could take on the challenges it faces to reinsert itself into a rapidly globalizing world. If Africa was to pursue an agenda of restructuring its relationship with the North and to build its alliance to this effect with the other countries of the South it clearly required for an overhaul of its institution and the behavioral legacy of a number of governments on the continent. Capital is now known to remain shy of conflict and instability, it tends to accumulate tardily in the hands of the under-educated and unskilled and unhelpful when diverted to the unworthy through corruption and nepotism. Towards the end of the 20th Century the Continent clearly needed to restructure and transform its institutional infrastructure. It required institution that will allow it to act collectively in the pursuit of its Agenda and that could integrate its collective decision with other relevant international organizations such as the UN, the G77, and G8 etc. Africa also clearly required a program for collective action to reverse the steady economic decline that followed on de-colonization. Roughly forty years ago Ghana and South Korea had the same GDP per capita.

THE AFRICAN UNION

The advent of the AU is a hugely significant development on the continent and was uppermost in the Africa centered foreign policy of the new democratic South Africa. South Africa was also elected as the first President of the AU at its inauguration in 2002. To understand the significance of the evolution of the AU it is often said in jest that there is more to the AU than dropping the O from the OAU. The genesis of the OAU is to be found in a shared desire and long struggle for de-colonization. It was a platform to provide support for liberation movements across the continent and to pull together in the opposition to the ideals and objectives of colonial governments during the 1950 and beyond. It was essentially a de-colonization organization. The AU, on the other hand, is in a sense comparable to being a mini-UN of the African continent.

On 9.9.1999, the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity issued a Declaration (the Sirte Declaration) calling for the establishment of an African Union, with a view to accelerating the process of integration in the continent to enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political challenges.

With its launch in Durban on 9th of July 2002 the first President of the AU, South African President Thabo Mbeki remarked during his inaugural address that:

“...The first task is to achieve unity, solidarity, cohesion, cooperation among peoples of Africa and African states. We must build all the institutions necessary to deepen political, economic and social integration of the African continent. We must deepen the culture of collective action in Africa and in our relations with the rest of the world...As Africans, we have come to understand that there can be no sustainable development without peace, without security and without stability...We must end the senseless conflicts and wars on our continent which have caused so much pain and suffering to our people and turned many of them into refugees and displaced and forced others into exile. We must accept that dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflicts are the only way to guarantee enduring peace and stability for our people. The Constitutive Act [of the AU] provides for such

mechanisms...we must work for a continent characterized by democratic principles and institutions which guarantee popular participation and provide for good governance. Through our actions, let us proclaim to the world that this is a continent of democracy, a continent of democratic institutions and culture. Indeed, a continent of good governance, where the people participate and the rule of law is upheld...”

THE VISION OF THE AU

The AU is Africa’s premier institution and principal organization for the promotion of accelerated socio-economic integration of the continent, which will lead to greater unity and solidarity between African countries and peoples. The organization is based on the common vision of a united and strong Africa and on the need to build a partnership between governments and all segments of civil society, in particular women, youth and the private sector. The promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent is a prerequisite for the implementation of the development and integration agenda of the Union.

The Objectives of the AU

- To achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;
- To defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
- To accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- To promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
- To encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- To promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;
- To promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
- To promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
- To establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations;
- To promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;
- To promote co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;
- To coordinate and harmonize the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;
- To advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology;
- To work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent.

THE ORGANS OF THE AU

The Assembly composed of Heads of State and Government, an Executive Council composed of Ministers of Governments of Member States; a Commission to run the day to day functioning of the AU, a Peace and Security Council and a Pan-African Parliament to ensure the full participation of African peoples in governance, development and economic integration of the Continent.

The Peace and Security Council is of particular significance since it will be the standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The Peace and Security Council is the collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa. The functions of the Peace and Security Council will include early warning and preventative diplomacy, peace-making, peace support operations. Its mandate according to the Constitutive Act will include the right of the AU to intervene in member states in respect of grave circumstances, war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. It may also respond to requests by member states to intervene in restoring peace and security and its primary function will be peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. It will ensure the implementation of the AU, UN and other relevant international Conventions and Treaties on arms control and disarmament. It may take action where the national independence and security of a member state may be threatened by acts of foreign aggression, including mercenaries. It will co-ordinate and facilitate humanitarian action in situations of armed conflict and natural disaster and take decisions on issues relating to peace on the continent. It also provides the mandate for developing a Common African defence and Security Policy.

The AU constitution further makes provision for an Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), an advisory organ composed of different social and professional groups of the Member States of the Union, a Court of Justice of the Union as well as Specialized Technical Committees that are meant to address sectoral developmental challenges and include committees on: Rural Economy and Agricultural Matters; Monetary and Financial Affairs; Trade, Customs and Immigration Matters; Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment; Transport, Communications and Tourism; Health, Labor and Social Affairs; and Education, Culture and Human Resources. The AU constitution also makes provision for the establishment of Financial Institutions such as an African Central bank, an African Monetary Fund and an African Investment Bank. Some of these institutions are still in the process of development and implementation.

THE NEW ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD)

The AU has at its purpose the renewal of a continent and to turn around a legacy of political instability, atrophy of the state, social anomie and economic decline since decolonization. Institutional transformation could, however, not achieve the objective of economic renewal in and of itself without a coherent political and economic program of action. The political program of establishing a respect for the Rule of Law, democratic institutions, respect for human rights, and a framework for intra- and inter-state stability is a requirement to create the conditions for

the economic lift-off of the continent. On the economic side the newly evolving political and institutional framework of the Continent requires a coherent program for collective action to achieve the goal of continental renewal. The New Economic Program for Africa's Development or Nepad was the Continent's response to such a requirement.

Nepad is a vision and strategic framework for collective action for Africa's renewal. It is effectively the economic program of the AU. Early into his presidency South Africa's second Head of State in its first 5 years of democracy, Thabo Mbeki, proffered the New African Initiative for Africa which morphed into the Millenium Action Plan for the renaissance of Africa or MAP. It was essentially a comprehensive economic restructuring plan for the continent in order to make it more business and investor friendly, its infrastructure supportive of economic activity, its governments more disciplined in fiscal matters and to move against corruption and nepotism in order to attract much needed investment capital which remain in short supply in the continent and to create the conditions for economic take-off. His detractors soon referred to MAP as the "Mbeki Plan" reflecting on the enthusiasm with which South Africa and its President promoted the program as part of its Africa centered foreign policy. French interests in Africa soon saw to the emergence of an ostensibly rival plan in the form of the Senegalese OMEGA plan. Omega was little more than an infrastructure rollout plan for the continent, mostly focussed on West Africa where the dominant French interest lies.

The compromise position was an integration of the two proposals, which were by no means incompatible and the NEPAD strategic framework was adopted by the former Organization of African Unity (OAU) to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa. The 37th Summit of the OAU in July 2001 formally adopted the strategic framework document and it has now become the internationally accepted framework for Africa's development

The primary objectives of the Nepad are to:

- To eradicate poverty;
- To place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development;
- To halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process and enhance its full and beneficial integration into the global economy;
- To accelerate the empowerment of women

The program sets out a number of principles for African governments by which to adhere. These principles are designed to sustain the conditions of economic liftoff and urges countries to embrace:

- Good governance as a basic requirement for peace, security and sustainable political and socio-economic development;
- African ownership and leadership, as well as broad and deep participation by all sectors of society;
- Anchoring the development of Africa on its resources and resourcefulness of its people;
- Partnership between and amongst African peoples;

- Acceleration of regional and continental integration;
- Building the competitiveness of African countries and the continent;
- Forging a new international partnership that changes the unequal relationship between Africa and the developed world; and
- Ensuring that all Partnerships with NEPAD are linked to the Millenium Development Goals and other agreed development goals and targets.

The Nepad priorities are to establish the conditions for sustainable development by ensuring peace and security; democracy and good, political, economic and corporate governance; regional co-operation and integration; capacity building; and policy reforms and increased investment in the following priority sectors:

- Agriculture;
- Human development with a focus on health, education, science and technology and skills development;
- Building and improving infrastructure, including Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Energy, Transport, Water and Sanitation;
- Promoting diversification of production and exports, particularly with respect to agro-industries, manufacturing, mining, mineral beneficiation and tourism;
- Accelerating intra-African trade and improving access to markets of developed countries;
- The environment.
- Mobilizing Resources by increasing domestic savings and investments; improving management of public revenue and expenditure; improving Africa's share in global trade; attracting foreign direct investment; and increasing capital flows through further debt reduction and increase ODA flows.

The Nepad program of action sets itself the challenge in the short term to achieve a number of essential conditions with the aim for Africa to:

- become more effective in conflict prevention and the establishment of enduring peace on the continent;
- adopt and implement principles of democracy and good political economic and corporate governance, and the protection of human rights becomes further entrenched in every African country;
- develop and implement effective poverty eradication programs and accelerates the pace of achieving set African development goals, particularly human development;
- achieve increased levels of domestic savings, as well as investments, both domestic and foreign;
- increase levels of ODA to the continent are achieved and its effective utilization maximized;
- achieve desired capacity for policy development, coordination and negotiation in the international arena, to ensure its beneficial engagement in the global economy, especially on trade and market access issues;
- regional integration is further accelerated and higher levels of sustainable economic growth in Africa is achieved;
- Genuine partnerships are established between Africa and the developed countries based on mutual respect and accountability.

The key priority action areas of the Nepad is:

- institutinalizing the African Peer Review Mechanism;
- facilitating and supporting implementation of the short-term regional infrastructure programs covering Transport Energy, ICT, Water and Sanitation;
- facilitating implementation of the food security and agricultural development program in all sub-regions;
- facilitating the preparation of a coordinated African position on Market Access, debt relief and ODA reforms;
- Monitoring and intervening as appropriate to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals in the areas of health and education are met.

African countries have demonstrated their determination to address issues of corruption, poor governance, inefficient and ineffective service delivery by their unqualified support for Nepad. Twenty three countries have by now applied to submit to African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) while those of Ghana and Rwanda have been completed. South Africa is currently undergoing Review. The APRM has been established as a voluntary mechanism with the aim to ensure that the policies and practices of participating countries conform to the agreed political, economic and corporate governance values, codes and standards adopted by member countries. It is a system of self-assessment, constructive peer dialogue and persuasion and information sharing among members.

Although only four years into its launch Nepad appears to be delivering on its promise with the average economic growth rate of the Continent rising to 5,1% in 2004 from 3,7%in 2003 and 2,9% in 2002 (Nepad the Journey So Far: p4).

SADC

The AU is made up for six regions each with a regional organization to act as implementing structures of decision and programs of the Union. Those are the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Common Market of Southern Africa (COMESA), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

Of most immediate importance to South Africa is its own regional organisation nl SADC which has been in existence since 1980. It was originally formed as a loose alliance of nine majority-ruled States in Southern Africa known as the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), with the main aim of co-ordinating development projects in order to lessen economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa. The member states are Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe; with Mozambique and Tanzania rumoured to be considering application for membership.

The main objective of SADC is to achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the peoples of Southern Africa and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration. These objectives are to be achieved through increased regional integration, based on democratic principles that promote equitable and sustainable development.

The major strategic thrust of South African foreign policy initiatives in the region over the last decade has been to drive the revitalization of the institutional mechanisms of SADC and to refocus the institution towards efficiency in order to confront the challenges of development of the region. South Africa has consistently espoused the principle that South Africa's destiny cannot be isolated from that of its immediate neighbors and the Southern African region as a whole. South African efforts have been aimed at maintaining the momentum of the restructuring process and more specifically the early implementation of Protocols, particularly those on Free Trade, and Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation in view of the pivotal role that such protocols play as instruments in promoting regional cooperation and integration. The entry into force of these Protocols will allow for the establishment of the SADC Free Trade Area and appropriate SADC interventions to restore stability and security in the region in order to boost international investor confidence and attracting foreign investment to the regional economy.

SOUTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

Based on the premises that countries of the developing South need to stand together and strengthen their ties and co-operation in order to lessen reliance on the industrialized North and to mobilize critical mass to promote the Agenda of the South of restructuring the relationship with the North, South Africa has set about the active pursuit of such alliances, most notably in the caucuses of UN institutions itself, the Non-Aligned Movement and IBSA. During its first ten years as a democracy South Africa has Chaired a number in international and regional organizations including NAM and UNCTAD, SADC and the AU.

Although the African Caucus in the UN and the NAM are institutions with a long history the development of the India-Brazil-South Africa Forum (IBSA) is significant. The underlying logic is not a matter of similar countries of comparable size forming an economic co-operation agreement. The real attraction lies beyond trade in the pursuit of a common interest in advancing a developmental agenda amongst countries of the South and to balance that with the interests of the industrial countries of the North. This objective becomes clear in the 2003 Brasilia Declaration of the IBS Forum stating:

- Trilateral co-operation amongst the three countries was an important tool for achieving the promotion of social and economic development, emphasizing their intention to give greater emphasis to co-operation among their countries.
- The importance of respecting the Rule of Law also International Law, strengthening the UN and especially the UNSC, and using diplomacy as a means to maintain international peace and security.
- Reform of the UN and in particular the expansion of the UNSC
- Threats to security to be handled with effective, coordinated international co-operation
- Emphasis on the promotion of social security and the eradication of hunger and poverty

- Elimination of all kinds of racial and gender discrimination
- Co-operation in ICT to narrow the digital divide
- Implementation of the WSSD Johannesburg Program of Implementation on Sustainable Development
- Effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the rights of countries of origin over their own genetic resources
- Globalization to become a positive force for change to benefit all people
- Pursuit of the Doha (WTO) Development Program
- Importance of a predictable and transparent international trading system
- Reform of the international financial architecture to be more responsive to development needs of countries
- Good governance at national and international levels
- Regular political consultations on international agenda items.

The development of IBSA brings a significant dynamic to North-South relations by the drawing together in a strategic partnership of three of the important, both politically and economically, countries of the Southern Hemisphere in a regional axis. China is believed to be following the IBSA development with great interest due to the relevance of its objective to its own developmental challenges.

The emphasis of South Africa's interest in promotion of South-South relations is rooted in the view that developing countries in the world should strive for collective action towards development and greater self-reliance as a response to the imperfections in the North-South relationship. The objective is wider than seeking greater market access to the North and increased economic co-operation. The objective has at its foundation the need to reconfigure power relations, as it is reflected in international institutions, that underlies unequal development in the world's history.

NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

South Africa has been consistent in its pursuit of the transformation of North-South relations, in particular with reference to security, international trade, the environment, debt relief and finance for development. This objective has been pursued through a constructive dialogue in a myriad of bilateral engagements, bi-national commissions, multilateral fora and the hosting of a series of international conferences since 1996. During its first decade of democracy South Africa has hosted more than ten major international events and conferences including:

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| ▪ UNCTAD IX | 1996 |
| ▪ Non-Aligned Movement Summit | 1998 |
| ▪ Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting | 1999 |
| ▪ World Aids Conference | 2000 |
| ▪ UN World Conference Against Racism | 2001 |
| ▪ African Union Summit | 2002 |
| ▪ World Summit on Sustainable Development | 2002 |
| ▪ African Ministers of Finance, Economic Development and Planning | 2002 |
| ▪ NAM Conference | 2004 |

In an address to the NAM Conference in Durban in 2004, South African President Thabo Mbeki refers to the challenges facing the developing world as being; poverty and underdevelopment; peace and stability and the “restructuring of the global exercise of power- of political power, of economic power and of social power”. The South African Minister of Foreign Affairs states in an annual report to Parliament during 2004-2005, that the dialogue with the countries of the industrialized North remains a high priority for the country. In her Budget vote speech tabling the referred report the Foreign Minister states that “...as agents of progressive change we shall continue our engagement with the global debate directed towards the restructuring of the existing power relations, particularly through the reform of the global multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, Bretton Woods institutions, and the World Trade Organization....particularly on the reform of the UNSC, in order to make the UN more effective in dealing with the new challenges as well as making it more transparent and democratic”.

Much under the leadership of South Africa the African Agenda has now been firmly placed on the tables of the industrialized countries of the world amongst others by forming a partnership in support of the new institutional dynamics on the Continent notably the AU and the rollout of the Nepad. African participation on the fringes of the G8 Summits began in 2001. The result of this partnership so far is the G8 Africa Plan of Action initiated in 2002, linking the G8 to direct support for the Nepad and subsequent endorsement of the Nepad by the international community in the UN (UNGA Res 57/7 of 2002) and the implementation plan of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002. At the 2003 G8 Summit it was further decided to expand the Africa Dialogue to include all OECD members with significant development impact. South African President Thabo Mbeki has until now played a pivotal role in achieving this objective by an unyielding and concerted effort not to allow leaders of the Northern countries to skirt development issues and to meet on global issues without focussing on the interests of Africa.

CONCLUSION

A clearly discernable pattern or logic is observed in the evolution of foreign policy over the first decade of a new and democratic South Africa. The logic has it that South Africa's path to prosperity, stability and a peaceful future can not be secured if that of the region and the Continent can not be secured. Africa can not achieve such a development in a world order that militates against its unfettered development and for that reality the structural relationship between the developed North and the developing South needs to be transformed into one that will allow for such development to be mutually beneficial. Further that the developing South will only be successful in restructuring the relationship with the industrialized North to the extent that it can create the required solidarity, self reliance and lessening of dependence on aid and the largess of the North.

Such a world view clearly places an gargantuan task on a new democracy at the most Southern tip of Africa but one that it embraces with remarkable enthusiasm and remarkable success so far. The country has excelled itself as one that plays a role in international developments far beyond its relative power; from peacemaking in Africa and beyond, to the reshaping of the international financial architecture in the G20, in the advancement of the Doha Round and focus on the

development Agenda in the WTO-G20, on the Board of the IAEA, in the Chair of International organizations and conferences, in engaging the G8, in building South-South momentum in IBSA etc. The current leadership in South Africa has shown the skill and determination to stay the course and remain focussed on its vision of creating a successful country in a continent that is prosperous, peaceful, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and united in a world that is just and equitable. South Africa is on a mission to promote its national interest and values through the Renaissance of the African continent and the creation of a better world for all.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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