

# Regionalism and the Fight Against Terrorism in Southern Africa: Reflections on Cabo Delgado in Mozambique

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## Abstract

Post-independence Africa has often depicted Southern Africa as a formidable region spared by the calamities of Islamic insurgencies and terrorism. However, unfolding events in the last five years have demonstrated the limitation of SADC to terrorism exceptionalism. A combination of relatively weak states perpetuating poor regionalism, ethnic and religious diversity, poverty and the existence of the 'ungoverned space' are possible explanations in making the region a suitable habitat for insurgency groups. The recent invasion by terrorists of Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique has been a critical cause for concern for the stability of the region. The military intervention of the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) and Rwanda presents an opportunity for academics to explore regional prospects for peace and security. This paper uses insights gained from a qualitative study on terrorism, counterterrorism and regionalism to investigate the concept of regional security cooperation in the SADC region and the authenticity of institutional responses in Northern Mozambique. The study concludes that the launch of the SAMIM, despite several obstacles, represents a step in the right direction. More so, creating durable security institutions is the starting point towards realising meaningful regional security cooperation, which guarantees feasible regional economic integration.

**Keywords:** regionalism, SADC, Mozambique, Cabo Delgado, terrorism, insurgency

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## 1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, we have witnessed a proliferation of institutional rapid response mechanisms, which stretch from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2002 to the European Union (EU) battle groups in 2007 and the African Union (AU) standby force declared operationally ready in 2016. In the case of NATO, established in April 1949 and comprising 12 countries from Western Europe and North America, which has since expanded, an essential aspect of the NATO Alliance was the American commitment to the defence of Western Europe (Baylis and Smith, 2001). Thus, the alliance was driven by a critical principle of collective self-defence enshrined in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Whereas the premise of the alliance was perceived as the United States of America's (US) unconditional commitment to defend Western Europe militarily, the alliance also literally meant that the US could use nuclear weapons to deter Soviet "aggression" (Baylis and Smith, 2001). For the Soviet Union, political encirclement entailed a growing military threat, specifically nuclear threat. It is for this reason that the vexatious NATO question vis-à-vis ambivalent relations of the US and Russia has for the umpteenth time remained uneasy, thus becoming an existential threat to regional and world peace, as now fully expressed in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War. On the part of Europe, the Treaty of Lisbon strengthens the security of the EU member states in dealing with external and security threats by introducing Article 42(7) of the Mutual Defence Clause. The clause has similar motives to NATO's injure one, injure all policy. The pursuit of collective security by the EU can thus be perceived in the context of a shared understanding of the desired notions of peace (Mvundura and Rusero, 2019).

However, despite investments made to these institutional mechanisms, as pointed out above, in the case of Africa, observations seem to suggest that the continent's military alliances and convergence have remained peripheral and weak (van Nieuwkerk, 2017). Instead, when one looks at the military responses to security crises across the African continent in recent years, the narrative is a repetition of the ever-increasing tendency that 'when push comes to shove' it is the coalitions of the willing that get deployed. Academics have termed these; 'ad-hoc coalitions', defined as temporary groups of actors that consent to solve a particular conflict at a given location in a more or less non-institutionalised manner. A case reference can be attributed to the Multinational Joint Task Force

(MNJTF) fighting against Boko Haram in Nigeria, created in 2015 by the most threatened states.

Northern Mozambique has projected similar responses towards the terrorist group locally called 'Mashababos'. Although the group is also called Al Shabab locally, it does not have any known or established connections with the real Al Shabab, which wreaks havoc in Somalia and Kenya (Dzinesa, 2023). This article explains the correlation between regionalism and terrorism, referencing the Cabo Delgado case study. The article further avers an assessment of the achievements, lessons learnt and, lastly, the feasible recommendations about attaining viable SADC regional security cooperation mechanisms.

### **2. On the notion of regionalism**

The concept of regionalism can be mapped out from the decades after the Second World War when decolonisation and the Cold War resulted in the establishment of multilateral and regional organisations across the globe. This trajectory is traceable from such organisations as NATO, the EU, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Africa Union (AU) and the Arab League, among other regional organisations (Nagar and Saunders, 2011). Generally, regionalism can be defined as the efforts of a group of nations to enhance each member state's economic, political and social aspects (Mvundura and Rusero, 2020; Nagar and Saunders, 2011). These efforts can manifest in regional cooperation, market integration and development integration. The 1990s, which coincided with the end of the Cold War and increasing complexities in interdependence fostered by globalisation, bears witness to a new wave of cooperation, which academics have often termed 'the new regionalism'. This is characterised by the forming of several regional cooperation frameworks that have advocated economic integration. References can be drawn from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), where efforts towards rejuvenating and strengthening existing regional actors and creating sub-regional actors in Europe and Africa became evident.

### **3. Regionalism in Africa**

On the African continent, regionalism can be traced from the African philosophy of 'Africanism', which brings about the unquenchable thirst for collective self-reliance, development, peace and unity (Daniel and Nagar, 2014). Scholars have described this doctrine as the pragmatic force

behind the birth of the OAU, AU and subsequently sub-regional groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC) and SADC premised on the exact cause (Dzinesa, 2023). Despite unsatisfactory results, regional integration discussions have been prominent on the agenda of the African continent, drawing back as far as the OAU's 1980 Lagos Plan of Action, the 1991 Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) adopted by the AU (Daniel and Nagar, 2014). Manifestations of regionalism continue to be visible in contemporary Africa with the launch in January 2021 of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by the AU, which serves as a protuberant reference to economic regional integration. The AfCFTA is an initiative that seeks to bring the continent the *crème de la crème* status. Africa has vast resources and a diversified people. Therefore, engaging in a treaty that facilitates intraregional trade makes inevitable the capacity to become the epitome of success and envy of other nations from a pragmatic conception. The AfCFTA treaty emanates from the continent's founding fathers' desire to integrate the whole continent. The merits of this treaty will bring about development, security and integration, among many other merits attached to this treaty. Nevertheless, one should not be oblivious to the fact that technicalities are a conventional aspect when it comes to the issue of reforms as a concern, with specific reference to the AfCFTA technicalities which include infrastructure, mismanagement, competition, ethnicity and implementation. Among other technicalities are the setbacks that could potentially alter the motive behind the implementation of the AfCFTA.

However, it is paramount for one to note that Africa's pursuit of regional integration, just like that of the entire global South, has not been spared by complexities that have widely remained diverse when compared to the global North, this being due to the socio-economic and political dynamics impacting the process (Rusero, 2023). In the African milieu, regional integration is attached to philosophical propositions which developed generally from western societies. Each of the different types of integration scheme has distinct regularities and methods of operation (MacLean, 1999). Thus, Africa's regional integration has been an exercise of different types where economic integration formulates different policies underpinned by the pan-Africanist school of thought. This scenario has led various scholars to understand African regionalism as a long-cherished pan-African idea of local governments and its people, not necessarily a means to development.

In the case of Southern Africa, countries from this region have held an enviable history of political cooperation. A high degree of solidarity was forged during the battle against settler colonialism and apartheid between the 1970s and early 1990s (Chimanikire, 2001). SADC remains the most formal and inclusive expression of Southern African regionalism (Bischoff, 2002). Southern Africa is one of the areas of the African continent that warrants systematic treatment as a region. Regions are not just geopolitical divisions but also social constructions premised on shared interests and intersubjective understandings. It is possible to identify several empirically and socially constructed attributes within and across states and societies in Southern Africa (Baner and Taylor, 2005). There is a high degree of shared colonial history in Southern Africa. The Portuguese had settled in the region on both coasts in present-day Mozambique and Angola, the Dutch in South Africa and the British in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. However, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, much of the territory had fallen under British control, except for Namibia under German rule and Angola and Mozambique under Portuguese rule (Baner and Taylor, 2005).

Liberation struggles also fostered interconnectedness among peoples and states in the region. Most of the time, liberation fighters were forced to live in exile in neighbouring countries. This meant the interface of various nationalities long before attaining several states' independence. States such as Tanzania and Zambia, which attained independence earlier, became rear centres to establish training camps and offices for liberation movements that were attempting to end minority rule in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), South West Africa (Namibia) and South Africa. However, the legacies of security–military alliances and a sense of cooperation did not start with the liberation movements. The Pretoria-Lisbon-Salisbury Axis entered into between South Africa and colonial Mozambique, Angola and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) was a security alliance aimed at curbing the feasibility of any meaningful military campaigns or armed struggles by the indigenous populations (Ngoma, 2005). In addition, the White Cooperation Bloc forged unity of shared common origins, history and the common motive of protecting the white colonial regimes against liberation movement uprisings (Ngoma, 2005). These developments point to a systematic approach that warrants SADC to be qualified and understood as a region.

The SADC as a regional organisation evolved out of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), an offspring of the Lusaka Declaration of 1980 and the Frontline States (FLS) consisting of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The FLS was an informal and loosely coordinated political alliance which attempted to aggregate its member states' power to pursue a specific foreign policy objective in Southern Africa. The FLS also evolved from the Pan-African Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa (PAMFECSA), consisting of Botswana, Zambia, Angola and Mozambique. The FLS had a twin objective of waging the liberation struggle to decolonise the region and simultaneously forging African unity buttressed through political and cultural symbiosis (Mpanyane, 2009). The expression and mechanisms of executing the struggle were coordinated and executed under the security arm of the FLS and Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDC). These security dynamics, to some degree, continue to shape the political and security cooperation of the region and help entrench collective thinking among regional members. Zimbabwe deliberately exploited this when confronted with its domestic crisis and external pressure from the broader western international community.

The SADCC, in turn, was meant to create its own economic space to free the region from its dependence on the apartheid economy. SADCC opted for functional cooperation and attracted overseas economic aid in doing so. The SADCC founding document of the Lusaka Declaration 1980 laid a framework for economic cooperation, development and the full integration of Southern Africa. On the political side, the FLS articulated the notion of greater security for Southern Africa from the apartheid regime of South Africa and advocated fundamental change aimed at liberating both Namibia and South Africa. Established in April 1980 by governments of nine states, namely Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the central thrust of SADCC was to coordinate development projects in order to lessen economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa. SADCC agreed on grouping priorities into Sectoral Responsibilities allocated to member states between 1980 and 1992 to achieve that objective.

#### **4. Defining concepts – Insurgency, terrorism and violent extremism**

It is critical to delve deeper into the nuanced distinctions of the notions of insurgency, terrorism and violent extremism, as they dominate the terminology discourse of this paper. A broader and holistic understanding of these terms dictates the policy tools that states and multilateral organisations use, encouraging strategies such as counterterrorism, counter-insurgency, preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), and preventing violent extremism (PVE). In the context of this paper, insurgency follows a definition postulated by Dzinesa that it is a rebellion against authority by the rebels who are not recognised as belligerents. This definition helps us to arrive at an informed understanding that not all rebellions are characterised as insurgencies. Conversely, terrorism denotes the calculated deployment of violence to a targeted population to instil and cultivate an atmosphere or culture of fear, thereby attaining a particular political objective. The deployed violence, which is deliberate or intentional, is thus meted out on a significant magnitude to draw the attention of the state and the populace. The AU has defined terrorism as “any act that is a violation of the criminal laws of a state party and can endanger the life, physical integrity, or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number or group of persons, or cause or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage”(AU, 2022).

More related to terrorism is violent extremism, which is the vocal or active opposition to the defined fundamental values of a given polity, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs (Institute for Security Studies, 2022). Thus, in the context of Cabo Delgado, the violent conflict that erupted there was not characteristic of a civil war and not a popular revolt, but rather a war against the state and its populace carried out by a terrorist sect. The definitions of the concepts above are essential in making sense of the authors' characterisation of the conflict in Cabo Delgado and, in the process, enhance the analytical depth of the paper through the facilitation of a comprehensive understanding of the diverse range of nuances this

phenomenon can engender, ranging from complex security responses to more holistic and preventive approaches.

## **5. Theorising regionalism in Africa**

The doctrine of regional integration in the African context cannot be ascribed to a singular theoretical framework. This is because of its associated complexities grappled by changing perspectives in the realities and challenges of globalisation, regionalisation and liberalisation. The continent has been involved in experiments of different types of regionalism guided by the notion of pan-Africanism regarding cooperation and integration. Scholars propound that the economic aspects of the concept are the accurate measure of success concerning regional arrangements, while other schools of thought focus on the relevance of politics. This narrative has explained the scholarly environment, which has seen a preoccupation with political and economic issues on African regionalism and has considered African governments and citizens craving regional integration as a long-cherished desire. This section seeks to articulate the functionalism and neo-functionalism theories in analysing vital political issues regarding Africa's quest for regional economic integration. Efforts in this section are premised on examining how these theories, combined, provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter to identify the theoretical gaps, contradictions and challenges in line with Africa's political and social realities.

## **6. Functionalism**

The ideology of functionalism can be retracted from the outbreak of World War 2, where concerns were raised on how the state had become dilapidated as an institution for social organisations. This concept was premised on countering power politics and state-centredness in international relations. The theory entails that power politics and state-centredness lead to conflicts and wars in the international system as nation-states continuously battle to achieve their self-interests and safeguard their sovereignty. Functionalism, therefore, advocates promoting peace and harmony among states. In this regard, functionalists affirm that war is a universal problem that affects everyone and, as such, the need for world peace should be a universal goal cherished by everyone. This theory then acts as the backbone behind understanding international cooperation in functional spheres of activity which do not impinge on



individual state sovereignty. This ideology believes that, through a system of functional cooperation, people are brought together with a feeling akin to sustained community. Functionalism reflects the roles of international organisations, non-state actors and transnational institutions, rather than national governments, when it comes to problems affecting the human species. It provides the fundamentals in explaining the basis of international cooperation and the evolutionary nature of the development of international and regional organisations.

As a theory, functionalism has also been a point of enlightenment for researchers on the reason sovereign states cooperate and how this cooperation advances with time. Functionalism enunciates that international institutions are not complete and immune to weaknesses, but should be seen as vehicles through which human needs are met. Thus, their activities ought to be premised on the human needs of the day. There is room to question as to whether functionalism is the most appropriate approach to take in relation to regional economic integration in Africa, given the political priorities that often come into play in realising key integration objectives. In reality, African leaders tend not to get involved in matters that are not contentious and could be resolved by more technical experts. Another potential issue with international cooperation is that it can sometimes lead to wars. Functionalism, a theory that cooperation is less likely to lead to conflict, is a valuable perspective. However, it only sometimes holds in Africa, where regional integration arrangements (RIAs) have led to state conflicts. This results from the weakness of African countries which mainly produce raw materials and import manufactured goods. Africa has yet to strengthen its policy and institutional frameworks to achieve regional economic integration goals.

### **7. Neo-functionalism**

Neo-functionalists, like functionalists, argue that the national government's authority is gradually eroded as people transfer loyalties to supranational bodies. Proponents of this ideology argue that, unlike what functionalism proposes, the integration process is not restricted to the intensification of policy collaboration in a specific functional area — economic or technical. Neo-functionalism is based on a political approach and re-launches functionalist theory from the perspective of regional institutions. To the neo-functionalists, 'interests' are the driving force behind the integration process, but actors may learn and develop common ideals and identities. The neo-functional model posits that

conflicts between states will be likely to occur when integration progresses and different political powers struggle for control. Cooperation is unlikely to last when these conflicts arise, as they can lead to power struggles and attitudes among political elites opposed to integration. Based on the above statements, neo-functionalism tries to explain the process of regional integration from a practical point of view. Regional integration is an inevitable process that can be initiated by political leaders of states interested in participation. Thus, neo-functionalism notes that states are essential participants in the integration process but emphasises that states comprise various interest groups and political parties. The essential neo-functional idea is that 'spillover' occurs, leading to the gradual integration of different sectors of society. This process is inevitable and will result in the merger of states and their different constituencies.

However, both functionalism and neo-functionalism have been criticised from different angles. For example, the new post-functional approach claims that the role and authority of member states decreases as integration proceeds; however, this claim contradicts the experiences of Africa. From European and African experiences, the state's role in national and regional affairs poses a significant challenge for neo-functional interpretations. Particularly in the African context, the new post-functional approach fails to account for the nature and functioning of the post-independence state in Africa or its impact on the process of economic integration, and it does not explain the lack of effective institutions in African countries, such as those interest groups and political parties that are supposed to drive integration. It does not account for the fact that, while regional integration is embraced in Africa, the status quo (state sovereignty) is maintained. While African governments have been motivated by the success of regional integration in Europe, the continent has yet to take full advantage of integration. Much attention has been given to establishing regional economic institutions rather than the structures that must be built and integrated to advance economic integration.

## **8. Security challenges in Africa pose challenges for regionalism**

Most African states are characterised by unsolvable internal ethnic conflicts, power-sharing disputes, lack of the rule of law, weak institutions, border disputes, religious and cultural differences, and weak institutions. This narrative has been conducive to hosting terrorist groups,

especially those founded on a revolutionary agenda, with religious antagonism motivating the extremists and a desire for institutional change. These groups often claim recognition from an oppressed minority while scholars define terrorism as a criminal act directed against a state intending to create fear and terror in the minds of a particular group or the whole nation. The world has known about terrorism for years, and it has become a global concern with the emergence of East-Asian terrorist groups operating in many countries. The strength of Al-Qaida in Africa and other regions of the world presents a threat to both western and African interests on the continent. The war on terrorism has been declared in an attempt to neutralise some of the sophisticated terrorist group networks in West and East Africa. The war on terrorism is a communal effort as it affects the whole region. It threatens global peace and security, and individual countries may be unable to handle it. Regional integration institutions should work for counterterrorism with international organisations such as the United Nations.

### **9. Mozambique's Cabo Delgado crisis and negotiating regional security alliances**

The situation in Cabo Delgado has shed light on the problem of promoting African solutions to African problems, given the existing lack of requisite financial and institutional resources. This paper highlights, first, some of the difficulties in negotiating regional security cooperation and, second, the security alliances on Mozambique's crisis in Cabo Delgado within the SADC confederation. Note is taken of the fact that Mozambique is a member state that is historically averse to external involvement in its domestic affairs and even the idea of creating military support alliances from within the region.

Over the past years, Mozambique has been experiencing mass displacement in a growing humanitarian crisis at the back of an Islamist insurgency in its gas-rich province Cabo Delgado. From the end of 2017, the North and Eastern parts of the province became a stage of violent conflict when a group of armed insurgents, mainly composed of local youths with links to Tanzania and Kenya, unleashed a series of attacks in the areas of the coast with a higher Islamic concentration (Forquilha and Pereira, 2019). The initiative aimed to establish an Islamic caliphate in that region. Cabo Delgado is the northernmost province of Mozambique, and it borders Tanzania in East Africa. Mozambique also shares borders with five other SADC member states: Swaziland, South Africa, Zimbabwe,

Zambia and Malawi. Four of the six neighbouring countries are landlocked and depend on Mozambique as a gateway to global markets (Forquilha and Pereira, 2019). In terms of security, Cabo Delgado could threaten this trade, which has been the basis for the support offered by these neighbouring counterparts in Mozambique to stem the insurgency. The conflict in this province has also been a cause for concern about maritime security in the Mozambican channel and local maritime security capacity generally along that belt. The East African coast is very limited, and it faces many challenges which include trafficking, illegal fishing and the potential resurgence of piracy.

The insurgency in Cabo Delgado has been complicated, as were the strategies to counter it. There have been many hypotheses propounded by scholars to articulate the roots of the conflict. There has been a school of thought focused on grievance aspects of the conflict, issues surrounding poverty and frustration of social expectations related to exploiting natural resources among local youths. Another school of thought has identified historical ethno-linguistic conflicts between coastal and inland peoples. Yet another hypothesis speaks to the regional dimensions of the conflict, which are pronounced by the relationship between the insurgency and terrorist cells in East Africa (countries such as Somalia, Tanzania and Kenya). Lastly, there is also the confluence of various international, regional and local economic interests in the Mozambique Channel, which are related to the control of a massively lucrative energy corridor and illegal drug, timber and ivory roots. These scenarios underline the complexity mentioned in the above paragraphs, where strong links exist between violent extremism, organised crime and local conflicts concerning the Cabo Delgado crisis.

## **10. SADC mission in Mozambique (SAMIM)**

The full expression of a SADC mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) came into being on 23 June 2021 following the regional bloc's overall consent to establish it on 23 June 2021. SAMIM was deliberately put in place as a response mechanism to escalating violent extremism and insurgency by an Islamist armed group, Al-Shabaab or Al-Sunnah wa Jama'ah (ASWJ), in Mozambique's northern Cabo Delgado Province, which posed the risk of regional contagion (Cilliers et al., 2021). It is important to note that SADC's peace operations are informed by regional and continental policies and principles, including the 1992 SADC Treaty (as amended); 2001 Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (in short,

Protocol); 2003 Mutual Defence Pact; 2010 Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ; Regional et al. Plan (RISDP) 2020-30; SADC Vision 2050; ASF Policy Framework; and AU Agenda 2063.

Specifically, the Treaty, Protocol, SIPO and Mutual Defence Pact provide the legal framework for establishing and regulating the peace and security architecture to promote regional defence, peace and security coordination and cooperation among SADC member States. The RISDP and Vision 2050 emphasise peace, security and good governance as the foundational pillar for Southern Africa's regional integration and development and are complementary to the AU Agenda 2063 goals of a stable and peaceful Africa backstopped by a relevant, fully functional and operational African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The Summit of Heads of State and Government is the mandating authority of collective self-defence, such as the deployment of the SADC Standby Force (SSF). The Summit does so on the advice and recommendation of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (the Organ). Article 2 of the Protocol states the overall objective of the Organ, is to coordinate, facilitate and promote peace and security in the SADC region. Article 6 of the Mutual Defence Pact states that:

- An armed attack against a State Party shall be considered a threat to regional peace and security, and such an attack shall be met with immediate collective action.
- Summit shall mandate collective action on the recommendation of the Organ.
- Each State Party shall participate in such collective action in any manner it deems appropriate. Any armed attack and measures taken in response to it shall immediately be reported to the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the UN Security Council (UNSC).

Based on the above outline, we concur with Dzinesa (2023) that the Mozambican case resonated with both regional instruments as external links existed. Article 7 of the Mutual Defence Pact stipulates that collective action can be taken at a member state's request or with its consent, except where the Summit decides that action needs to be taken in compliance with the Protocol. This is in sync with Article 11 of the Protocol, which outlines significant intrastate conflicts under the jurisdiction of the Organ and the various conflict management methods and procedures at the regional body's disposal, including collective enforcement action without

a member state's consent. Such intrastate conflicts include genocide, ethnic cleansing and gross human rights violations; civil wars or insurgencies; military coups or other threats to legitimate state authority; and conflicts that threaten regional peace and security (Dzinesa, 2023). However, the Summit can mandate such enforcement action only as a last resort, under Chapter VIII, Article 53 of the UN Charter and with UNSC approval (Dzinesa, 2023).

SAMIM was created under the auspices of the SADC Mutual Defence Pact and was deployed at the invitation of the Mozambican government to help it uphold national sovereignty and territorial integrity. This was significant as the government's response had been first to deny and downplay the conflict in Cabo Delgado, second to invoke sovereignty in domestic affairs while underestimating the terrorist threat, and third to graduate from heavy-handed but inadequate policing to military force subtly backed by private military contractors (PMCs), namely Russia's Wagner Group, Dyck Advisory Group (DAG) of South Africa and a consortium of South Africa's Paramount Group and Dubai-based Burnham Global.

SAMIM's initial mandate was to support Mozambique in combating terrorism and violent extremism in Cabo Delgado by:

- Neutralising the terrorist threat and restoring security to create a secure environment;
- Strengthening and maintaining peace and security, restoring law and order in affected areas of Cabo Delgado Province;
- Providing air and maritime support as well as logistics and training to Mozambican Armed Defence Forces (FADM) to enhance its operational capability;
- Helping Mozambique, in collaboration with humanitarian agencies, to continue providing humanitarian relief to the population affected by terrorist activities, including internally displaced persons (IDPs).

SAMIM's 15 July 2021 deployment was preceded by Mozambique's signing of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with SADC, which outlined the operational framework for the mission's troop/personnel contributing countries (T/PCCs), including Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The Summit extended SAMIM's mandate repeatedly with the Mozambican government's consent throughout its

first deployment year. The third extension in April 2022 was significant as it approved SAMIM's segueing from a Scenario 6 military intervention mission to degrade the terrorist threat to a Scenario 5 multidimensional peace mission. This has been one of greatest contemporary security threats and has dedicated 24 sessions to the issue, making it the most discussed by the AUPSC since its operationalisation in 2004.

A summative evaluation of SAMIM can thus be made, notably that it played a crucial role in helping the Mozambique government pacify Cabo Delgado and restore law and order as a fundamental basis to combating terrorism. SAMIM's peacebuilding initiatives, buttressed by €1.9 million in funding from the EU under the AU African Peace Facility (APF) Early Response Mechanism (ERM), included the capacity building of Cabo Delgado's police and correctional services officers and resulted in the enhancement of law and order. In addition, SAMIM contributed through capacity building of local officers. Human rights issues were addressed and the rule of law was observed when dealing with, among other issues, grassroots community concerns, terror suspects, including children recruited by the insurgents, and terrorist prisoners (Forquilha and Pereira, 2019).

### **11. Rwanda's mission in Cabo Delgado**

Rwanda's mission in Cabo Delgado deserves attention since it has, in several regards, been more effective than the SADC mission. This section also discusses a comparative assessment with the SADC mission to provide valuable insights into regional security interventions. On 9 July 2021, the East African state of Rwanda deployed 1000 military and police personnel to Cabo Delgado "to support efforts to restore Mozambique state authority by conducting combat and security apparatus, as well as stabilisation and security-sector reform" (Pigou, 2022:1). The deployment followed a bilateral deal entered between the presidents of Mozambique and Rwanda, respectively Phillip Nyuse and Paul Kagame. The Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) was effectively at the forefront in countering insurgents in their designated areas of responsibility, the districts of Palma and Mocimboa da Praia, and re-occupied the part of Mocimboa within weeks of deployment (Pigou, 2022). In an official statement, the Republic of Rwanda noted that the Rwandan contingent would support efforts militarily to restore Mozambique's state by conducting combat and security operations and stabilisation and security sector reform (Government of Rwanda, 2021). The Mission of Rwanda proved to be

more efficacious than that of SAMIM. SAMIM was deployed on 15 July 2021 following an approval by the Extraordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Maputo on 23 June 2021 as a regional response to extreme violence and terror in Mozambique (SADC, 2021). SAMIM was deployed under Scenario 6 of the African Standby Force with a mandate to support the Mozambican government in combating terrorism and violent extremism in Cabo Delgado. The mandate also extends to strengthening and maintaining peace and security, restoring law and order and assisting the government and humanitarian agencies to provide humanitarian relief to the affected population (Dzinesa, 2023). However, SADC's (late) deployment into Mozambique was mainly due to its internal processes and, more importantly, because of Mozambique's reluctance to have a regional force deployed. The initial position Mozambique adopted in refraining from having SAMIM deployed earlier was that it did not refer to the insurgency as 'terrorist activities' but as banditry, implying that the threat was not as severe as terrorism. SAMIM's ineffectiveness in dealing with the conflict in Mozambique has largely exposed the deep invisible divisions of the regional bloc in handling intrastate conflicts, and has rendered as suspicious the hierarchy and status of the states in the bloc as far as its responsiveness to conflicts is concerned.

## **12. Other mediation efforts in Mozambique and implications of SADC regionalism**

Outside of SAMIM and RDF involvement in Mozambique, there have been other notable mediation efforts and involvement by some external actors. Notably, in October 2021, the European Union established the European Training Mission in Mozambique (EUTM), whose thrust was "military training including operational preparation; specialised training, including on counterterrorism; training and education on the protection of civilians and compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law; and promotion of the agenda Women, Peace and Security" (Louw-Vaudran, 2022: 4). In addition to the EUTM, the EU contributed €2 million to the AU Rapid Response Mechanism support to SAMIM (Louw-Vaudran, 2022). SADC currently seeks support from the AU on the planned extension of the mission in Mozambique. While commendable, the gesture by the EU diminished the pursuit of 'Sadcness' as the regional bloc has existed for the past three decades. The much-cherished values of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and wading off



imperial and neo-imperial influence, have been the hallmark of SADC's existence. However, the EU gesture demonstrates both the unwillingness and/or incapacitation when mobilising resources to defend a member state's territorial integrity and sovereignty. On 8 July 2019, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced the appointment of Mirko Manzoni of Switzerland as his Personal Envoy for Mozambique. According to the UN, Ambassador Manzoni would provide good office support in facilitating the dialogue between the government of Mozambique and RENAMO and towards the signing and implementing of a peace agreement between the parties (UN, 2019).

### 13. Recommendations

Support should be provided to Mozambique on the terms requested by the government of Mozambique, especially in terms of the logistics and training of the Mozambican army. In this conversation, the EU could diplomatically request more effort towards transparency and information sharing in the way that the support is used and in the efficiency of the support. The EU should also advocate the call for a collective undertaking initially oriented with domestic undertones. This issue of having to negotiate with Rwanda outside the regional arrangement is plausibly uncomfortable for other member states, especially given that there could be a scenario of regional conflict spillovers and negative consequences from the coalition that Mozambique was trying to forge.

However, given the negotiations that Mozambique undertook with countries in the region, the fact remains that this was a Cabo Delgado insurgency, straddling East Africa and also going into the Mozambique Channel. This more significant issue extends to the peripheries of SADC, and the regional community should have admitted to incorporating other regions for support. This position thus drives a push towards an EAC, ECCAS and SADC peace and security summit, which might be an urgent necessity. If this is something feasible, the EU could assist with the necessary skills or capacity building that would be required to manage the complex logistics and coordination efforts of such a mission. The case of Cabo Delgado has also presented a long-term conflict; thus, SADC's response should also extend its conflict resolution and crisis management efforts by incorporating long-term solutions and strategies to such predicaments. This can be put into practice by aligning a strategy for prevention of violent extremism with a strategy for countering violent extremism to address the factors that lead to radicalisation.

For the Mozambican government, there is a need to embrace a multidimensional approach that is forthright in recognising the root causes of the insurgency and an integrated national security response with a human security-centric and developmental approach. In such a crisis, the nation-state must also develop a culture of working with the local community and humanitarian workers to provide humanitarian relief and essential services in the affected and at-risk areas. There is an urgent need for the Mozambican government to take a step further to change the security position of the maritime. They need to identify and undercut the localised financial supply chains and links to the transnational illicit networks that fund the insurgency.

#### **14. Conclusion**

The security situation in Cabo Delgado cannot be viewed as being separate from the human development disparities that prevail in the region. These disparities have been a contributing factor to the unfolding of the insurgency. Lessons from elsewhere on the continent relating to the ‘development trap’ must remain a part of the discussions about diffusing the situation. If interventions are only seen as reactive, the continued insurgency will find deeper traction among the disaffected groups in the region, mainly the youth. The point of departure for the Mozambican government, SADC and South Africa, a regional hegemony, is to recognise that, if left unattended, the situation will morph into a regional military complex dilemma where there is no peace in poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. This article recognises that regionalism functions beyond security operations to address these issues. There are issues of peace and development, capacity building and educational programmes, building basic infrastructures, and addressing unemployment in the region. A holistic understanding of these dynamics will likely bring finality to restoring total sovereignty in Mozambique and reclaiming a bonafide state fully in charge of its defined territory.

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