

THE JACOB ZUMA GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY: ASSOCIATION OR DISSOCIATION?

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Introduction

As South Africa approaches the third year anniversary of the Jacob Zuma-led government, it is an opportune time to map some of its policy trajectories. In this policy essay, I shall unpack the foreign policy and strategic objectives of the administration, with assessment of its dominant diplomatic priorities. Former President, Thabo Mbeki, had a clearly articulated and highly ambitious foreign policy narrative from which the incoming Jacob Zuma claimed his would diverge. However, when the new president finally did manage to cobble together a foreign policy, it actually borrowed heavily from Mbeki's own. More significantly, the policies as written on paper have yet to bear any resemblance to the ones being implemented. This, coupled with ructions and accusations of weaknesses of leadership in the current administration, implies an element of confusion, the roots of which can be traced back to the transfer of power between the two leaders. In this sense, South Africa's foreign policy during the past three years or so could be said to have been Polokwani-sed, a reference to the tensions between former President Thabo Mbeki and his successor Jacob Zuma, and the implications of this fraternal squabble on policy in general, foreign policy in particular.

The foreign policy agenda of the Zuma government

Huge expectations greeted the current South African government at the ANC's 52nd National Conference in Polokwane in 2007, at least from supporters of the faction that wrested control of the party from Thabo Mbeki and handed it to Jacob Zuma. Many of the expectations have revolved around the idea that the democratic coup would constitute not just a shift in personalities but in actual policies (Landsberg, 2011, p. 246)).

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Mbeki had pursued a four-pronged approach of strategic goals in which he sought to combine foreign and domestic policies (Landsberg, 2006: p.256). The so-called 'African Agenda'; South-South co-operation; North-South dialogue; and socio-economic and politico-security all incorporated the country's post-apartheid move to combining domestic growth with the replacement of international isolation by continental and overseas links, and notions of global governance (Landsberg, 2006, p.257).

It was against this background that the August 2009 *Medium-term Strategic Framework to Guide Government's Programme for the Electoral mandate Period 2009-2014* was announced, signalling that the Zuma administration would champion its foreign policy under the broad rubric of "Pursuing African Advancement and Enhanced Co-operation". The government erected a number of pillars, remarkably similar to those of Mbeki, namely

- (1) closing the gap between domestic and foreign policy, or the national interests;
- (2) Promoting Southern African Development Community (SADC) integration;
- (3) prioritization of the African continent through "African advancement";
- (4) strengthening of South-South relations;
- (5) improving strategic relations with the North;
- (6) strengthening political and economic relations; and
- (7) participating in the global system of governance.

The cement intended to hold together the edifice which these pillars were supposed to hold up was commonly voiced as 'national interest,' but it soon became apparent that the foundations themselves might not be able to carry the weight. Of major concern to critical observers soon became whether these foreign policy goals represented a marked shift in, or merely a reinforcement of, those pursued by Mbeki, and why there had been so many variations and divergences in their implementation. If Zuma wished to diverge from Mbeki's agenda, why did he adopt it in the first place? Alternatively, was he perhaps caught between the enthusiastic reformers who put him into power and the actual powers responsible for putting policy into practice?

From Foreign Affairs to International Relations and Co-operation

In one of the first moves announced by Minister Nkoana-Mashabane, in line with the resolution adopted by the ANC at Polokwane, was that the name of the department responsible for the management and co-ordination of the Republic's diplomacy and foreign policy would change from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to the Department of International Relations and Co-operation (DIRCO). The idea behind this was to signal the Zuma government's intention to introduce a new style and approach to the conduct of foreign affairs. The emphasis was now upon collaboration, and a non-hegemonic attitude that eschewed so-called 'soft-balancing', wherein the bullying tactics of successive apartheid governments had supposedly been replaced by deals with foreign powers aimed at mutual recognition of each other's self-interest.

In her first public address as new Minister, Nkoana-Mashabane spelt out the rationale behind the change of name, stating it had been intended to "reflect the new focus that our government wishes to place on partnerships and co-operation for development". In an address to DIRCO Heads of Missions Conference in August 2009, she expanded on this motivation when she asserted that it "was largely motivated by international trends which require states to put emphasis on co-operation over competition, and collaboration over confrontation". The minister went further to reason that "the globalised nature of the world necessitates that states continue to forge ways of co-operating better with each other" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a).

A further motivation behind the change in the name of the department was to help close the gap between domestic and foreign affairs and to help demystify the latter by bringing them closer to the public. In the words of the Minister, "one of the important areas of our work will be to make South Africans aware of the work that the Department is doing. In this regard we plan to enhance our public diplomacy initiatives and increase the level of our engagement with South Africans on foreign policy matters," and to gain the support of the people, she asserted, "our work needs to be known and understood by South Africans from all walks of life". This would require "more clarity and focus on the role of the Department in meeting our domestic priorities through international partnerships and co-operation" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009b). The Minister was implicitly recognising that there was a need for the government to become better in devising strategies that would help to close the domestic-foreign policy divide. At the very least, there was an expectation

that government would communicate more effectively the rationales underscoring foreign policy to domestic audiences.

During her *Outreach Programme* at the University of Limpopo in October 2009, the Minister articulated a view of the national interest that challenged the realist notion of power and domination, preferring a notion that would involve co-operation and partnership, and acknowledge its complexity. This all-purpose adhesive, 'national interest,' comprised the country's "goals and ambitions; they are about the state's survival, extending to its pursuit of wealth, economic growth and power". DIRCO attached great currency to soft balancing, with foreign and domestic policies closely connected:

We do not believe that the international system is characterised by anarchy and that states have to hide behind the cover of their sovereignty and focus narrowly on the pursuit of their national interest. In South Africa's scheme of the national interests, states can work together around a common global agenda and shared values for a better world. (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009c)

However, if this rhetoric was intended to signal a fundamental shift in policy by the new administration, it would have to go further than a name change. Examined closely, both the Mandela and Mbeki presidencies had long denounced hegemonic approaches to international affairs in favour of public avowals of cooperation and partnership-building. On the African continent in particular, the 'new South Africa' had consistently adopted a posture of partnership, not least in a bid to reassure its neighbours about its good intentions, and announcing that it sought to be a peaceful and reliable partner, no longer bent on pursuing its own interest at their expense.

Establishing a South African Development Agency

So, apart from the name change, what else was new? Another idea communicated by the new Zuma-led government was the establishment of a South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA), with the aim of promoting developmental partnerships. According to Minister Nkoana-Mashabane (2009c), the new government intended to bring together the work of several departments into one more practical unit. The view emanating from Pretoria-Tshwane was one of 'cooperation', 'coordination' and 'coherence'. In August 2009, the Minister confirmed that SADPA was operational, and would "contribute to capacity and institutional building, as well as support socio-economic and human resource

development” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009c). However, while the idea of SADPA was touted as bringing order to previous chaos, it was not a new one. The first concrete example of translating such a vision into a programme of action had been by the Mbeki administration to make South Africa a virtual donor country, willing to put substantial resources at the disposal of the ‘African Renaissance.’ This was also intended to counter Western hegemony on the continent, and signal to continental partners that neo-colonial relationships were to be challenged. In 2000, just one year into Mbeki’s presidency, South Africa established the African Renaissance and International Co-operation Fund (ARF, 2000, Act 51, section 2), effectively making it an African donor country, able to influence continental politics in direct ways, and reversing the former Economic Co-operation Loan Fund (Act 68 of 1968), used by the apartheid state to lure reluctant African states into cooperating with it. In terms of structure, the ARF was under the control of the Director-General of Foreign Affairs. Funds for projects were disbursed after the approval of the Director General or the Minister of Foreign Affairs (DFA, 2008).

The DFA could also tap into its own resources and claim back such resources after approval had been sought from the Minister of Finance. Loans or other financial assistance were granted in accordance with an agreement entered into with the country in question and the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs. Assistance granted was subject to terms and conditions agreed upon by the recipient country and the Minister, and in all cases in consultation with the Minister of Finance (DFA, 2008). An Advisory Committee was established to manage the Fund, and given the task of making recommendations to the Minister and the Minister of Finance on the disbursement of funds through loans and other financial assistance.

This ARF effectively propelled South Africa in the direction of challenging the hegemony of the established donors. Its aim was “to promote co-operation between the Republic of South Africa and other countries by granting loans and/or granting of other financial assistance in respect of development projects in other countries”. The fund set out to promote in a “proactive way” six areas and priority line items (DFA, 2008):

- (1) Co-operation between the Republic of South Africa and other countries, in particular African countries
- (2) Promotion of democracy and good governance
- (3) Prevention and resolution of conflict
- (4) Socio-economic development and integration
- (5) Humanitarian assistance
- (6) Human resource development

By 2007, the ARF had built up a strong track-record in multi-lateral and bi-lateral funding in Africa. At that juncture, government recognised the need to develop a policy framework for development assistance for the Republic and the stage was set for becoming a fully-fledged donor that would compete with and challenge established donors in Africa. The DFA and Treasury had taken the lead by 2005 in working on a strategy for transforming the ARF into the more coherent Development Assistance Fund and Programme for South Africa, while a detailed cabinet memorandum was prepared to spell out the principles (DFA, 2008). South Africa participated in the so-called 'Paris Club process', which focused attention on aid flow, critical reform of outdated and ineffective aid policies and management that favoured budget support as opposed to tied aid. A global assessment of progress was made on issues such as achieving the indicators of the Paris Declaration. So serious had the Mbeki government been about playing at the strategic level on funding that it explored the idea of doubling aid to Africa by 2010, and allocated no less than 0,7% of its annual income to aid by 2015.

The 2007 strategy document on becoming a donor state suggested that it would consider both multilateral and bilateral funding, and conceded that the latter would require extensive infrastructure in order to ensure effectiveness. However, South Africa needed to work on beefing up this infrastructure, and it would have to learn from the UK's Department of International Development (DfID), Germany's GTZ, America's United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Canada's Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Scandinavian donors and others. If successful as a donor country it would then be in a position to influence the OECD and the Paris Club, to ensure that aid became better aligned with the national development agendas of developing countries, while at the same time campaigning for less conditional aid. It also gave South Africa a voice to push for greater levels of aid to be allocated to the continent and other developing countries and emerging economies.

The question of how far this policy was continued by Zuma and how far it was replaced by a new one is closely related to growing concern over the government's commitment to realizing the goal of establishing its agency amid a global economic recession, as well as meeting pressing socio-economic challenges at home. As well as a major service delivery crisis, the ANC government is under attack from its traditional support base, the trades unions, and is currently locking horns with the media as it tries to muzzle freedom of speech in a vain attempt to prevent disclosure of criticism of the president and the widespread corruption that has permeated every level of government and the civil service.

As Mbeki's vision of an African Renaissance appears to be falling by the wayside, because of the desire by the new ruling elite to distance themselves from the former head of state, the government has shown little sign of making its agency operational. If and when it does so, it is doubtful that it will be able to continue to pursue the broad goals of the ARF, i.e., promotion of democracy and good governance; prevention and resolution of conflict; socio-economic development and integration; humanitarian assistance; and human resource development. More likely, it will have to refine and rationalize these goals to something less ambitious, perhaps a niche area of democratic state-building. In addition, there are institutional policy challenges such as where to situate the agency, whether as part of DIRCO, in the Treasury, or as a separate entity on its own. Whichever route government decides on, one thing is clear, there will need to be a high degree of cooperation between DIRCO and a host of other departments, especially the Presidency, Treasury, DTI, DPSA and others. Of more concern is whether the government is truly committed to realizing the ambitious goal of setting aside 0,7% of GDP to go towards aid, when its own a people are manifesting growing unrest at what is widely perceived, rightly or wrongly, as shambolic governance.

Pursuing African Advancement

A key dimension of the Zuma government's foreign policy, as was the case with Mbeki, has been that of "continued prioritization of the African continent", pursued under two broad thematic areas: continental and improving political and economic integration, and the South African Development Community (SADC). However, behind the rhetoric of change, there is once more a note of familiarity. Strategies parading under the label of "African advancement" betray a policy that borrows heavily from the Mbeki government's notion of the "African Agenda", as explicitly stated by Nkoana-Mashabane when she announced that "the consolidation of the African Agenda remains central to our foreign policy objectives" and that the new government "will continue to work towards achieving a vision of Africa which is united, peaceful and prosperous" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009c).

Speculation has also been rife as to the future of NEPAD under the scattergun approach to foreign policy of the Zuma policymakers. It came as news when the government recently began to state in the open that it remained committed to NEPAD, having been silent on this issue for most of its first three years and running the risk, as a lead state in the formation of NEPAD, of distancing itself for domestic political rather than sound foreign policy reasons. In practice there remains much uncertainty about the future of this programme. In committing

itself, grudgingly, to NEPAD, and to improving the regional climate for growth and development, as well as placing the development requirements of the continent on the global agenda, it is signifying that it will continue to use Mbeki's vehicles, the G8-Africa Action Plan, and the African Partnership Forum. However, it will not follow its predecessor in heralding this, or indeed any policy direction, as being in the national interest, and NEPAD remains the main frame of reference for intra-African relations and Africa's partnership with international partners, such as the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership, Forum for Africa-China Partnership (FOCAC), the G8, New Africa-Asia Strategic Partnership (NAASP), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Nkoana-Mshabane, 2009c). Widely perceived as little more than 'talking shops', it is difficult to see how Zuma could convince his domestic audience of the benefits of continued membership of these groups, even if he himself knew.

Such fears are also reflected in the government's relationship with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the implementation of which it initially supported. There are now serious doubts about this governance instrument's future, and almost a year after Chris Stals stepped down as South African representative on the Panel of Eminent persons, only in early 2012 have we been informed that ANC Chairperson, Baleka Mbete, will replace Stals, a good five years after he stepped down from the position. This does not show good leadership, added to which are questions around the future of the mechanism at home and the implementation of the action plan. The tensions between government and civil society over the domestic APRM process and structures are well documented, but the tensions and problems persist, with both sides having some answering to do about how they propose to restore the creditability of the instrument.

The Mbeki government repeatedly emphasised the need to strengthen the African Union (AU) and its institutions, and within the context of the Grand Africa debate about the AU government, its stance was in favour not of Gaddafi's United States of Africa (USAf), but a Union of African States. Again, there was an opportunity for the Zuma government to move beyond the cautious deliberations of his predecessor and embrace a federal vision for the continent. However, once more, his avowed commitment to supporting the old paradigm of building a Union of African states and continuing to work for the strengthening of the AU and its confederal institutions placed him firmly in the footsteps of the man his coup d'état had overthrown: "South Africa will continue to advocate for a gradual and incremental approach, focusing on the regional organisations, as building blocks towards the Union Government, South Africa's approach continues to be premised on the understanding "that the African Union is a union of independent and

sovereign states”, and that the actions of the AU Agency “are contingent on the mandate of member states” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009c). It is hardly surprising, in the light of such intellectually bankrupt dogma, that the critical problems facing the continent and country can find any swift and long-term solutions.

In characteristic fashion, substituting rhetoric for substantive policy, stated policy heralded that it would, through continental and regional issues, work towards the entrenchment of democracy and respect for human rights on the African continent (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009c). Suffice it to point out here that the balance between a human rights and justice versus a peace, security and development approach has been a difficult one for this country to achieve during the course of the past fifteen years.

There is already much expectation in the local and international media that the Zuma government will pursue pro-human rights foreign policy, but does it stand up to close scrutiny? Presentation of these expectations, let alone their implementation, will have to be carefully managed, lest the foreign policy become just another piece of shallow international human rights discourse.

In line with his neo-functionalist approach, Mbeki’s foreign policy strategies comprised strengthening the African Union (AU) and its institutions as an essential part to bolstering Africa’s unity and development. Zuma’s Government promised to continue to contribute to the organs of the AU, namely financial institutions such as the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Investment Bank, as well as the African Court of Justice and the African Court of Human and People’s Rights. As hosts of the Pan-African Parliament, South Africa deemed itself to have “a special responsibility to ensure that this organ of the AU enjoys legitimacy and effectively discharges its mandate” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009c). Policies stressed the need to ensure the necessary resources and political support to realize these goals, but as with promises of sustained and equitable economic growth on the African continent, this again shows, as the Minister of International Relations has betrayed on numerous occasions, that the developmental approach to foreign policy is in fact similar to the stance adopted by the Mbeki administration.

The Zuma government’s approach to conflict resolution in Africa

The new Zuma administration steered clear of using the evocative and controversial idea of “quiet diplomacy” as a means to promote conflict resolution in Africa. Distancing itself from this controversial concept was an attempt to show a

break between itself and the Mbeki administration, yet apart from ditching the term “quiet”, in practice the conflict resolution posture adopted by Zuma was similar to that adopted by the Mbeki administration. In his first year, Zuma was already showing a preference for non-confrontational, and accommodative, mediated solutions to conflict and deadly wars in Africa.

The Mbeki government had been an activist in the area of peace diplomacy, and post-conflict reconstruction and development. The new government has vowed to contribute to the promotion of peace, security and stability, by among others, sustaining involvement in peacekeeping operations in Africa. It went on to say that South Africa would assist in the reconstruction and development of the African continent, especially in post-conflict countries such as the DRC, Sudan, Burundi, Western Sahara and Zimbabwe. But how and where would the focus lie?

Here there may be evidence of a break with policy between the two presidents. Starting with the bilateral questions, in particular Zuma's choice of first state visit to Angola in August 2009, he was accompanied by 11 Cabinet ministers, senior government officials, and the largest business delegation to accompany a head of state on a state visit since 1994. Zuma was determined to restore solidarity with Angola, a country with whom relations had been severely strained during the Mbeki years. Angola did not like South Africa's hegemonic status in the region, and Angolan President Dos Santos never responded positively to Mbeki's overtures for closer relations. For the almost decade of his rule, Mbeki failed in his bid to secure a state visit to South Africa by his Angolan counterpart. In 2007, the so-called Browse Mole Intelligence Report was leaked by the Republic's organized crime-fighting agency, the 'Scorpions,' containing serious claims against the Angolan President and accusing him of having backed a plot to unseat Mbeki by providing financial and political backing for the campaign by the ANC Deputy-President Jacob Zuma to replace him as head of state (*Mail&Guardian Online*, 2009). The intelligence report suggested that Angola was unhappy with the pre-eminent role Mbeki had come to play in African diplomacy, and that the Angolans favoured a strategy in which his role would be curtailed.

Against the backdrop of these charges, and a generally frosty relationship between Luanda and Pretoria-Tshwane, it was not surprising that Zuma chose Angola as his first destination for a state visit after becoming head of state. On a positive note, the idea of elevating South African-Angola ties to a more strategic plan sounded like a welcome move, and there were certainly bilateral benefits to be had economically. On a more curious level, the question arose as to whether the restoration of ties signalled a geo-continental shift in policy away from the likes of

Nigeria, Algeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Ghana. If not, it is unclear how South Africa and Angola hoped to achieve the stated goal which arose during the Summit of the two also playing a strategic sub-regional and continental role. Angola would be a curious choice to play this role, and while Luanda itself harbours a desire to be recognized as a regional hegemon, and seeks the status and prestige of the label, it is less clear whether the country has a sub-regional and continental plan, let alone the will to execute it.

Zuma's choice of anointing Angola as the Republic's number one strategic partner in Africa had serious implications for the hitherto strongest bi-lateral African relationship in post-apartheid history. 2009-2012 saw a sharp decline in the relationship between Pretoria and Abuja relations, with the latter feeling abandoned by South Africa and the tensions in the relationship coming to a head during the 2011 NATO war against Libya war. The Libya vote went against seeming key propositions about South Africa's foreign policy, including peaceful settlements of disputes; African solutions for African problems; defending the sovereignty of African states; and defending multilateralism and the centrality of the United Nations (Landsberg & Moore, 2011, p.72). While it was the AU who in 2010 nominated South Africa to return to the UNSC as a non-permanent member from January 2011 to December 2012, scarcely two years after it finished its first stint from January 2007 to December 2008, the Zuma government, together with Nigeria and Gabon, voted for the Libya resolutions in apparent isolation of the AU (Landsberg & Moore, 2011, p.73). South Africa also took the vote without consulting its new BRICS partners (Brazil, Russia, India, China), to the obvious chagrin of some like China and Russia.

Caused in part by the fall-out over Libya, "South Africa and Nigeria, apart from not getting on well", argued Patrick Smith, "will be tied up with their own political ructions" (The Africa Report, February 2012, Editorial). This was an unfortunate development. It should be remembered that between 1999 and 2008, South Africa and Nigeria built one of the strongest strategic partnerships on the African continent as they set out to "facilitate the strengthening of existing co-operation... in peace, security and stability issues" (Quoted in Landsberg, in Adebajo & Mustapha, 2008, p.204). The two countries' bi-lateral and multilateral relationship remained of strategic importance as they both helped to construct the AU and crafted NEPAD. They shaped the AU away from Muammar Gaddafi's United State's of Africa (USAf) plans into the idea of a union of states and under Mbeki and Obasanjo's leadership, the two African pivotal states embarked on a real "concert diplomacy in the interests of African renewal, by trying to take primary

responsibility for managing inter- and extra-African affairs” (Quoted in Landsberg, in Adebajo & Mustapha, 2008, p.204).

Pretoria-Tshwane and Abuja set out to “maintain and increase, if necessary, the existing frequency and regularity of consultations between the two countries of issues of international and regional multilateral concern”. The two regarded their relationship as “...of strategic importance, particularly in the light of the promotion of the development and promotion of NEPAD... as well as the evolution of the mechanisms around the AU” (Landsberg, in Adebajo & Mustapha, 2008, p.204). Since the unsavoury developments of the Libya votes of 2011, there has been a cooling off in the relationship between Nigeria and South Africa, to the point that by the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012 there was a frostiness in the relationship. According to Adekeye Adebajo, South Africa’s “maladroit diplomacy over Cote D’Ivoire and Libya [resulted in] the alienation of its previously close strategic partner, Nigeria” (Adebajo, 9 February 2012). Patrick Matlou from the Africa Institute of South Africa argued that, “what is supposed to be a strategic partnership is increasingly becoming bogged down in differences between the two countries, largely seen through the eyes of how their governments engage”. He reminds us that “there were no celebrations of the bi-national [commission] in 2010 and 2011” and “South Africa and Nigeria are often seen and act as rivals”. There is little doubt that one of the continent’s most strategic and important bi-lateral relations has degenerated into a tense affair in recent years. Nigeria sees itself as the giant, “as bigger, more resourced” and a “long time leader in Africa”, and they believe that they were “the champion of the anti-Apartheid struggle and that South Africa should, in showing gratefulness for the assistance it played in its transformation. South Africa, the expectation goes from Abuja, should “play second fiddle to Nigeria”, which, according to Matlou, South Africa “has through the force of example, clarity of its international relations and policies, and through the leadership role bestowed on her, is often urged to lead even where she is reluctant” (ASIA Focus, Nov/Dec 2011, p.3). Then there is the rivalry for the UN Security Council seat.

There is little doubt that one of the continent’s most strategic and important bi-lateral relations has degenerated into a tense affair in recent years. While during the Mbeki and Obasanjo years there had been tensions, the two leaders made sure that they managed them and preserved a “concert of powers” relationship. Since 2009, however, the relationship has deteriorated to the point that that the two states are hardly on speaking terms. In a recent policy brief, the Centre for Conflict Resolution recommended that “relations between South Africa and Nigeria – the two main regional hegemon in sub-Saharan Africa – should be urgently improved to

provide leadership to rally a united African diplomatic front at the UN and other international diplomatic fora" (CCR, 2012, p.5). Many felt it was imperative that these African pivotal states took the lead in restoring efficiency and effectiveness in the AU and other continental organisations.

While there has been much promise that Zuma would adopt a tougher more confrontational approach towards Mugabe and Zimbabwe, there is less likely to be a change of approach toward Zimbabwe, which apart from an explicit commitment to work towards a free and fair election at the earliest possible date, seems to evoke business as usual (or lack of it) in Tshwane-Pretoria. Zuma has said he would work with all parties in the Zimbabwe unity government, Zanu-Pf, MDC-Tsvangarai, and MDC-Mutambara, to address "potential fault lines" within the inclusive government to resolve their differences and ensure that this government works more effectively (Director-General Ayanda Ntsuluba, 2009). This includes resolving differences over issues such as the Governor of the Central Bank and the Attorney General (Director-General Ayanda Ntsaluba, 2009). However, the government of national unity (GNU) is a fragile one and the three parties involved in the pact are reluctant participants. The GNU is likely to go through many fits and starts, and there is even a chance that there will be an occasional walkout staged by some of the parties, especially the two MDC factions. South Africa said that it would work with Western powers such as the EU and other cooperating partners to re-engage Zimbabwe, but as Mugabe continues his decline into senility and increasingly bizarre outbursts, the pertinent question is who is the more detached from reality, him or Zuma?

As far as the DRC is concerned, the Zuma government continues to use the vehicle created by the Mbeki government to engage the central African country in managing its post-colonial civil conflicts, namely the South African-DRC Bi-National Commission (BNC) (Director-General Ayanda Ntsaluba, 2009). In engaging the DRC, South Africa would focus on examining progress on the implementation of projects and key issues related to post-conflict reconstruction and development, in particular helping the DRC building its capacity within the police and security forces, and building state institutions to govern more effectively. While Mbeki's government had helped to broker a rapprochement between Rwanda and Burundi, Zuma's chose to take up this role and emphasise the need for the two countries to improve the tenuous security situation between them.

Sudan is another country and challenge over which South Africa has invested much political capital in trying to resolve political and security issues. While Mbeki took a personal interest in Sudan and regularly engaged in personal diplomacy, Zuma appears to favour a more backseat approach and delegated consultations around the issue to his Minister of International relations and Co-operation. The

Zuma government adopted a view that unity between North and South remained fragile, and the planned referendum over self-determination for the newly formed South Sudan could unearth more tensions and divisions between North and South, rather than cementing unity and solidarity. The Minister for international relations confirmed that South Africa had “an important contribution to finding a lasting peace in the Sudan as we chair the Ministerial Committee on post-conflict reconstruction in that country” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a). She confirmed that South African troops were an important component of the AU-UN peace-keeping presence in Darfur” and that “former President Thabo Mbeki is leading a High-level Panel of the AU whose work should help us to address the challenges of justice and reconciliation in that country” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a).

One area of policy which the Zuma government made no attempt to disguise its having continued along the Mbeki route was a preference for negotiating inclusive governments on the continent. For instance, it supported the work of former Mozambique President Joaquim Chissano as SADC appointed mediator to try and resolve the crisis in Madagascar, which has been dubbed by SADC and the AU as an example of “unconstitutional change of government” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a). This is a practice that has been rejected by these continental institutions. Determined to reverse the unconstitutional practice and restore rule in Madagascar, Pretoria-Tshwane came out in support of Chissano’s push for an inclusive government that would see Ravalomanana as president, with the figure who ousted him, Rajoelina, as participating in such a government (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a). Both would be allowed to stand in a new presidential race after the transitional period.

In reality there were signs of association and dissociation with the Mbeki foreign policy. Whether on paper, or in theory, the Zuma government’s stance towards conflict resolution in Africa was therefore very much in line with the Mbeki administration’s preference for inclusive and negotiated solutions, and showed a remarkable degree of continuity with the previous government’s approach. Again, any talk of change and a break with the Mbeki government’s approach to conflict resolution does not stand up to scrutiny, as in reality the new administration has opted to build on the approach of its predecessor government. Furthermore, there are even signs that the rhetorical pretence of looking for change is in some instances being dropped altogether, as continuity apparently comes to be accepted as the norm. For Zuma, he played expedient politics by allowing some to believe he would change the Mbeki agenda, while knowing full-well there he would mainly stick to such an agenda as he helped to shape much of it during 1999-2005.

Improving political and economic integration of SADC

It is now pertinent to consider South Africa's planned strategies for improving political and economic integration of SADC, the new government's prioritization of which should be viewed within the context of its regarding regional economic communities (RECs) as the pillar institutions of continental union. As the Minister of International Co-operation put it, policy is "informed by our commitment to contribute towards the transformation and realignment of SADC from a regional organization preoccupied in the main by a political agenda to a Regional Economic Community (REC) that will meet the challenges of globalization" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a).

Just as regional integration and the role of SADC in mitigation, peace and security, and governance featured prominently as a priority, so the new Zuma-led government promised to focus on making a contribution towards political cohesion and strengthening governance and capacity in SADC, including deploying personnel to strategic positions within the Secretariat. It is worth pointing out here that this focus on regional cohesion by the Zuma administration is not new; it has been a vexing question in foreign policy since the end of apartheid, namely the gap between intentions and capacity. The lofty promise by government notwithstanding, South Africa remains one of the most under-represented countries in African and international multilateral forums, with serious implications for its core national interest and foreign policy goals. On one hand, it promises to promote regional integration, including through SADC protocols, aimed at improving security and stability, infrastructure, transport (surface, air, and maritime, public administration and other sectors; the co-ordination of multi-sectoral plans, and harmonizing industrial policies. On the other hand, while it is known that there is a proposed International secondment policy on the table, the status of that policy remains unclear.

The Zuma government has also stated that it will move towards enhanced regional economic integration and address sources of disagreement among members of Southern African Customs Union (SACU) on issues such as trade policy and revenue. The question begged, however, is whether the new administration plans to continue with the Mbeki government's innovative policy paradigm, introduced towards the latter years of the previous administration, namely that of development regional integration. What it does indicate is that it will be moving towards enhanced regional economic integration and addressing sources of disagreement among members of SACU on issues such as trade policy and revenue sharing.

The closest there is to an explicit developmental idea is to be found in government's stated policy towards EPAs, articulated in the 2009 MTSF, wherein the idea was mooted that South Africa would seek to ensure that EPAs have a development agenda and support regional integration. However, there continues to be a major difference amongst SADC states over how to respond to EPAs, with some being apprehensive about embracing this platform and others viewing it as an important trigger for development. Either way, there is a need for SADC common positions over EPAs and other trade instruments. It was therefore understandable when the Minister for International Relations responded by stating that South Africa must "continue to reflect on challenges regarding our interaction with countries in SADC, particularly our varying positions on negotiations around the EPAs with the EU" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a). There is thus a need to analyse the implications of the EPAs on the SADC regional integration programme.

The Zuma government's is also grappling with the issue of putting into operation the Project Preparation Development Fund (PPDF), as the first step towards the SADC Development Fund. This plan coincides with a global financial crisis, and the chances of donors honouring their commitments, or for that matter SADC member states, have been dealt a blow. The questions arise as to whether South Africa will take it upon itself to engage the donor fraternity to ensure that they meet obligations and turn pledges into disbursements. What about the relationship between the SADC Fund and the planned SADPA? What are South Africa's own plans to bolster such a fund? An even more significant question in the context of this paper is whether the Zuma government will prove more effective in executing its stated regional mandate, or whether we are likely to see dithering on the part of government, which would result in weak implementation of stated goals?

Strengthening South-South Co-operation

The third foreign policy pillar of the Zuma administration to consider, according to the 2009 MTSF, is that of "strengthening South-South relations". The first point to note is that there is a high degree of continuity with the Mbeki administration of "consolidating the agenda of the South" through South-South co-operation. The main rationale underscoring the South-South cooperation strategies of the Zuma government would be to "ensure the creation of political, economic and social spheres necessary for the fight against poverty, underdevelopment and marginalization of the South". Again, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane as good as admitted to following Mbeki when she stressed that "South Africa will continue to

build relations based on solidarity and cooperation with regional and sub-regional groups in the South such as the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), Forum for China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC), Africa-India Forum, G77 plus China, the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum, and the New Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership (NAASP) in pursuit of the consolidation of the African Agenda". The Medium-term Strategic Framework of 2009 stated that the focus of "South-South cooperation" strategies would be on (MTSF, 2009):

1. continue engagement with organizations of the South, such as the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), the G77Plus China, and others.
2. implement and monitor of all India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Tri-lateral Forum Agreements and Actions Plans, as well as ensure that sectoral agreements deliver tangible results that reach and benefit the citizens of all three countries.
3. revitalize the New Africa-Asia Strategic Partnership (NAASP) as a relevant vehicle for South-South co-operation, and strive to ensure that the challenges in implementing the Asian-African projects that were agreed upon at the Asian-African Summit in 2005 are addressed.
4. Engage and support efforts of the African Union and the United Nations to find a lasting solution to conflict situations on the African continent, as well as conflicts elsewhere, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

On the South-South cooperation score, there is a clear ethos of continuity between the emerging policy positions of the Zuma government and those adopted by the Mbeki administration. It should be remembered that the Southern formations which the Zuma government chose to prioritize were the very ones in which the Mbeki government played pivotal roles in revitalizing and strengthening, including IBSA and NAASP, and NAM and the G77 Plus China formation (C. Landsberg, 2010, pp. 227-228). Indeed, the new administration no longer even pretended to deny the strong political and economic ties Mbeki had cultivated with India, Brazil and China, as providing opportunities to diversify its international relations, especially in the political realm.

Even had they wished to fulfil their pledge to break with the past, the administration quickly discovered that, on the South-South front at least, the Mbeki government had refined and consolidated policy to the extent that there was little room for manoeuvrability. It thus had no choice but to opt for continuity and focus on implementation and operationalisation of these policy directions and decisions. What is now needed is to shift the attention in these organizations and programmes to implementation of policy and to ensure that they realize the lofty goals they set

out to achieve. The challenges in this regard should not be underestimated. Jacob Zuma took over the levers of policy at a time when many fellow heads of government and states of Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia were starting to disengage from many of these processes. A huge burden will fall on South Africa's shoulders if they try to rescue and resuscitate these initiatives, and the government faces enormous challenges on the home front, which may compel the President and his Cabinet Ministers to scale down on foreign policy adventurism and focus on domestic priorities. This may mean that initiatives like IBSA and NAASP have to be neglected.

Again, there was continuity between the strategies of the two administrations, but examination of the practice and actual implementation of policy shows little sign that sustaining or securing the survival of these forums remains a key priority of the Zuma government. It is thus the policy-to-implementation gap, prompted by the factionalism within the ruling alliance as well as tensions in government, which we have to look to when it comes to the Zuma government. Suffice to point out that Zuma inherited from his predecessor a well-defined South-South strategy and there would be no need for them to reinvent the wheel; instead, the focus had to be on implementation.

Strategic relations with formations of the North

Engaging the Northern industrialized powers and their associations is the fourth pillar of the new Zuma administration's foreign policy, and in this respect we again see signs of association as well as dissociation with those of Mbeki. The rationale behind a strategy to continue engaging the industrialized powers was advanced by the International Relations and Co-operation Minister when she stated that "countries of the North are undeniably an economic power based of the world and remain essential to the economic well-being of the developing world". Given these economic considerations, South Africa set out to "forge partnerships with these countries within the context of trade, development and co-operation". Engaging the North, policy stated, would furthermore be done to advance South Africa, the continent and the rest of the South's developmental agenda". In the medium term, policy toward the North would see the Zuma government continue pursuing a developmental and investment-oriented approach to engagements with the North, such as the OECD and the G8, as well as continuing to work for the consolidation of the African Agenda through the implementation of relevant NEPAD programmes in all such engagements.

The visit in August 2009 by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton confirmed South Africa's wish to cement close ties with Washington and strategic economic relations in particular, and it wished to take "full advantage of the US Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)", and in this respect it might be said that Zuma was more ambitious than his predecessor, Mbeki. It should be remembered that, during the Mbeki and George W. Bush presidential eras in South Africa and American respectively, the bilateral relationship between the two countries cooled off significantly because of differences over US unilateral conduct globally and the illegal American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. On the other hand, there was American irritation over South Africa's 'quiet' approaches to the crisis in Zimbabwe. The Zuma government was committed to strengthening itself to rebuild this relationship and to extract maximum economic benefit from the world's remaining super power. The 2011 NATO-led Libya war prompted furious responses from Pretoria-Tshwane, and the relationship with the P-3 of the UN Security Council, France, Britain and the US, deteriorated rapidly.

Reaching out to the EU, on the other hand, has been a continuous process by both Mbeki and Zuma, with both presidents determined to bolster relations with South Africa's leading trading partner, and turn this reality into benefits for itself and for the African continent. South Africa has committed itself to advancing AU-EU relations by taking the 1st Africa-EU Action Plan implementation process. The Zuma administration has taken a leaf out of the book of its predecessor, which had learned some tough lessons from the TDCA negotiations with Europe, above all how not to go it alone. So, as government takes up the EU-Africa mental, it has to take on board other Africans and their fears.

Comparing the overall Zuma policy vis-à-vis the North, there is an overall similarity in policy, notably engaging the North, or otherwise, with the aim of extracting commitments for African and Southern developments priorities. Under the mantra of 'national interest,' both leaders have sought to advance the agendas of Africa and the broader development community. Zuma did try to struck a more positive cord with the Americans, but the relationship soured in the aftermath of America and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's ((NATO's) abuse of United Nations Security Council resolutions 1970 and 1973 relating to the conflict in Libya in 2011, resolutions both which South Africa voted for. When NATO turned a no-fly zone mandate (res. 1973) into a regime change agenda, it resulted in major damage in the relationship. How successful Zuma will be in having close relations with northern powers while also introducing an element of independence vis-à-vis these powers difficult to ascertain.

Participation in the Global System of Governance

The fifth pillar of the Zuma government's evolving foreign policy is that of "participating in the global system of governance", remarkably similar to Mbeki administration's "global governance" strategies". In the early part of this treatise, dealing with foreign policy strategies of the Mbeki government, I have made the point that the South African government from 1999 to 2008 essentially followed a transformational and developmental foreign policy. This was especially true in relation to the global governance strategies of the Mbeki government, a diplomacy dimension from which Zuma borrowed diplomacy as he and his government endorsed the notions of transformation and developmentalism in their future foreign policy. Again, the issue here is that, on paper, continuity revealed itself between the new government's foreign policy and that of its predecessor. The discontinuities and dissociations happened in practice.

The Minister of International Relations and Co-operation declared soon after the April 2009 polls:

We believe that the transformation of the international system will not only give Africa a bigger voice, but will put us in a better position to address the developmental plight of our continent. We will continue to work other nations and progressive non-state actors for the reform of the United Nations, including the Bretton Woods Institutions. We cannot achieve our objectives of a better world when the current configurations of the Security Council of the UN is informed by the geo-politics and security concerns of the 1950s when most of Africa was under colonial rule (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a).

The transformational aspirations of government as articulated here targeted for reform and transformation both political and global financial institutions. In validating the idea of a developmental foreign policy, the 2009 MTSF stated that in "strategic relations with the North", the Zuma government's "global system of governance" strategies were geared towards ensuring "that the developmental objectives of the developing world are addressed". This objective would be met through six sub-objectives (MTSF, 2009).:

1. Active participation in the global economic reform processes through continued engagement with the international and regional economic and financial institutions, such as multi-lateral development banks, the IMF and the G20.
2. Ensuring that the current momentum within the G20 is maintained and that it does not focus only on efforts to mitigate the global crisis, but also

reaching agreement on governance reforms at the Bretton Woods institutions.

3. Utilizing existing negotiating grouping and alliances to pursue objectives of developing countries.

4. Working with like-minded countries in forging a collective for the transformation of global governance.

5. Playing an active role in the WTO in ensuring the conclusion of the Doha Development round of negotiations and strive towards common objectives with like-minded partners.

6. Continuing active engagement within global governance institutions on political, economic and security matters, including the reform of the United Nations and sustainable development and disarmament.

Here too we did not see much novelty. It will be recalled that the Mbeki government had pursued a two-pronged global governance strategy, one aimed at politico-security questions, the other at socio-economic development. While the Zuma government did not specially distinguish between politico-security and economic and development strategies, it is clear that the emerging global governance strategies emphasized both dimensions in practice. Indeed, Mbeki placed great emphasis on playing a “prominent role in global affairs” and in an “active and purposeful manner [pursuing] its interests at the UN” (DFA, 2005, p.20). For the former head of state, this amounted to unjust use of power by the West and other powers within the annals of the UN and other global governance institutions. Notwithstanding the fall-out over South Africa’s Libya vote, and its loss of face amongst the ranks of the West, BRICS, and Africa, the Zuma government insisted that UN reform remain a key priority. Thus, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane was dedicated to “...ensuring that the UN remains central to addressing global peace and security issues. While we are on the UN Security Council as non-permanent members”, she vowed, “we remained concerned that we are there as second class citizens when we should all be represented on the UN equally”. She stressed to her fellow IBSA members that “...the time is opportune, given our joint representation in the UNSC, to conclusively advance UNSC reform”. Nor did the Minister confine her remarks to the UN and UNSC, also offering advice to other multilateral institutions: “On international trade issues”, opined the Minister, “the conclusion of the WTO’s Doha Development Round has been taking far too long and it is time that we bring this to finality, but certainly not at the cost of achieving a balanced outcome for developing countries” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 8 March 2011). As with Mbeki’s, so Zuma’s government behaved like the spokesperson for the developing South, at least as stated in policy.

The similarities between what the Zuma and Mbeki governments, at least on paper, were palpable, yet it was in practice that we witnessed the divergences. Sharp differences emerged, for example over the two administrations' voting behaviour within the UN. Whereas the Mbeki government adopted consistent positions vis-à-vis such controversial issues as Iran, Zimbabwe, Myanmar and others, and consistently abstained or even voted no, the Zuma government, as stated earlier, has displayed much prevarication in its voting behaviour regarding issues like Libya (resolutions 1970 and 1973) and Syria during 2011 and 2012.

Burned by its experience over the vote concerning Libya, and NATO's selective interpretation of Resolutions 1970 and 1973, the South African representatives in New York opted to abstain on a crucial vote against Syria in October 2011, stating that "we were concerned that the resolution should not be part of a hidden agenda to yet again institute regime change" (Sowetan Live, 6 October 2011). DIRCO spokesperson, Clayson Monyela went further and argued that "...we are concerned that the sponsors of this resolution rejected language that clearly excluded military intervention in the resolution of the Syrian crisis" (Sowetan Live, 6 October 2011).

Apart from these controversial votes in the UNSC, the Zuma administration vowed to continue to work towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the attainment of which in African countries, according to the 2009 MTSF, South Africa will continue to champion. Here South Africa emphasized a linkage strategy which suggested that "democracy goes hand-in-hand with economic justice and prosperity" and as such it was important to:

ensure that Africa stays the course in its pursuit to meet the MDGs. The tactic the new government set out to employ would be to "work with progressive forces in the world to implore the international community to play a constructive part in complementing our efforts.

While participating in his first G8 Africa session of the G8 Summit in 2009 in Aquila, Italy, Zuma urged G8 countries to commit themselves "to supporting African efforts towards promoting development, good governance and achieving the MDGs". The problem to date has been that stated goals to pursue these global governance strategies, including a promise to ensure that the MDGs do not fall by the wayside, or ensuring that issues of UN reform is not swept under the carpet, has not been met with practical leadership. South Africa has not shown the necessary leadership to forge coalitions with like-minded states so as to ensure that these issues stay on the front-burner; it has not kept the feet of the industrialised powers to the proverbial fire. While South Africa is Africa's only member on the G20, and even on

the G20's development committee, it has not used its influence to ensure that the G20 comes up with a credible development plan that would meet the special needs of Africa or the developing countries. Again, the problem has been lack of action (Landsberg, "Rising powers and the G20, September 2011).

Much has happened since South Africa articulated these goals. The country is now a member of the august Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) forum, a proposed economic countervailing block in world affairs. BRICS still has to clarify its agenda, both political and economic, and the economic differences between these powers, most notably inequalities amongst them, could become a source of tension. Indeed, these countries will not just have to address this potential source of conflict between them, but they are also under pressure to ensure that their respective regions benefit from their presence, as opposed to them becoming new sources of exploitation and neo-imperialism in Africa and other developing regions. South Africa is already under pressure to ensure that it represents African interests in a robust and legitimate manner within BRICS. Indeed, the assumption that South Africa's interests are in line with African interests is one that is challenged by many.

We should also remember that two of the BRICS members, China and Russia, are members of the UN Security Council, and the other three are not. This makes for greater divergence instead of converges between the BRIC members, and careful management of the relations is called for.

Strengthening political and economic relations

The emerging foreign policy trajectories of the young Jacob Zuma administration not only focused on multilateral dimensions and institutions but also placed an emphasis on the need to strengthen bi-lateral political and economic relations. Here too it took its cue from the Mbeki government's foreign policy priorities, as it placed major emphasis on economic diplomacy, and strengthening economic relations with as many states as possible. In her address to the Heads of Missions Conference in August 2009, the minister of International Relations reminded heads of missions and diplomats that:

Among our main challenges in the pursuit of our foreign policy objectives is the alignment and co-ordination of South Africa's economic diplomacy across all spheres of government; strengthening economic diplomatic capacity in our Missions; and improving efforts aimed at marketing the brand South Africa and Africa abroad (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a).

Stated policy held that South Africa's economic diplomacy strategy would continue to focus on strengthening economic relations with traditional and established economic partners; expanding trade relations with emerging markets in Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe; and the promotion of intra-Africa trade so as to enhance economic development on the continent.

The foreign policy dimensions of the 2009 MTSF identified as vital the goal of "strengthening political and economic relations", in particular to strengthen "economic diplomacy", and the foci would be on nine nodal points (MTSF, 2009):

- (1) Promoting and expanding bi-lateral partnerships that are aimed at advancing the economic interests of South Africa through structured mechanisms
- (2) Continuing to focus on the consolidation of economic relations with traditional and establish economic partners
- (3) Expanding trade relations with emerging markets in Asia, the middle east, South America, Eastern Europe, and the promotion of intra-Africa trade to enhance economic development in Africa
- (4) Strengthening people-to-people co-operation through civil society organisations and other like-minded stakeholders
- (5) Ensuring that there is alignment and coordination of South Africa's international engagements amongst and between all spheres of government and between public and private sectors
- (6) Strengthening economic diplomatic capacity in South African missions abroad, by amongst others undertaking effective and intense training for all representatives abroad
- (7) Continuing to engage China to finalise the Partnership for Growth and Development (PGD)
- (8) Improving efforts aimed at marketing South Africa and Africa abroad
- (9) Addressing the weaknesses identified in the communication of South Africa's foreign policy positions, both in the foreign arena and domestically.

This emphasis on economic diplomacy came as no surprise as the new government set out from the onset its new terms to close the domestic-foreign policy divide and to introduce strategies that would make it better possible for DIRCO to make a more effective contribution to help meet the national strategic goals identified by government.

In October 2009, DIRCO released its much anticipated document, a *Conceptual Framework on Identification of Anchor States in the Five Geographical Regions Recognised by the African Union* (DIRCO, October 2009). This was a policy statement in search of “anchor states”, i.e., those states that “...are influential in their own regions due to strong economies, large populations, size of territory, military strength, ability to project a foreign policy, peace, security and stability, and whose collapse would result in “trans-boundary mayhem, but whose prosperity and stability would bolster its region’s economic vitality”. This document subscribed to the idea that “...leading [African] countries must have the capacity to act as catalysts for development, good governance, and peace and security in their respective regions”. “Anchor countries”, continued the policy document, “must use their influence to drive the agenda of development through integration, political cohesion, to entrench peace, security and stability on the continent” (DIRCO, October 2009, p.8).

CONCLUSION

On paper, there were many similarities and a high degree of association between the broad macro aspects of the Zuma government’s foreign policy and those of Mbeki. In practice however, many deviations and dissociations emerged and the Zuma foreign policy showed many degrees of dispersion and a lack of focus. While the new government said that the ‘national interest’ would be the cement that would hold together its foreign policy, how such interests linked up with other macro frameworks, such as the African advancement, South-South co-operation, North-South dialogue, active participation in the global system of governance, and strengthening political and economic relations, are less clear. There is thus need to dot the i’s and cross the t’s in order to build synergy between various foreign policy strands. The assumption that these different foreign policy strategies necessarily cohere is one that needs challenging. The very idea of South Africa’s national interest needs fleshing out and even turned into a fully-fledged doctrine that would guide the Republic’s foreign policy.

There is an equally serious challenge faced by the Zuma government’s foreign policy, viz., a gap between a stated foreign policy on paper and the actions taken by government in practice. There is thus a policy-to-operations gap that has revealed itself as far as the Zuma government’s foreign policy is concerned. In short, while the Zuma government boasts a clear foreign policy as articulated on paper, in reality there exists a two-pronged gap that needs urgently to be addressed: a gap between the stated national interests and broad foreign policy stratagems; and a gap between

stated foreign and the actions embarked upon by government. In the final analysis, the foreign policy of any country is only as good as its outcome.

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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to bring coherence and predictability to South African foreign policy, the government of Jacob Zuma has, since assuming office in May 2009, put emphasis on forging relations with countries and regions, and key international relations issues and concerns. According to policy, the pursuit of the national interest lay at the heart of the Republic's international strategies, with 'national interest' being used as a cement to hold together the edifice of post-Mbeki government's foreign policy. On paper, the government appears to have gone far in articulating this ambitious foreign policy, however a number of questions arise. Have these policies been put into practice and if so do they follow the stated agenda or are there serious deviations? Has there been association with Mbeki's policies on paper and dissociation from such policies in practice?

How do the various tenets of foreign policy relate to the epicentre of the national interest and to one another? Do they represent a marked shift from the previous Mbeki government's African Agenda' or are they a mere copy? This paper seeks to answer these questions, in particular investigating whether a gap has developed between articulated, or stated, policy and how it was pursued in practice, through implementation.

KEY-WORDS

South Africa; Jacob Zuma; Foreign Policy;