



THE CONTRIBUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT AID EFFORTS TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE IN AFRICA

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Abstract:

The international political landscape is shaped by humanitarian intervention (HI), which manifests in various forms. South Africa has rejected the global system of organised power that upholds the supremacy of hegemonic states in its foreign policy. Recent international initiatives have fuelled the debate over humanitarian intervention. Scholars view HI through the legal lens, whereas others perceive it as a political or moral decision. The paper aims to discuss the traditional method of assessing humanitarian interventions by examining a combination of motives and intentions. Fifteen journal articles on humanitarian intervention, conflict resolution and peace in Africa were analysed. The findings show that HI involves deploying military actions, providing aid, protecting rights, and enforcing peace agreements. South Africa has made significant contributions to humanitarian efforts in Africa, particularly in mediating peace processes in countries like Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and Lesotho through its diplomacy and peacekeeping efforts. The country's global strategy emphasises tackling issues like underdevelopment, labour distribution, wealth disparity, poverty, transnational influence, and the implications of progressive governance. South Africa offered humanitarian support to different countries during natural disasters, which assisted the well-being of refugees and internally displaced persons. Such support includes initiatives like the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), the provision of antiretroviral therapy and the humanitarian aid to Gaza. South Africa has contributed significantly to improving access to healthcare for those affected by COVID-19 and the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa. The paper concludes that South Africa's contributions to humanitarian efforts in Africa have been diverse and impactful, ranging from peacekeeping and conflict resolution to healthcare and disaster relief initiatives.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since the end of apartheid, South Africa has established itself as an important player in resolving conflicts and promoting peace across Africa, drawing on its moral standing, diplomatic expertise, and economic power¹. However, there is ongoing debate about how effective its humanitarian and development assistance is in creating lasting peace. Critics contend that South Africa's aid initiatives are often inconsistent, poorly funded, or driven by political motives, with a focus on maintaining strategic partnerships such as with the African National Congress's historical allies rather than achieving tangible peace results². Moreover, although South Africa has taken on mediation roles in conflicts like those in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi, its humanitarian assistance such as rebuilding after conflicts or supporting refugees has faced criticism for not being well-coordinated in the long term with regional organizations like the African Union (AU) or the Southern African Development Community (SADC)³. Despite being an aid recipient, South Africa is in a unique position to provide development assistance to other African countries. Establishing the South African Development Partnership Agency has consolidated the country's foreign aid commitment and advanced its foreign policy and development goals for the African continent⁴. South Africa has played a significant role in conflict resolution and peace in Africa since it transitioned to democracy in 1994. Its involvement has been driven by its high reputation as a model for conflict resolution, the iconic status of Nelson Mandela, and a sense of moral obligation to repay Africa for the sins of apartheid⁵. South Africa has played an active role in numerous peace processes and conflict resolution initiatives in nations like Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Ivory Coast. The country has been instrumental in the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), contributing significantly to peace efforts

¹ Landsberg, *The Diplomacy of Transformation*. 2012, Macmillan.

² Sidiropoulos, *South Africa's Development Aid*. SAIIA Report. 2014

³ Nathan, *Community of Insecurity: SADC's Struggle for Peace*. 2016, Routledge.

⁴ Rashid A.K. *Is Humanitarian Intervention Ever Morally Justified?* Republic of South Africa [RSA] (2024). <https://www.gov.za/documents/other/foreign-policy-south-africa-discussion-document-01-jun-1996>. Accessed on 01/08/2024.

⁵ Frankel, J. *Dollar Rivals Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, (2023) Harvard University

in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo. While South Africa's peace interventions have yielded mixed outcomes, some successful and others less, the overall impact has been notable in advancing peace and stability across Africa⁶. Critics argue that South Africa's aid is frequently reactive rather than transformative, focusing on short-term stabilization without addressing structural drivers of conflict, such as inequality (SDG 10) or weak governance⁷.

Humanitarian Intervention (HI) remains among the most contentious topics in international law and politics⁸. It is challenging to categorize humanitarian intervention as strictly positive or negative due to its complex nature. At times, this approach to conflict resolution may detract from the well-being of the affected populations. Conversely, it can also be wielded by some states to exert dominance over others, often to the detriment of the local populace⁹. Since the end of the Cold War, significant shifts in international relations have heightened the likelihood of interventions occurring, with or without the approval of the UN Security Council. This has reignited discussions about humanitarian intervention, leading to an abundance of literature and increased state practice on the subject. The concept of humanitarian intervention has its roots in the development of a substantive doctrine of just war during the Middle Ages¹⁰.

The issue of humanitarian intervention has become increasingly significant in both political discourse and theoretical frameworks. It represents a specific type of foreign forcible intervention, defined as the use of force to prevent or address severe violations of fundamental human rights, particularly mass killings and genocide, in a third state, where the victims are not citizens of the intervening state and there is no

⁶ Jayakumar. Humanitarian Intervention: A Legal Analysis, SSRN journal (2012). Available online: <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2121008>.

⁷ Masters, 2022

⁸ Bell, C. Human rights and minority protection. Contemporary peace-making, (2003). Hound mills: Palgrave Macmillan.

⁹ Rashid A.K. Is Humanitarian Intervention Ever Morally Justified? Republic of South Africa [RSA] (2024). <https://www.gov.za/documents/other/foreign-policy-south-africa-discussion-document-01-jun-1996>.

¹⁰ Bell, C. (2003). Human rights and minority protection. Contemporary peace-making (2003). Hound mills: Palgrave Macmillan.

legal authorization from a competent international organization¹¹. Such interventions must be unilateral, although they can involve multiple states acting together. This collective intervention occurs when several states pool their military resources to engage in actions within another country. However, it remains unilateral, as these states exercise coercion as if they were addressing a single entity. Additionally, humanitarian intervention typically arises when a third state chooses not to grant consent.

Holzgrefe¹² characterizes humanitarian intervention as the threat or use of force by a state crossing into another state's borders to prevent or halt severe violations of fundamental human rights affecting individuals who are not its citizens, all without the authorisation of the state where the intervention takes place. Conflict is an inherent and functional aspect of society; it is understood as a disagreement among two or more parties that inevitably leads to confrontation, often perceived as a psychological phenomenon by behavioural specialists¹³. In the political arena, conflict and humanitarian intervention have become commonplace, frequently occurring between political factions and manifesting as prolonged acts of aggression that can span large geographical areas¹⁴. Numerous documented instances of conflict have transpired globally, including internal disputes and international confrontations. The paper discusses the traditional method of assessing humanitarian interventions by examining a combination of motives and intentions. The paper sought to answer the following research questions: What is the role of South Africa in providing humanitarian assistance in Africa? What key interventions have addressed situations where human rights are severely violated, causing internal conflicts and state fragmentation? What is the role of humanitarian intervention in aiding security, peace, and development

¹¹ Snidal, D. How informal intergovernmental organisations facilitate cooptation and promote peaceful change in times of power rivalry. *Contemporary Security Policy*, (2024) 46,150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2024.2424706>

¹² Holzgrefe, J.L. and Keohane, R.O. *Humanitarian intervention, ethical, legal, and political dilemmas*, (2003). Cambridge University Press.

¹³ Spencer, M., and Lalgee, R. Sociological Studies, Overview, In Lester R. Kurtz, Tapscott, C. (2020). *South African Development Assistance in Africa*. In: Jing, Y., Mendez, A., Zheng, Y. (eds) *New Development Assistance. Governing China in the 21st Century*, (2022) Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-7232-2_11

¹⁴ Frankel, J. *Dollar Rivals Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, (2023) Harvard University

reconstruction? This paper used an integrative review to assess, critique, and synthesise literature. The extensive body of research on humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding underscores the tensions between immediate relief efforts and sustainable, long-term development initiatives¹⁵. However, there is a paucity of studies exploring how emerging donors such as South Africa address these challenges within fragile states across Africa. This deficiency is particularly noteworthy considering South Africa's distinctive position as a "middle power" with ambitions to assume a leadership role on the continent. The paper outlines South Africa's role in Africa in African peacebuilding, framing its humanitarian and development aid within broader debates on sustainable conflict resolution and the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the paper will discuss the literature review, research methodology, implications and recommendations and conclusion.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent decades, the conversation around aid management has become increasingly important in development debates, mainly due to the rising financial needs of African countries for economic growth that exceed their available resources, resulting in substantial budgetary limitations. The discussions surrounding humanitarian aid and development assistance have sparked numerous questions and expectations for policymakers and humanitarian practitioners¹⁶. The humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence form the basis of humanitarian action. These principles are crucial for establishing the identity and legitimacy of humanitarian actors, guiding their practices, and shaping the conceptual and physical spaces in which they operate¹⁷.

¹⁵ Barnett & Weiss, *Humanitarianism in Question*. (2008), Cornell University Press.

¹⁶ Lie, J.H.S. The humanitarian-development nexus: humanitarian principles, practice, and pragmatics. *Int J Humanitarian Action* 5, 18 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-020-00086-0>

¹⁷ Lie, J.H.S. The humanitarian-development nexus: humanitarian principles, practice, and pragmatics. *Int J Humanitarian Action* 5, 18 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-020-00086-0>

2.1 Aid and Humanitarian Intervention in Context

Many African nations continue to face significant challenges in financing their development initiatives, primarily due to limited domestic financial resources, rising debt servicing obligations linked to high levels of sovereign debt, and restricted fiscal space worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic¹⁸. Consequently, Africa relies heavily on international aid or official development assistance (ODA) to fill the fiscal gaps necessary for socio-economic development. Southern Africa is the region most impacted by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In South Africa, a national survey conducted in 2007 estimated that around 5.4 million people were living with HIV¹⁹. By 2008, about half a million individuals were receiving anti-retroviral (ARV) therapy in the country; however, the number of annual AIDS-related deaths was estimated to be between 300,000 and 400,000, translating to nearly a thousand deaths each day²⁰.

The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) has redirected the conversation towards fundamental human rights, leveraging the human rights framework established by the government to compel action on the ARV issue²¹. Numerous countries have enacted HIV-specific laws that govern the lives of individuals living with HIV, often criminalising the transmission of the virus²². Humanitarian intervention has undergone significant conceptual and practical transformation since the end of the Cold War. This shift has its roots in various advancements. A key factor is the changing international landscape; the conclusion of superpower

¹⁸ Owusu-Gyamfi, M. and Commodore, R. Africa's COVID-19 Recovery Challenge: How the G20 can Bridge the Development Financing Gap, Policy Briefing 255, (2021). <chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnipocajpccglefindmkaj/https://saiaa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2>. Accessed on 28/07/2024

¹⁹ UNAIDS. United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and World Health Organisation (WHO) (2007).

²⁰ Dorrington, R., Bourne, D., and Bradshaw, D. The impact of HIV/AIDS on adult mortality in South Africa, Technical Report, (2001). Burden of Disease Research Unit, Medical Research Council, South African Medical Research Council.

²¹ Heywood, M. South Africa's Treatment Action Campaign: Combining Law and Social Mobilization to Realize the Right to Health, Journal of Human Rights Practice, (2009). 1,20. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/hun006>

²² Kruger, P., and Karim, A.S. A human rights-based approach to coercive public health interventions: lessons from the HIV and COVID-19 pandemics, African Journal of AIDS Research, (2022). 21123doi: 10.2989/16085906.2022.2073897

rivalry has removed certain systemic obstacles to domestic involvement. Humanitarian interventions address situations where human rights are severely violated, often resulting from internal conflicts, state fragmentation, or state failures, alongside the suffering caused by oppressive governments²³. In the post-Cold War era, internal or civil wars have become the predominant form of military conflict. Yang²⁴ notes that many non-violent solutions have been tried, prompting a renewed focus on humanitarian intervention, which aims to exert political influence while minimising the crisis's severity and targeting the state. Moreover, humanitarian intervention in Sudan should not undermine international peacekeeping and security, nor should it inflict further hardship on those working to prevent or end hostilities²⁵. Kuperman²⁶ argues that the rationale behind humanitarian intervention is not solely "humanitarian"; it is shaped by political, economic, military, and ideological considerations that complicate the context. Examining the Central African Republic as a case study illustrates this strategy's comprehensive nature in peacekeeping and conflict resolution.

2.2 The Role of Humanitarian Organisations

Regarding intergovernmental organisations, neither ECOWAS/ECCAS nor the United Nations played a significant role in resolving and mediating conflicts. Apart from military intervention, these organisations primarily prioritized the interests of their member states, leading to a continual reassessment of their strategies and only moderate involvement in peace processes. Hurd²⁷ notes that humanitarian organisations, particularly UN agencies and international NGOs, attempted to address the dire humanitarian fallout from the violence despite limited resources. However, other scholars point out that certain

²³ Snidal, D. How informal intergovernmental organisations facilitate cooptation and promote peaceful change in times of power rivalry. *Contemporary Security Policy*, (2024) 46,150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2024.2424706>

²⁴ Young, Protecting humanitarian aid workers: an urgent call. 2024.

²⁵ Cross, J. Street vendors, and postmodernity: conflict and compromise in the global economy, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, (2000), 20. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443330010789061>

²⁶ Kuperman, A. *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention: Genocide in Rwanda*, The Breaking Institution, (2001). Washington, DC, London.

²⁷ Hurd, I. *After Anarchy: Legitimacy and Power in the United Nations Security Council* (2007, p.295). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

types of aid can not only fail to meet essential needs but may also exacerbate violence. The United Nations is the leading authority in managing the international community, supported by a small team of military advisors from the Department of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations, and Humanitarian Affairs²⁸. Humanitarian action and development aid are two distinct areas of the international system, each with its discursive roots and institutional paths²⁹. The management of aid has significantly impacted humanitarian efforts. Recent technological advancements and shifts in aid structures have necessitated a stronger focus on aid administration and effective guidance for the optimal use of resources in development efforts.

The justification for humanitarian intervention often hinges on the severity and scale of human rights violations occurring within a particular context. According to Pugh³⁰, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and other forms of mass atrocities represent clear instances where the international community may feel compelled to intervene to protect vulnerable populations. Humanitarianism and development are distinct in both their structure and the aid offered. These practices are influenced by and continually reinforced by each segment's formal differences, historical parts and institutional frameworks³¹. The concept of the Responsibility to Protect, endorsed by the United Nations in 2005, asserts that states have a responsibility to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. When a state is unable or unwilling to fulfil this responsibility, the international community may have a duty to intervene to safeguard the affected population.

²⁸ Pugh, M. *Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention. Issues in World Politics*, (1997). London: Palgrave.

²⁹ Lie, J.H.S. The humanitarian-development nexus: humanitarian principles, practice, and pragmatics. *Int J Humanitarian Action* 5, 18 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-020-00086-0>

³⁰ Pugh, M. *Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention. Issues in World Politics*, (1997). London: Palgrave.

³¹ Lie, J.H.S. The humanitarian-development nexus: humanitarian principles, practice, and pragmatics. *Int J Humanitarian Action* 5, 18 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-020-00086-0>

2.3 Managing the Politics of Humanitarian Interventions

In the 1990s, the UN Security Council increased its interventions to address domestic conflicts and severe human rights violations, which it recognised as threats to international peace and security. This led to the imposition of economic sanctions or the authorisation of military force³². Whereas only three instances of force were used outside self-defence between 1945 and 1988, eleven such cases have occurred since 1989. Despite the rise in coercive actions, the results have been inconsistent; in some instances, like Bosnia and Somalia, these measures have entirely failed³³. Navigating the politics of humanitarian interventions is a complex task that involves balancing various interests, legal frameworks, and ethical considerations. Humanitarian interventions, which deploy military force or other actions to shield civilians from severe human rights abuses, often face significant political hurdles and controversies³⁴. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that humanitarian interventions are viewed as legitimate and justifiable to secure domestic and international backing. Clearly articulating the reasons for intervention, such as preventing genocide, crimes against humanity, or mass atrocities, and providing evidence of the need for intervention can help build legitimacy.

Seeking broad international consensus and support for the intervention can help mitigate political opposition and legitimacy concerns. Collaborating with global organizations like the United Nations Security Council and regional entities and obtaining resolutions or mandates for intervention can strengthen its legitimacy and legality³⁵. Ensuring transparency throughout the intervention, covering decision-making, operational planning, and on-ground actions, fosters trust and credibility. Implementing accountability mechanisms, such as independent oversight bodies or investigations into misconduct allegations, can address concerns regarding power abuses or human

³² Pugh, M. *Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention. Issues in World Politics*, (1997). London: Palgrave.

³³ Kinkoh, H. Inconsistencies are costing the AU Mission in Somalia, *Institute for Security Studies*, (2023).

³⁴ Oudraat, C. Humanitarian intervention: The lessons learned. *Current History*, 99, (2000). (641).

³⁵ Kolb, R. *Affaires courantes et commentaires Current issues and comments. Note on humanitarian intervention*, (2003).

rights violations³⁶. Engaging with relevant stakeholders, including affected communities, host governments, regional players, and humanitarian organisations, ensures that interventions are sensitive to local needs and appropriately contextualised. Building partnerships with local communities can improve the effectiveness and sustainability of these efforts³⁷. Additionally, developing a clear exit strategy and a long-term plan for stabilisation and reconstruction post-intervention is vital for managing expectations while reducing the risk of mission creep. Investing in capacity-building, institution development, and reconciliation initiatives can help tackle the root causes of conflict and foster lasting peace and development.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This paper utilised an integrative review method, which is an approach that allows for the inclusion of diverse methodologies (i.e. experimental and non-experimental research) and has the potential to play a greater role in evidence-based research³⁸. The use of an integrative review supports a variety of research activities, and utilising a variety of data sources, which include the theory review, methodological analysis and the definition of the idea. A research scope focused more broadly on a phenomenon of interest rather than a systematic review, and allows for diverse research, which may contain theoretical and methodological literature to address the aim of the review³⁹. This method encourages the creation of a thorough comprehension of the subject by synthesising all accessible data. Well-conducted integrative reviews can yield evidence that advances knowledge, which could contribute to the understanding of humanitarian and development aid, in turn, improving South Africa's efforts towards peace and conflict resolution in Africa. Using an integrative review assisted in assimilating research data from different

³⁶ Evans, G. *Conflict Resolution and Humanitarian Response to Genocide*, Asian Institute of Technology, (2004). Bangkok

³⁷ Harrison, S. *Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management* November (2022). doi:10.1007/978-3-031-12600-0_4. In book: *Integrative Social Work Practice with Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons* (pp.69-96).

³⁸ Hopia, H., Latvala, E., and Liimatainen, L. *Reviewing the methodology of an integrative review*. *Scandinavian journal of caring sciences*, (2016). 30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/scs.12327>.

³⁹ Toronto, C.E., and Remington, R.A *Step-By-Step Guide to Conducting an Integrative Review* (1st ed.), (2020). Springer International Publishing AG.

research designs to reach comprehensive and reliable conclusions⁴⁰. Fifteen journal articles on humanitarian intervention, conflict resolution and peace in Africa were analysed. This approach assisted in the development of a thorough understanding of the topic based on all available evidence. Hence, the combination of data from multiple research designs helped in producing thorough and trustworthy results.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 South Africa's Humanitarian Aid, Development and Social Contract

The post-COVID-19 era has seen a significant increase in official development assistance (ODA) to Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), with a total of \$1 trillion in foreign aid received over the last 50 years⁴¹. Despite the increased flow of ODA, it remains uncertain whether it has significantly improved the living standards of poor populations in the region. Good international citizenship is the area of foreign policy in which community values influence the pursuit of international interests. The elements of good international citizenship are simply a recognition of international dependence⁴². Good international citizenship is concerned with pursuing inherently valuable ends, improving standards worldwide in human rights and equal opportunity, peace and disarmament and aiding community groups. The most basic obligation of good international citizenship is to ensure that our house is in order before we raise issues on the international scene. In 2001, South Africa launched the African Renaissance Fund, which became the country's main instrument for providing regional development aid⁴³. Our ability to secure advances

⁴⁰ Whittemore, R., and Knafl, K. The integrative review: updated methodology. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* (2005). 52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03621.x>

⁴¹ Salifu, G. A. N., and Salifu, Z. Aid administration and sustainable development in the post-COVID-19 era in Africa: a review of the literature approach. *Cogent Social Sciences* (2024). 10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2312649>. Accessed on 28/07/2024

⁴² Drexhage, J. Murphy, D. *Climate Change and Foreign Policy: An exploration of options for greater integration*, 2007, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Denmark

Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace, & Conflict (Third Edition), (2007). Academic Press, Pages 176-187,

⁴³ Cruz, A. South Africa's emergence in global development (2011). Available online from: <https://www.devex.com/news/south-africa-s-emergence-in-global-development-76964>.

in the areas of human rights, refugees, or development assistance rests on our being and continuing to be seen as a liberal democracy with a solid record at home. For instance, the articulation and application of human rights and similar principles with absolute consistency and impartiality.

South African aid is channeled through the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which supports various nations which supports various African countries in areas such as peacekeeping, technology development, research and education. Additionally, South Africa has initiated other programs to enhance the comprehensive development goals set by NEPAD, including the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative⁴⁴. Established in 2008 with five other African nations, this initiative has grown to involve over thirty-five countries. It serves as a forum for senior budget officials from finance, budget, and treasury ministries to implement effective public financial management and promote economic growth. Notably, over 50 per cent of South Africa's aid is allocated to defence and security efforts in the region, particularly through substantial contributions to the African Union and the United Nations peacekeeping missions in places like the DRC, Burundi, Darfur in Sudan and Nepal. South African aid also focuses on education.

4.2 The Role of Humanitarian NGOs in Containing Violence

South Africa has played a pivotal role in peacekeeping and conflict resolution. The country has been involved in several peacekeeping and conflict resolutions⁴⁵. South Africa has been at the forefront of peace diplomacy, as seen by its commitment to peacekeeping and its various conflict resolution activities, such as mediation, negotiation, and post-conflict reconstruction. South Africa has emerged as a key player in Afrocentric peacekeeping, forming a cornerstone of its stabilisation agenda and establishing the nation as a leader in the African Union and

⁴⁴ OECD. Managing Development Resources, the use of country systems in public financial management, (2009). Available online: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/>

⁴⁵ Murphy, R. United Nations peacekeeping in Lebanon and Somalia, and the use of force, *Journal of Conflict & Security Law*, (2003), 8,80.

United Nations missions across the continent⁴⁶. By examining South Africa's involvement in peace operations from a broader strategic lens, we can assess the potential for its future evolution amid global and regional shifts. The country's effectiveness in preventing and resolving conflicts will be bolstered by a synergistic integration of its diplomatic, military, and other initiatives, particularly when backed by the necessary army capabilities that enhance South Africa's ability to influence international affairs.

Peacekeeping has remained the favoured term to describe a diverse range of latter-day multinational interventions, many of which have borne little or no resemblance to traditional blue helmet operations conducted with consent, impartiality and without resort to force. Indeed, aberrations have included air strikes against recalcitrant parties, a manhunt for factional leaders, and even a naval bombardment of the capital of a 'host country'. Without dwelling on the morality or efficacy of forceful third-party interventions, suffice it to say that the time is ripe for more excellent conceptual and semantic clarity on what is and is not peacekeeping.

4.3 Humanitarian Aid for Peace and Reconstruction

Humanitarian aid refers to actions undertaken by organisations or organizations intended to alleviate extensive human suffering within the borders of a sovereign state⁴⁷. In places where there has been conflict, humanitarian aid is essential to efforts to restore peace and rebuild communities. Emergency relief, such as food, water, shelter, and medical supplies, is given by humanitarian aid to those impacted by violence. In doing so, misery is lessened, and additional deaths are avoided⁴⁸. Humanitarian organisations can promote community stability and trust by impartially aiding all impacted populations. For processes of peace and reconciliation to begin, this is crucial. For instance, South Africa has invested at least R1 billion in peacekeeping efforts in the DRC and R2.9

⁴⁶ Mabera, F. South Africa's profile as a peacekeeper: In keeping with the times. *African Security* (2018). 11. 3,223.

⁴⁷ Lange, M. *Conflict, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: Meeting the Challenges* (2003). United Kingdom.

⁴⁸ Mezzalama, F. *Investigation of the relationship between humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations*, Joint Inspection Unit (1995). Geneva.

billion in support of democratic elections. This commitment reflects South Africa's dedication to fostering peace in the DRC and its aim, which is part of the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework, particularly the goal⁴⁹. By tackling issues like poverty, inequality, and lack of access to essential amenities, humanitarian aid can address some of the core causes of war.

Aid can support sustained attempts at peacebuilding in this way. Additional reforms of development assistance include subsidising thousands of Congolese students, providing training for public servants in the DRC, enhancing public institutions, funding infrastructure projects and promoting increased trade⁵⁰. Large-scale population displacement is frequently the outcome of conflict. Internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees receive support from humanitarian aid to help them reconstruct their lives and meet their basic needs⁵¹. Humanitarian aid can also assist reconstruction efforts by giving resources for repairing infrastructure, reestablishing livelihoods, and encouraging economic development in areas impacted by conflict. In 2006, the ARF allocated \$33.7 million to finance the presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo. From 2009 to 2010, South Africa contributed \$500,000 to assist the African Union observer mission for the 2010 Sudan elections and invested \$36.3 million in Zimbabwe's agricultural and economic recovery initiatives⁵².

Rebuilding communities and recovering from conflict depend on this. Building bridges and promoting understanding between various groups, humanitarian organisations frequently assist opposing parties in their dialogue and reconciliation processes⁵³. The protection of civilians in

⁴⁹ Cruz, A. South Africa's emergence in global development (2011). Available online from: <https://www.devex.com/news/south-africa-s-emergence-in-global-development-76964>.

⁵⁰ World Bank. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Priorities and Options for Regeneration, (2005).

⁵¹ Pusterla, F., and Pusterla, E. R.G. The future of humanitarian aid in a new context full of challenges, (2021). Directorate-General for External Policies, Policy Department.

⁵² Cruz, A. South Africa's emergence in global development (2011). Available online from: <https://www.devex.com/news/south-africa-s-emergence-in-global-development-76964>.

⁵³ Tschirgi, N. Peacebuilding as the Link between Security and Development: Is the Window of Opportunity Closing? International Peace Academy Studies in Security and Development (2003). New York.

conflict areas is a top priority for humanitarian relief organisations, who also fight for their rights and make sure they are not attacked or injured during hostilities. In areas of violence, humanitarian aid is essential for bringing about immediate relief. For example, the World Bank's approval of the Northern Crisis Recovery Project in Mozambique intends to address early recovery efforts, such as reestablishing economic prospects and livelihoods, fostering social cohesion, and enhancing access to essential services. Strengthening infrastructure is pivotal for long-term recovery and resilience in conflict zones. South Africa aims to play a significant role in the trilateral dialogue, serving as a mediator between donor nations and African aid recipients, particularly regarding AU-EU relations^{54,55}. South Africa joined the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum to enhance its South-South cooperation, focusing on collaboration and coordination on global issues and development⁵⁶. The new aid organisation seeks to establish a formal South African international development agency akin to the United States Agency for International Development or the UK's Department for International Development. This initiative reflects a broader trend among emerging nations with strong regional influence, like India, Brazil, and South Korea, to assert their presence in international development assistance⁵⁷.

4.4 South African Foreign Policy and Humanitarian Efforts

South Africa's foreign policy has evolved considerably since the end of apartheid in 1994. During apartheid, South Africa was internationally isolated due to its discriminatory policies, but after Nelson Mandela's presidency, the country sought to become a respected member of the international community. According to Roth⁵⁸, South Africa has placed peacekeeping operations as a key priority in its foreign policy,

⁵⁴ Barton, B. R. Trust and the politics of security risk management: the European Union's engagement of China in Africa (2020). https://doi.org/10.5353/th_991022468819703414.

⁵⁵ Christensen, R. C., Hearson, M., and Randriamanalina, T. At the Table, Off the Menu? Assessing the Participation of Lower-Income Countries in Global Tax Negotiations (2020). <https://doi.org/10.19088/ictd.2020.004>.

⁵⁶ Cruz, A. South Africa's emergence in global development (2011). Available online from: <https://www.devex.com/news/south-africa-s-emergence-in-global-development-76964>.

⁵⁷ Cruz, A. South Africa's emergence in global development (2011). Available online from: <https://www.devex.com/news/south-africa-s-emergence-in-global-development-76964>.

⁵⁸ Roth, K. War in Iraq: Not a Humanitarian Intervention, Human Rights Watch, (2004). New York.

recognising that the stability and development of the African continent are directly linked to its prosperity and security. This is reflected in South Africa's active participation in various UN and African Union peacekeeping missions over the past two decades. South Africa's engagement in peacekeeping is driven by its commitment to the principles of Pan-Africanism and South-South solidarity rather than solely to boost its international standing or for more pragmatic reasons. The country's 2011 White Paper on Foreign Policy emphasises Africa as the focal point, stating that South Africa has "no choice but to participate in peacekeeping as an essential part of its foreign policy." However, South Africa has sometimes struggled to fully implement its vision for a more prominent role in peacekeeping operations due to a range of internal and external factors, including resource and institutional constraints. In 2016, the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini requested assistance from the Republic of South Africa due to an unprecedented drought caused by El Niño. In response, the South African government allocated R40 million for an Emergency Food Assistance Project in Swaziland aimed at supporting orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) at various neighbourhood care points (NPCs)⁵⁹. The project targets beneficiaries aged 0 to 5 years and aims to assist 52,000 children over an 18-month implementation period. However, when eSwatini's government sought an R2.4 billion loan from South Africa two years ago due to a financial crisis, the assistance came with strict conditions⁶⁰. The Swazi government was required to commit to better financial management and implement fiscal reforms mandated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In 2013, South Africa donated R1 million to Namibia, focusing on the food and water sectors after a drought. The aid was part of a commitment to addressing urgent humanitarian needs in the region. South Africa has also played a crucial role in African Union (AU) election observer

⁵⁹ African Development Bank (2022). Program: Emergency Food Production Program (EFPP) Country: Kingdom of Eswatini, available online: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/d>.

⁶⁰ Rashid A.K. Is Humanitarian Intervention Ever Morally Justified? Republic of South Africa [RSA] (2024). <https://www.gov.za/documents/other/foreign-policy-south-africa-discussion-document-01-jun-1996>.

missions, particularly in Lesotho and Angola. During the 2022 elections in Lesotho, South Africa provided logistical support and diplomatic leverage, leveraging its historical ties within the Southern African Development Community to stabilise the electoral process⁶¹. South African observers played a crucial role in Angola's 2022 general elections, monitoring the electoral process for the African Union mission. They assessed voter registration processes, campaign dynamics, and adherence to international standards⁶². This demonstrates South Africa's commitment to promoting democratic practices, aiming to enhance electoral integrity and contribute to long-term peace and stability in Southern Africa. By supporting democratic processes, South Africa strengthens the region's governance foundations.

South Africa has shown strong support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), demonstrating its commitment to international solidarity and human rights. The country has approved a 50 million Rand contribution for humanitarian aid to Palestinians through UNRWA, highlighting the need for ongoing assistance. South Africa's historical context of apartheid allows it to empathize with the struggles of oppressed populations⁶³. Despite smaller financial contributions, South Africa maintains regular engagement with UNRWA and its leadership⁶⁴. South Africa has actively engaged in conferences and discussions aimed at securing funding for UNRWA and advocating for the rights of Palestinian refugees⁶⁵. The country frequently highlights the need to

⁶¹ Louw-Vaudran, L. (2022). Lesotho reforms hang in the balance ahead of elections, available online <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/lesotho-reforms-hang-in-the-balance-ahead-of-elections>.

⁶² Rashid A.K. Is Humanitarian Intervention Ever Morally Justified? Republic of South Africa [RSA] (2024). <https://www.gov.za/documents/other/foreign-policy-south-africa-discussion-document-01-jun-1996>.

⁶³ Isilow, H. South Africa pledges about \$2.7M in humanitarian aid to Gaza (2024). Available online from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/south-africa-pledges-about-27m-in-humanitarian-aid-to-gaza/3247957>.

⁶⁴ Rashid A.K. Is Humanitarian Intervention Ever Morally Justified? Republic of South Africa [RSA] (2024). <https://www.gov.za/documents/other/foreign-policy-south-africa-discussion-document-01-jun-1996>.

⁶⁵ Isilow, H. South Africa pledges about \$2.7M in humanitarian aid to Gaza (2024). Available online from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/south-africa-pledges-about-27m-in-humanitarian-aid-to-gaza/3247957>.

maintain an international focus on the humanitarian crisis in Palestine. Through its involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Union, South Africa champions the Palestinian cause, pushing for a fair resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This support extends to endorsing UNRWA's vital role in delivering education, healthcare, and social services to refugees⁶⁶. Additionally, South Africa has organized various forums and discussions to raise awareness about the plight of Palestinian refugees, fostering solidarity movements within its borders. This effort includes collaborations with local NGOs and community organizations dedicated to human rights and social justice.

South Africa's participation in the Rice and Vegetable Production Project in Conakry, Guinea, is part of a wider initiative to enhance agricultural development and food security in the region⁶⁷. South African agricultural experts have been providing technical assistance and training to local farmers, sharing best practices in rice and vegetable cultivation, irrigation methods, and pest management strategies to improve yield and sustainability. Various South African entities, including government bodies and private sector players, have invested in agricultural infrastructure in Guinea, funding improvements in irrigation systems, storage facilities, and access to quality seeds, all crucial for boosting productivity⁶⁸. South Africa also emphasizes regional integration and collaboration through frameworks like the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU). By supporting agricultural initiatives in Guinea, South Africa seeks to strengthen its relationships with West African countries and foster food security across the continent⁶⁹. The project prioritizes building local

⁶⁶ Rashid A.K. Is Humanitarian Intervention Ever Morally Justified? Republic of South Africa [RSA] (2024). <https://www.gov.za/documents/other/foreign-policy-south-africa-discussion-document-01-jun-1996>.

⁶⁷ Pitigala, N., and Lopez-Calix, J. Trade policy options for export diversification: The case of Mali, Chad, Niger, and Guinea. *Journal of Infrastructure Policy and Development* (2021). 4. <https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v4i2.1200>

⁶⁸ Mitra, P., Ribeiro, M. P., Melina, G., Belianska, A., Bohme, N., Cai, K., Diallo, Y., Jain, S., and Zerbo, S. Climate Change and Select Financial Instruments: An Overview of Opportunities and Challenges for Sub-Saharan Africa. *IMF Staff Climate Notes*, (2022) 1. <https://doi.org/10.5089/9798400225208.066>

⁶⁹ Black, R., Busby, J., Dabelko, G. D., De Coning, C., Maalim, H., McAllister, C., Ndiloseh, M., et al. *Environment of Peace: Security in a New Era of Risk*. (2022). <https://doi.org/10.55163/lcls7037>.

capacities by training farmers in modern agricultural techniques and sustainable practices.

This not only improves productivity but also empowers local communities, making them more resilient to food shortages. The Rice and Vegetable Production Project aligns with South Africa's broader goals of enhancing food security and reducing poverty in Africa⁷⁰. By helping Guinea improve its agricultural outputs, South Africa contributes to regional stability and economic development. South Africa often partners with organizations like the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to align its efforts with international best practices and standards in agricultural development. The Cuba Economic Package Project, launched by South Africa, is a joint initiative designed to strengthen economic relations and promote development between South Africa and Cuba. This project emphasizes enhancing economic cooperation in key sectors such as health, education, and agriculture. South Africa aims to tap into Cuba's renowned expertise in healthcare, which includes training South African medical professionals in Cuba and deploying Cuban medical personnel to South Africa. This exchange not only boosts South Africa's healthcare capacity but also helps fill gaps in medical services, particularly in underserved regions.

The South African economic package aims to boost trade between South Africa and Cuba, focusing on sectors like manufacturing and agriculture, and importing Cuban products. It encourages South African businesses to invest in Cuba, particularly in tourism, renewable energy, and infrastructure. The package also promotes cultural and educational exchanges, fostering cooperation and understanding. It acknowledges South Africa's historical connections to Cuba, rooted in struggles against colonialism and apartheid⁷¹. Supporting Cuba aligns with South Africa's foreign policy of solidarity with nations advocating for social justice and development. South Africa has supported the Presidential and Legislative Elections in Liberia, ensuring free, fair, and transparent processes. The

⁷⁰ Oruma, S. O., Misra, S., & Fernandez-Sanz, L. Agriculture 4.0: An Implementation Framework for Food Security Attainment in Nigeria's Post-COVID-19 Era. IEEE Access, (2021) 9. <https://doi.org/10.1109/access.2021.3086453>

⁷¹ Rashid A.K. Is Humanitarian Intervention Ever Morally Justified? Republic of South Africa [RSA] (2024). <https://www.gov.za/documents/other/foreign-policy-south-africa-discussion-document-01-jun-1996>.

country has dispatched election observation missions to evaluate the electoral environment, monitor polling conduct, and uphold democratic principles. South African experts have provided technical assistance, sharing best practices in election administration, voter registration, and technology use. South Africa has also undertaken capacity-building initiatives to strengthen Liberia's electoral bodies, training personnel in electoral procedures, conflict resolution, and civic education. As a member of the Southern African Development Community and the African Union, South Africa supports Liberia's elections.

South Africa is participating in the International Diplomacy Training Program (IDTP) Project in Burundi to improve the diplomatic skills of Burundian officials and diplomats. The program focuses on international relations, negotiation techniques, and conflict resolution. South African diplomats and experts lead workshops and sessions, sharing their experiences in diplomacy, governance, and international collaboration. This aligns with South Africa's strategy to promote regional integration and cooperation within the African Union and SADC. The training initiatives emphasize good governance, human rights, and democratic practices, reflecting its commitment to democracy and stability. The country has encountered criticism for its seemingly contradictory foreign policy stances, particularly its hesitance to denounce Russia's invasion of Ukraine⁷². Nevertheless, South Africa remains an active participant and champion of regional peacekeeping initiatives that align with global efforts spearheaded by the UN. Experts highlight the potential of additional AU-led missions, which could be more responsive to the evolving dynamics of conflicts in Africa⁷³. There are also advocates for greater inclusivity in peacekeeping, emphasizing the need to increase the involvement of women peacekeepers. Over the years, South Africa has increasingly strengthened its role in peacekeeping operations, participating in various UN and regionally led missions across the continent. Definitions and measurement mechanisms for developmental assistance must evolve beyond the current norms, which often lead the

⁷² Taylor, R. South Africa: The Role of Peace and Conflict-Resolution Organizations in the Struggle Against Apartheid. In book: *Mobilizing for Peace* (2002). (pp.69-88). DOI:10.1093/0195125924.003.0004

⁷³ AUC/OECD, *Africa's Development Dynamics 2021: Digital Transformation for Quality Jobs*, AUC, Addis Ababa/OECD Publishing, (2021), Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/0a5c9314-en>.

public to perceive strategic and comprehensive cooperative relationships, such as that between South Africa and the DRC, as mere backdoor deals shrouded in suspicion. This shift is essential to foster transparency and trust, enabling a clearer understanding of the genuine benefits and intentions behind such partnerships.

The country's role in peacekeeping has broadened to encompass not just military deployments but also civilian and police personnel, showcasing a comprehensive approach to its peacekeeping initiatives. Rigby⁷⁴ notes that South Africa's contributions to UN missions have increased significantly, making it the 15th largest contributor among all UN Member States, which underscores its growing influence and dedication to international peacekeeping. Additionally, South Africa's peacekeeping policy has evolved in response to the shifting landscape of conflicts and peacekeeping conditions in Africa, highlighting the necessity of grasping the political and strategic contexts in which these missions operate. The nation has adeptly navigated intricate regional dynamics and internal expectations, establishing itself as an engaged participant in addressing both regional and international conflicts⁷⁵. Although it faces challenges in fully realizing its peacekeeping aspirations due to various internal and external constraints, South Africa's involvement in peacekeeping has become more sophisticated and strategic, reflecting a deeper commitment to promoting peace and security both in Africa and globally⁷⁶. South Africa has encountered numerous challenges in its peacekeeping endeavours, encompassing both strategic and operational issues⁷⁷. A significant hurdle involves maintaining consent, impartiality, and the non-use of force in peacekeeping missions, especially in situations where peace is lacking. Furthermore, shortcomings in equipment and training have adversely affected South Africa's

⁷⁴ Rigby, A. *Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management: The View from the Non-Governmental Sector International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), (2001). 774.

⁷⁵ Pitigala, N., and Lopez-Calix, J. Trade policy options for export diversification: The case of Mali, Chad, Niger, and Guinea. *Journal of Infrastructure Policy and Development* (2021). 4. <https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v4i2.1200>

⁷⁶ Rigby, A. (2001). *Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management: The View from the Non-Governmental Sector International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), (2001). Vol. 77, No. 4.

⁷⁷ Bell, C. (2003). *Human rights and minority protection. Contemporary peace-making.* (2003). Hound mills: Palgrave Macmillan.

involvement, particularly in the African context. Additionally, the evolving nature of conflicts poses challenges that necessitate a renewed focus on the fundamental peacekeeping principles of consent, impartiality, and non-use of force.

4.5. South Africa's Humanitarian Aid on Covid-19 Vaccines and Antiretroviral Therapy

South Africa has made significant contributions to conflict management, particularly in peacebuilding, humanitarian intervention, and women, peace, and security (WPS). The country has provided financial support, training, and capacity-building to conflict and post-conflict nations in areas like policy development, diplomacy, elections, security sector reform, demining, gender mainstreaming, and human resources development⁷⁸. However, discussions about development cooperation can be contentious due to traditional definitions and discomfort in the Global South. The South African Government's donation of over 2 million COVID-19 vaccine doses has received a positive reception. Gift of the Givers has been a leader in African-led humanitarian efforts across numerous countries. South Africa's African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund continues to back peacebuilding initiatives throughout the continent. Additionally, several South African civil society organizations, such as the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes and the Institute for Security Studies, contribute to conflict management in Africa, albeit on a smaller scale. There exists significant potential for enhanced collaboration between the government and civil society to strengthen South Africa's capacity for conflict management⁷⁹.

South Africa has donated over 2 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to the African Vaccination Acquisition Trust, demonstrating its leadership in the global and regional response to the pandemic. UNICEF expressed

⁷⁸ Mthembu, P. *South Africa as a Development Partner: An Empirical Analysis of the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund* (2021). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57938-8_26

⁷⁹ Hendricks, C. and Majozi, N. *South Africa's International Relations: A New Dawn?* *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, (2021)56, 73.

gratitude for this contribution and called for further support to prevent the spread. The COVID-19 Fund, led by South Africa, is under the responsibility of the AU Chairperson. The mission in Addis Ababa implemented projects and monitors fund utilization. As of March 2021, Africa had over 3.9 million confirmed cases and 106,712 fatalities, creating a health, humanitarian, social, and economic crisis. South Africa's social assistance programs, which provide cash transfers to 17 million individuals monthly, were crucial during the COVID-19 lockdown. The government implemented shock-responsive measures, including additional payments to social grants, and introduced new initiatives like the Temporary Employer-Employee Relief Scheme (TERS), Special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress grant, and food parcel distributions. Despite its well-managed system, significant delivery failures revealed its limitations in coverage and adequacy. South Africa embraced these responsibilities during a period of global and regional turmoil. As COVID-19 challenged nations to prioritize cooperation over isolation, South Africa played a key role in coordinating regional responses to tackle the issues faced by strained public health systems, vaccine distribution strategies, and economic stimulus and debt assistance throughout Africa⁸⁰. The nation's leadership has also been put to the test by persistent and emerging security threats in the Sahel and Cabo Delgado, Mozambique. Central to its regional strategy is the challenge of fostering regional economic cooperation while safeguarding its domestic economic interests.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The initial focus of sustainable development (SD) efforts was primarily on long-term programmes that aim to tackle poverty, social inequalities, environmental decline, etc., while also addressing structural issues that undermine growth, prosperity and sustainability⁸¹. The number of crises occurring globally has resulted in a significant surge in the amount of humanitarian aid needed to provide food, water, shelter, and medical

⁸⁰ Kruger P., P., and Karim, A.S. A human rights-based approach to coercive public health interventions: lessons from the HIV and COVID-19 pandemics, *African Journal of AIDS Research*, (2022). 21:2, 123-131, doi: 10.2989/16085906.2022.2073897

⁸¹ Shehu, M., Abba, A. Humanitarian crisis and sustainable development: perspectives and preferences of internally displaced persons in the northeastern Nigeria. *Int J Humanitarian Action* 5, (2020) 17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-020-00084-2>

attention to those impacted. Humanitarian organizations can either directly address certain requirements or provide help to nearby services carrying out similar tasks⁸². Conflict violence may grow because of humanitarian aid. These funds could be misappropriated and used to purchase weapons, worsening the conflict. Armed organizations attempting to obtain relief supplies may target aid recipients, including captives and the general civilian populace. The experience of managing COVID-19 has the potential to promote inclusive national dialogue and decision-making, strengthen social contracts between states and communities, build greater trust in institutions, and enhance peacebuilding initiatives. Based on the evidence presented by various scholars, South Africa should only undertake projects when the necessary expertise and resources for success are available, due to its limited resources, and the initiatives must be financially viable⁸³. Thus, projects must consider the needs of both the recipients in general and South Africa in particular. Emphasis should be placed on quality over quantity, with a focus on avoiding luxuries that benefit only a select few. This paper contributes to the knowledge of linkages between humanitarian actions in conflict situations and SD. Aid must visibly promote the well-being of the people, particularly through education and training. The emphasis should be placed on partnerships and training rather than fostering charity and dependence⁸⁴. South Africa should leverage the expertise and resources of its private sector to the fullest extent possible by ensuring proper maintenance and sustainability of any project being undertaken. By recognizing that Aid projects can only make a minor contribution to alleviating Africa's vast challenges, South Africa must strive to avoid competing with other donors and duplicating initiatives.

In the international responses to conflict-induced humanitarian crises, there are now renewed efforts to move beyond providing immediate relief materials (such as food, clothing, shelter, essential medications) to

⁸² Hendricks, C. and Majozi, N. (2021). South Africa's International Relations: A New Dawn? *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, (2021), 56, 73.

⁸³ Fabricius, P. South Africa's aid to its neighbours should be explicit and conditional. Institute for Security Studies (2013).

⁸⁴ Alemu, N. E., Temesgen, E., and Dessiye, M. Do gender roles affect urban poverty in Ethiopia? A focus on women in micro and small enterprises. *Cogent Social Sciences* (2023). 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2216509>.

restoring destroyed livelihoods, rehabilitating individuals and communities, building resilience and reducing risks, and preventing further spread of conflict⁸⁵. In contrast to Western donor countries, South Africa keeps its African aid efforts largely under wraps, rarely discussing its guiding principles or motives in public. This approach not only helps to spare recipient countries from potential embarrassment but also aims to prevent providing fodder for domestic criticism. Some black South African leaders have argued that they have a stronger claim to available aid funds than foreign nations, while right-wing white South Africans oppose African aid on principle⁸⁶. To mitigate long-term debt crises, Africa should explore alternative financing sources, including stronger domestic resource mobilization, increased production, value addition, and economic diversification.

As an integral part of Africa, South Africa has a significant interest in ensuring stability and prosperity in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in the Southern region. Beyond this pragmatic interest, South Africa also feels a moral obligation to assist its African neighbours to the best of its ability⁸⁷. Moreover, aid showcases South Africa's economic and technological capabilities, while successful aid projects serve as a way to "show the flag" and boost trade and other relations. Assistance given by South Africa to Southern African nations has fostered regional collaboration. South African aid is motivated by various factors, primarily based on enlightened self-interest⁸⁸. Although aid is viewed as a means to build influence and create alliances, South Africa understands that monetary assistance alone cannot turn African leaders into reliable partners, particularly given the unpredictable nature of the political landscape across the continent. The idea linking humanitarian action

⁸⁵ Shehu, M., Abba, A. Humanitarian crisis and sustainable development: perspectives and preferences of internally displaced persons in the northeastern Nigeria. *Int J Humanitarian Action* 5, (2020) 17,8. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-020-00084-2>.

⁸⁶ Tapscott, C. Overcoming the past and shaping the future: the quest for relevance in teaching and researching public administration in Africa. *GPPG* 1, (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43508-021-00030-x>

⁸⁷ Tapscott, C. Overcoming the past and shaping the future: the quest for relevance in teaching and researching public administration in Africa. *GPPG* 1, (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43508-021-00030-x>

⁸⁸ Salifu, G. A. N., and Salifu, Z. Aid administration and sustainable development in the post-COVID-19 era in Africa: a review of the literature approach. *Cogent Social Sciences* (2024). 10,9.

with development, although not new, has received renewed attention with the unveiling of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda⁸⁹. African countries have a chance to improve their appeal for manufacturing activities as global companies seek to diversify their supply chains⁹⁰. To take advantage of this, they must focus on further developing their infrastructure, enhancing logistics, increasing investments in skills training, reducing business expenses, and adopting digital technologies. Moreover, African nations can leverage the ongoing digital transformation across the continent and adjust to the new circumstances brought on by the pandemic.

6.0 CONCLUSION

South Africa's commitment to peacekeeping and its role in the SADC demonstrate its commitment to regional stability and development. The country's foreign policy plays a crucial role in shaping international relations, reflecting its values, goals, and interests. Understanding domestic factors, such as political leadership, public opinion, economic interests, and national security concerns, is essential for effective foreign policy and addressing global challenges. These domestic factors can compete for consideration and significantly impact a nation's approach to the world. Humanitarian interventions should be guided by principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence, prioritizing civilian protection, adhering to human rights standards, and minimizing harm to non-combatants. South Africa has demonstrated diplomatic leadership and mediation skills in conflict resolution, facilitating negotiations and brokering peace agreements in countries like Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan, demonstrating the importance of human rights and impartiality in humanitarian action. South Africa has played a crucial role in promoting peace and stability in Africa through its active participation in peacekeeping missions, military deployments, and humanitarian assistance. This has helped protect civilians and stabilize fragile states. South Africa's development

⁸⁹ Shehu, M., Abba, A. Humanitarian crisis and sustainable development: perspectives and preferences of internally displaced persons in the northeastern Nigeria. *Int J Humanitarian Action* 5, (2020) 17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-020-00084-2>.

⁹⁰ Mahembe, E., & Odhiambo, N. M. Foreign aid, poverty and economic growth in developing countries: A dynamic panel data causality analysis. *Cogent Economics & Finance*, (2019) 7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322039.2019.1626321>

assistance programs have supported post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation, and capacity-building efforts, promoting sustainable peace and development in affected communities. As Africa's economic powerhouse and champion of regional integration, South Africa continues to play a vital role in shaping a peaceful future for the continent.