South Africa as an Anti-Piracy Actor

Written by Phillippa Lewis

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Anti-Piracy Actors: South Africa

Introduction

Increasing piracy activity has thrust the question of maritime security ever-higher on the international agenda. Whilst it is by no means a new phenomenon, growing instances of piracy off the coast of Somalia has led to intensified international efforts to combat such activity in an effort to safeguard shipping lanes and protect international waters. Whilst piracy is not limited to Somalia, the convergence of a number of factors has led to it flourishing in the area and consequently it has generated particular attention from the international community. Piracy does not currently present a problem within South African territorial waters; however, the country has become increasingly concerned about such acts since December 2010 when Somali pirates launched their southernmost successful attack, hijacking a Spanish fishing trawler, the Vega 5, and her 24 crew inMozambique waters (Mwangura 2012). This shift in activity southwards led to a recognition by South Africaof the need to act to curtail the threat. Whilst the South African Navy has spoken of its preparedness to tackle this threat, criticisms have emerged about the South African naval capabilities and their ability to undertake anti-piracy missions.

Whilst a large amount of anti-piracy rhetoric is based on naval capabilities, piracy is not merely a security problem and thus, cannot be tackled by purely military means. Fundamentally, it is multidimensional in nature. Rittel, Horst, and Webber (1973) speak of 'wicked' problems, those of which no 'solution,' in the sense of an objective or definitive answer can be found. 'The search for scientific bases for confronting problems of social policy is bound to fail, because of the nature of these problems' (Rittel et al. 1973:155). Piracy is reflective of such a notion and it is important that discourse is not limited by an emphasis on hard measures. An examination of piracy, and resultantly anti-piracy, must contain a multitude of perspectives including, security, legal, law and order, development, humanitarian, and governance.

South Africa is a complex anti-piracy actor. Due to the nature of the problem facing the country, its approach does not form a coherent doctrine, but instead it is multi-faceted and aims to tackle the many dimensions of the piracy. An emphasis is necessarily placed on co-operation with a multitude of regional and international actors, as South Africa recognises that piracy cannot be solved by one country alone, and cannot be solved purely by military might. Instead, importance is seemingly placed on the need to address the 'root causes' of piracy, illustrated by renewed efforts to work with the Transnational Federal Government in creating political stability within Somalia (BUA NEWS:2012). Whilst there has been increasing emphasis on tackling piracy problems (notwithstanding questions as to their effectiveness), South Africa faces a decision of priorities. While its relative economic strength in the context of the Southern African countries places a certain burden of responsibility on the country to assist in the development of the region, South Africa is facing its own developmental problems as it deals with inequality and tensions in the post-colonial and post-apartheid eras. The recognised link between piracy and instability creates a need for regional development in order to tackle the root causes of the problem, but South Africamust balance this with the needs of its own people and its own national interests.

As already noted, South Africa is a complex anti-piracy actor due to the nature of South Africa as an actor and the nature of the piracy problem facing the country. This essay seeks to provide an insight into the development of anti-

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piracy measures in South Africa, and place them within the wider context of South Africa's national, regional and international commitments and responsibilities. While South Africa recognises piracy as a threat, its role in tackling it is necessarily only part of a wider international effort to secure waters. Whilst such an international effort will prove essential in addressing the threat of piracy in the long-term, South Africa is also faced with the negative repercussions of such efforts, most notably a spread of pirate activity further southwards and closer to South Africa's waters. The spread of piracy has the potential to place South Africain conflict with other anti-piracy actors, most notably those like the European Union, which is undertaking substantial naval missions in Somali waters. WhilstSouth Africaspeaks of co-operation, it is clear that there is growing pressure on the country to play an active role in counter-piracy missions, both due to its status as a leading power in the region, and in an attempt to offset the negative effects of international naval missions.

South Africa and the Problem of Piracy

South Africais a maritime nation. According to statistics outlined in an address by Minister of Transport Mr Sibusiso Ndebele, during the 106th Session of Council of the International Maritime Organisations (IMO) in London 2011, South Africa's sea-borne trade accounts for over 50% of its GDP, and 98% of South Africa trade volume or 80% of its trade value by sea. He described South Africa as a leading power in Africa's intra-regional and international trade, whose key partners, including those in the BRICs (Brazil,Russia,India and China) are regional powers with vast maritime interests and capabilities in sea trade, commerce and naval influence. Furthermore, he stated that 'South Africa's maritime strategic interests bring with them huge obligations that include providing for the safety and security of navigation and ships, ensuring the effective protection of the maritime environment' (Ndebele 2011).

Ndebele also spoke of South Africaas part of the continent ofAfrica, which has yet to assume its rightful place in the international maritime industry. This was attributed to the fact that, 'the African content has the lowest intra-regional trade levels compared to any other region in the world' and 'Africa is the only region in the world with no merchant tonnage under its control (registry) to handle her coastal intra-regional and extra-territorial seaborne trade' (Ndebele 2011). In light of this, the current recession is seen to offer South Africa and the continent a 'unique opportunity to implement the African Maritime Charter – which was adopted in Durban to implement the African Union (AU) Maritime Conference in Durban in 2009- through a comprehensive African Maritime Development Strategy' (Ndebele 2011).

Trade statistics, therefore, illustrate the pivotal part that maritime security has on trade and the South African economy more generally and thus the importance of engaging in anti-piracy missions. Within this context, the *Maritime Transport and Service Industry Black Economic Empowerment Charter* states as its overarching long-term vision 'to develop South Africa to become one of the world's top 35 maritime nations by the year 2014' (BEE Charter 2003: clause 2.1.1). Such a vision is premised on the goal to 'substantially increase the number of SA flagged vessels and develop new South African shipping companies that are globally competitive' (BEE Charter 2003: clause 2.1.3). The development of South Africa's maritime industry is undoubtedly dependent on its maritime security and the maritime security of the region more generally and thus the effective curtailing of piracy activity.

Whilst pirate activity provides much disruption to the area and succeeds in undermining maritime security, it forms part of a larger framework of maritime threats that challenge both South Africa and the global community. A 2008 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) Report notes that West Africa, which has never had a drug problem in the past has become a hub for cocaine trafficking (roughly 50 tonnes a year pass through the region) (UNODC 2008:1). Illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing is estimated to cost-sub-Saharan Africa about $1 billion annually (MRAG 2005:7), the catch from which floods international markets, depresses prices, and discourages legal and environmentally sustainable practise around the world. More generally, Africa's $1 trillion per annum maritime economy is overrun with illegal trafficking. This includes a multibillion black market in military arms, illegal logged forest products that represent as much as 70 per cent of African timber harvests, (World Bank 2006) and counterfeit medications that account for up to 50 per cent of all sales on the African continent (UNODC 2009:34). Such examples, as outlined by Vogel (2011) illustrate just a few of the problems in a large, complex and interconnected framework of security challenges, which require extensive resources to tackle and detract attention from piracy (although all are somewhat interlinked). Whilst all do not necessarily affect South Africa directly, they

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form part of the larger challenge, which it and the international community must address in order to secure international waters and uphold maritime security in the region creating economic benefits. The scale of the maritime security problem, as illustrated by these figures, also indicates that current measures are failing, and in some cases allowing it to worsen. Whilst a large quantity of South Africa's maritime-security rhetoric is focused on piracy, it is clear that these acts are just part of a wider picture, and must not overshadow other problems, which have great developmental consequences despite the fact that they do not contain as many vested interests from international actors and fall as far into the international spotlight.

On a local level, South Africa, being a maritime nation is 'endowed with a double geo-political identity, namely the land and the sea. In turn, this twin blessing (often ignored) to a large degree shapes the country's maritime and naval interests' (Siko 1996:41). South Africa's *Maritime Doctrine* (2006) describes the country as having a coastline of 3924 kilometres with an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 1,553,000 square kilometres. Furthermore, 'the geo-strategic position the RSA occupies as a country is an important factor that guides the country's use and security of the seas. The importance of its geo-strategic position is followed by its maritime zones, marine resources, marine ecology and conservation – and all of these factors carry with them immediate national, regional and international obligations' (Maritime Doctrine 2006:15). This obligation is partly due to South Africa's location as a maritime choke point in the Southern Hemisphere, surrounded by the Indian, South Atlantic and Southern Oceans and a major shipping route. Such obligations to protect its waters increase international pressure on South Africa to become a power projector and to undertake an active part in anti-piracy missions.

"It is this (the Cape Sea Route) route that is the Navy's ward. It is the Navy's duty to police it … To watch it… To care for its users – the mercantile fleets of the world. For this they work, and while doing it, the grey ships can strengthen the bonds of friendship with our neighbours, and can make new friends, and can hold all that is best in maintaining the brotherhood of the sea. Then they are doing their proper appointed peacetime task. They are the 'Grey Diplomats'". (W.J. Flesh and Partners 1973)

These concluding words of *South Africa's Navy: The First Fifty Years*, as quoted on the South African Naval Website illustrate the perceived responsibilities that the navy face in the context of an increasingly dynamic security situation. Siko (1996) speaks of certain rights and responsibilities that come with having such a vast area under its sovereign control. 'South Africa is a member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and also the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). As a subscriber to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS), and including being a signatory to the convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), South Africa is morally bound to observe these normative international guidelines' (Siko 1996:41) and thus, sovereign right is balanced with a responsibility to protect the area for the international community and so the country must be seen to be playing an active role in counter-piracy missions.

The South African economy is served by several ports on its coastline: Durban, Richards Bay, Port Elizabeth, East London, Cape Town, Mossel Bay, Saldanha Bay and Coega. Whilst pivotal to the South African economy, these ports also serve those economies of its landlocked neighbours and those in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). South Africa, therefore, is not alone in having a vested interest in protecting both its waters, and those waters around it more generally against piracy in times of a growing threat. The South African *Maritime Doctrine* describes South Africa as an island economy: 'This virtually complete reliance on the ocean for trade renders South Africa very vulnerable and emphasises the strategic importance of commercial ports and the oceans bordering the country. The same are vital to the economies of the rest of Southern Africa and the interdependence of these economies and the South African maritime community cannot be over emphasised. This implies that ports, as vulnerable economic choke points, must be protected at all cost.' (Maritime Doctrine 2006:20). This point is reflective of the increasing importance placed on piracy, and maritime security more generally within South Africa as a form of preserving the country's self-interest and as part of the multitude of actors with which it is involved.

South Africa relies on the UNCLOS definition of piracy as defined in their *Maritime Doctrine* (2006[1]:111):

As defined in **1982 UNCLOS**, piracy is an act that can only be committed on the *high seas* and for which universal jurisdiction applies (that is to say, any state can apprehend a pirate vessel, regardless of its flag state). As defined

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piracy consists of the following:

(a) any illegal acts of violence, detention or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or passengers of a private ship or private aircraft, and directed:

I.   on the *high seas* against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft;

II.   against any ship, aircraft persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State.

(b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft.

(c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in a. and b. above.

Such acts of piracy committed by a warship, government ship or government aircraft whose crew has mutinied and taken control of the ship or aircraft, are treated in the same way as acts committed by a private ship.' (UNCLOS 1982: 60-61).

The recognition of this definition of piracy illustrates the legal framework in which piracy is viewed by South Africa. Accordingly, under this perspective an emphasis is placed on the law and order side of piracy, namely criminalising the act of piracy itself. This apparent focus on law and order is in conflict to the apparent focus on naval and military methods as a means to combat pirate activity. Furthermore, such attempts to focus on the criminalisation of piracy are necessarily hampered by an inadequate legal framework in many of the African countries and a relatively poor international record of arresting pirates.

The problem of piracy was emphasised in an address by Lindiwe Sisulu, Minister of Defence and Military Veterans at the SADC Extraordinary Meeting on Regional Anti-Piracy Strategy (2011). She noted that piracy had been a recurring feature on the agenda since 1995 and expressed a wish to move it from the discussion agenda to the operations agenda, although she expressed thanks for current levels of cooperation. In describing South Africa's interest in anti-piracy, Sisulu notes the relative distance from piracy that South Africa had previously enjoyed. However, this changed due to the increasing vulnerability of their major trade artery in Eastern Africa. 'One major reason why speculations point towards pirates moving southward is the recent discovery of oil and gas off the Tanzanian coastline. Six million tonnes of oil are transported around South Africa's western coastline, which makes this a prime target for pirates' (Sisulu 2011). It is clear therefore, that South Africa is growing as an anti-piracy actor having defined maritime piracy as a security threat to the region in recognition of a need to protect its self-interests in time of changing circumstances by stopping the spread of piracy before it become a serious problem in South African waters.

Underpinning South African rhetoric on piracy is a need for cooperation, and an awareness of the effect of piracy, not just on South Africa, but the wider region and its development illustrated by its work with regional development bodies, which will be examined later. South Africa's interest, is ultimately underpinned by the movement of piracy in to the waters of Southern Africa, although not in South Africa specifically, and the exposure that it entails. It is noted that the region is becoming increasingly vulnerable and is seen as 'an alternative to Somali pirates as they try and avoid the clamp-down of various maritime task forces around the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden – purely by moving into largely unprotected parts of the Indian Ocean' (Sisulu 2011). This increasing instability and vulnerability in the South African maritime domain is an apparent unwelcomed side effect of other piracy actors – namely the international anti-piracy forces. Although not limited to the actions of international naval forces, this point does prove a necessary weakness of the approach in combatting piracy, namely that resources are not sufficient to cover the whole area and thus, the likelihood is that pirates will adapt to the changing circumstances and move to new areas further weakening international efforts. This change in the location of piracy also illustrates the potentially conflicting aims between the actions of South Africa and other international naval forces when tackling piracy – namely South Africa's aim to prevent the spread of piracy southwards and the larger operating area used by pirates as a result of international aims to prevent its occurrence off the coast of Somalia. Similarly, the spread of piracy has also been

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attributed to the increase in the number of ships taking the longer and more hazardous route around the Cape of Good Hope in order to try to avoid pirate activity in the Gulf of Aden and the Suez Canal – notable piracy hotspots. Such a diversion of ships is not only detrimental to the spread of piracy, but also to the economy as the cost of shipping increases with the necessary increase in fuel and time. 'Rerouting a single tanker from Saudi Arabia to the United States around the Cape of Good Hope adds approximately 2,700 miles to each voyage and about $3.5 million in annual fuel costs' (Mbekeani and Ncube 2011:6). Such increases in costs are likely to be passed on to the consumer having a negative effect on the economy. Pirate activity necessarily has negative consequences on trade, but its effects are not limited to this. Tourism forms an essential part of nations' economies, and its success is widely based on stability. Piracy and other maritime security issues undermine such stability and confidence in the eyes of the international community and thus have a negative impact on the tourist industry affecting the jobs of local populations. Additionally, whilst there have been reports of the East London Harbour Port potentially benefitting from the re-routing of ships around the Cape of Good Hope (Africa.gm 2008), these are described as 'minor' and are largely unsubstantiated in official documents.

South Africa's approach to piracy is necessarily co-operative and one that acknowledges that it is a problem that cannot be placed within a security framework alone and thus one that cannot be solved via purely military measures. Recognising the importance of the sea, South Africa is working within a number of international organisations including the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In addition, it is taking unilateral action as a nation-state. In an US Africa Command-organised maritime security conference (2010), AU Commission deputy chairman Erastus Mwencha spoke of Africa as 'under attack'. Outlining all of the potential problems that Africa faces, including human trafficking, dumping of toxic waste, money laundering, piracy, corruption, Mwencha stated that 'the leading threat to Africa's maritime domain however remains the threat of ignorance.' Accordingly, 'until there is a true understanding of the geo-strategic importance of Africa's maritime domain for Africa's socio-economic development growth, how central it is for the wellbeing and prosperity of millions of Africans, the scope and magnitude of all the afore mentioned threats and vulnerabilities will continue to grow' (Mwencha 2010). This view was recognised by the US AFICOM Commander General W.E Ward who, in his remarks at the conference stated that 'a phrase we routinely heard during the earliest days of the U.S. Africa Command was "African solutions to African challenges." We agreed, and still agree and we know that imposed strategies won't work' (Ward 2010). Although cooperative then, an emphasis both within South Africa and within the organisations in which it works, is that of creating a regional, or continental based strategy that seeks to address the issues from an African perspective rather than that of internationally enforced ideas and mechanisms. This focus on African solutions, however, contrasts sharply with the high level of international involvement in the area and the leading role that organisations such as the United Nations and European Union are playing in the fight against piracy illustrating the shortcomings of regional methods.

South Africa's Counter-Piracy Practices

A speech by Mr Thabang Makwetla, Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans to a conference on 'Forging a Common Approach to Maritime Piracy' in Dubai (2011) outlined the South African position on anti-piracy measures. Makwetla expressed support for the sentiment expressed by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon when he emphasised the need for stability in Somalia in order to halt pirate activity. 'There is indeed an urgent need to combine the vital sea-based anti-piracy strategies and efforts to find a permanent political settlement of the Somali conflict… this means, at the same time, to address the root causes of piracy and taking decisive actions against piracy and impunity' (Makwetla 2011). In accordance with this view, South Africa recognises the need for a holistic approach, and one that must have both short and long term objectives for Somalia in both creating a stable country and ending pirate activity – two aims that are interlinked.

In addition, Makwetla expressed agreement with the position of the African Union Peace and Security Commission (AU-PSC) when it addressed the need to combat the dumping of toxic waste and illegal fishing, which was proving detrimental to the lives and livelihoods of Somalia's population. Moreover, Makwetla expressed the wish to support the sentiment expressed by 'the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Mr Bernard Membe, regarding the indictment on all of us for the unconvincing performance over two decades during which Somalia has progressively regressed into a failed state' (Makwetla 2011). Support for such a statement further

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indicates South Africa's position on the need for a political solution in Somalia as a pre-requisite to maritime security and thus indicates a framing of the issue of piracy as a governance problem. However, this statement also illustrates the ineffectiveness of previous actions taken by states to tackle the political problems in Somalia and thus doubt can be placed on whether future policies will cause any improvement. Emphasis is put on the notion of good governance, and this is not merely limited to Somalia, but encompasses a responsibility of all states. 'The importance of policies designed to curb corruption in African states, ensure transparency and accountability in the management of national resources, greater investment in human development, and strengthening of the democratic (especially the electoral) processes to ensure the emergence of credible leaders cannot be over emphasised' (Onuoha and Ezirm 2010:55). This emergence of good governance is vital in order to create a stable political situation in which state development can prosper creating viable alternatives for populations to piracy but it is that which requires active and responsible engagement from the international community, most notably from regional actors, on a scale that it is unlikely to meet.

Speaking on the topic of intervention more generally, Thabo Mbeki, former South African President has spoken of the need for African countries to take responsibility of its own security to combat Western interference:

'Unless, practically, we assume responsibility for the advancement of democracy, the protection of human rights and the realisation of the objective of good governance on our continent, and act to guarantee peace and security, these powers will intervene in our countries in pursuit of their selfish objectives, legitimising such intervention by presenting themselves as "friends of Africa", intent to give us the gift of democracy, human rights, peace, good governance and progress, regardless of our wishes' (Mbeki 2012).

As such, an emphasis must be placed on good governance, both to combat the 'root causes' of piracy, and create confidence among the international community in solutions. This is related to the need for a regional or continental based solution to the piracy problem, one that is sympathetic and responsive to the unique nature of this 'wicked problem'. Such rhetoric, however, seemingly fails to take responsibility for the failings of the African continent and the African institutions in tackling both the political situation in Somalia and the increasing levels of piracy in the region. A truly effective counter-piracy programme requires local, regional and international forces to co-operate in order to achieve a multilateral and comprehensive approach. Anti-western rhetoric could prove to have negative ramifications when trying to secure the necessary resources to effectively tackle piracy.

Within the context of the Southern African Development Community, Makwetla expressed recognition with great concern of the growing levels of piracy activities in and around the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somali; particularly their southwards spread towards the Mozambican Channel. He states that 'South Africa's main priority is to ensure smooth trade and safe movements of cargo within the SADC Maritime Zone and the continent at large' (Makwetla 2011) illustrating both an apparent increase in the willingness to intervene and the importance placed on economic priorities and the development of the region

In an address to the third Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) held in Cape Town (2012), Sisulu echoed the sentiments found in previous speeches, namely of the need for cooperative action and a holistic approach to maritime security that does not focus purely on military but instead good governance, development, and stability. Moreover, she expressed the envisagement of a better South Africa, which contributes to a better and safer Africa in the world. Additionally, South Africa expressed the wish to discuss on board security as an anti-piracy option, stating that it 'has been raised with us by a number of European countries. We are grappling with this development. We would like to be advised by yourselves on the ethics and viability of this' (Sisulu 2012).

At a national level, South Africa has increasingly expressed its preparedness to deal with the growing threat of piracy. Chief Maritime strategy director Bernhard Hein Teuteberg said the Navy is prepared to meet the threat of piracy, which is moving towards South Africa (Times Live 2012). The Department of Defence's *Overarching Strategic Statement* (2011) echoes this by naming maritime security as a strategic priority and stating that 'the defence and security of South Africa is inextricably linked to that of the region and the continent. Being a littoral country, South Africa needs to have a balanced maritime capability to effectively respond to arising maritime security threats affecting South Africa' (Department of Defence 2011:6). Whilst rhetoric clearly illustrates the importance that South Africa places in the ability to secure both its waters and the waters of the continent more generally, serious doubt has

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been placed in its ability to do so.

As part of its on-going naval measures to tackle piracy, South Africa will continue to patrol the waters of the Mozambique Channel in an effort to secure the area against growing insecurity. Under Operation Cooper, the Navy, with the aid and support of Mozambique has maintained an anti-piracy patrol in the area since early 2011. The Naval presence generally consists of a frigate supported by a C-47TP Dakota reconnaissance aircraft of the South African Air Force (Wingrin 2012). In addition, a trilateral agreement was signed by South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique in February 2012 allowing the three countries the right to, among other things, patrol, search, arrest, seize, and undertake hot pursuit operations on any maritime crime suspect. In accordance with the trilateral agreement, the SA Navy are authorized to patrol as far as Tanzania. (Wingrin 2012).

South Africa's anti-piracy mission was further boosted by a joint navy exercise 'Good Hope V' near Simon's Town Naval Base. The large-scale exercise between the South African Navy, Air Force and the German Navy, takes place biannually and is the largest undertaken by the German Task Force Group outside of its NATO obligations. The exercise was this year commanded by South Africa for the first time and was focused specifically on anti-piracy. Although the exercise was scaled down due to financial considerations on both sides 'the aim of Exercise Good Hope V was to conduct exercises that would facilitate the sharing of expertise in general and anti-piracy operations in particular, thus enhancing the SA Navy's capability in terms of anti-piracy operations within the Mozambican channel,' (Wingrin 2012[2]) an area deemed to be of particular strategic importance to South Africa.

As part of a further boost to South Africa's Naval security an intelligence-driven operation is under way to create specialised maritime surveillance centres around the country which will form part of the Navy's early warning system. The operation forms part of the SADC's regional maritime security strategy, and an effort to secure Southern African waters from the spread of piracy. Rear-Admiral Bernard Teuteberg, chief director of Maritime Strategy described the urgency and importance of cooperative efforts: "to put it bluntly, and there is no other way of doing it, to stop piracy in our waters we have to drive them north. By (our) deploying off the Somali coast all we will do is drive pirates east and south, which is not what we want" (Hoskin 2012). This statement illustrates the conflict between international naval efforts in Somali waters and the interests of South Africa, namely that pirates are increasingly adapting to operations by changing tactics and increasing the area in which they operate to increase pressures on resources and thus are increasing the South Africa's vulnerability. In an effort to tackle this growing area of pirate activity, later priorities will also include extending the mission to the West coast of the SADC, with emphasis on Angola, Namibia and the Democratic Republic of Congo although this is dependent on the availability of resources.

Whilst it is not possible to give a full analysis of South Africa's naval operations, such examples illustrate the strong emphasis on naval force. In spite of this, however, criticisms and scepticisms have been raised as to the ability of South Africa's Navy to respond to the challenge, notably when missions are expected to be extended. The Department of Defence *Annual Report FY 2010/2011*, described the financial year as extremely demanding for the SA Navy due to increased operational tempo. It was said that 'although the Directed Levels of Capabilities as stipulated in terms of the force employment requirements for the respective capabilities were achieved, the SA Navy will not be able to sustain these levels of capability into the future, due to continued underfunding' (Annual Report 2010/11:74).

Deane-Peter Baker (2012) notes the contradiction between the sentiment of 'African solutions for African problems' and the little active contribution to securing Africa's maritime domains, most notably by the South African Navy. Baker attributes this lack of action to 'a combination of a mismatch between the assets the navy has available and the security challenges it needs to combat, budget constraints, and a lack of political will' (Baker 2012:152). Defence spending in South Africa is just 1.3 per cent of GDP, which amounts to about $4.4 billion for the 2010-11 financial year. Approximately 7 per cent of its budget is allocated to the Navy's operational budget, about US $308 million (Baker 2012:154). Such figures somewhat undermines the increasing naval rhetoric of promises to fulfil anti-piracy missions and will undoubtedly have negative repercussions on the stemming of pirate activity in the area.

South Africa's limited spending capabilities however, must be viewed in the context of the other challenges, which South Africa is facing. Whilst it has come under criticism for its lack of action in anti-piracy efforts, this must be

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considered along with the fact that 'South Africa has played a leading role in addressing conflict and defusing tensions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, and São Tome and Principe, and it has contributed additional forces to the African Union (AU) and UN Missions in the Comoros, Darfur, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Liberia' (Baker 2012:151). Such examples of South African action (notwithstanding questions of effectiveness of need) illustrate that South Africa has priorities beyond those of maritime security. Whilst securing its waters and the waters of the SADC are increasingly cited as major priorities of the nation, these must be considered within the context of the missions that South Africa has engaged inland and the resources that they require which necessarily reduce the country's capabilities to take effective action against piracy. Furthermore, South Africa's part in land-based missions are pivotal to the need to address political issues and tensions within states to create state stability, which is needed to address the root causes of piracy and as a pre-requisite to secure waters.

In addition to its naval measures, and in an attempt to help foster political stability in the country, South Africa has renewed diplomatic efforts with the Transnational Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia. It has allocated the government R100 million, which will go towards building adequate institutions, which will be sustainable beyond the TFG's current mandate and assist the independent running of the country. Furthermore, Nkoana-Mashabane, South Africa's International Relations and Co-operation Minister called for a political solution to the problem and called upon all armed opposition groups, including the Al Shabaab, to lay down their arms and join the peace process (South Africa Info 2012). Such sentiment illustrates the importance placed on a political solution and the creation of a stable country to address the root causes of piracy on land and foster a long-term solution. Whilst South Africa is heavy on development rhetoric, it seems apparent that progress in this area is shortcoming – Somalia has faced ever increasing civil and political upheaval and instability and South Africa, in unison with the regional and international communities must recognise that effective and sustained action and support are needed, not merely rhetoric.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the part that South Africa plays in anti-piracy efforts is multi-dimensional. Inherent contradictions and conflicts necessarily lie between its need to project itself as a regional actor, and the need to address its own economic weaknesses and internal security threats. 'It is clear that in the case of a nation such as South Africa, which encompasses within its borders both components of the First World and the Third World, the notion of security and the factors that influence its security are related more to issues of development than of pure military or territorial security' (Mills 1996). Piracy, for South Africa therefore, is an issue, which is placed within security, legal, law and order, development, humanitarian, and governance frameworks. Whilst an importance is placed on the securitisation of the issue, namely the necessary need to address it via naval operations due to negative side-effects of international naval operations, this is balanced with its recognition that piracy is part of a larger problem that must be addressed via political stability in Somalia and the continent more generally.

Through its role in a variety of regional and international actors, South Africa recognises that piracy will only be solved via cooperation between nations and that piracy is a problem that must be solved as a matter of urgency. It seems however, that a contradiction lies between its desire to project itself as a force exporter, and its poor defence spending. This fact is compounded by the internal 'guns versus butter' debate- whether South Africa can justify spending on its military when it has disproportionately vast numbers of it citizens in poverty emanating in part from its earlier colonial and apartheid eras. Prosperity will necessarily depend on economic growth and this in turn is dependent on maritime security, both within South Africa's territorial waters and the region more generally. As such and as expressed by government sentiments, piracy is a growing problem for the country and one that cannot be ignored. Given economic constraints, however, South Africa must concentrate its efforts on co-operative measures which emphasise the projection of political stability in the region via good governance. Current estimates show that naval force is unsustainable without the necessary defence spending and thus South Africa must play to its strengths and seek longer-term solutions to the piracy problem, which is currently dominating its maritime security agenda. Furthermore, the negative side effects of international efforts in Somali waters illustrate that current naval strategies are not working. Whilst South Africa places a lot of emphasis on 'African solutions for African problems' this is not necessarily matched with effective action to tackle piracy, illustrated by the large international presence dominating the area in terms of naval capacity and international aid. South Africa must therefore, use its relative strength and influence in the area to push for longer-term political solutions to the Somalia question that has remained unanswered

for decades. It is only when the land-based root causes of piracy are addressed that positive effects will be seen on the reduction of pirate activity. Furthermore, South Africa, and the international community more generally must realise the part that they have to play in the continued pirate action and work to address the local grievances in order to foster an environment where piracy is not a desirable option. At present talk is strong, but it appears action is weak and thus South Africa must follow-through on its pledges and continue to engage in co-operative action. However, with differing priorities, low naval spending and a poor economic environment, it seems unlikely that South Africa will ever match its tough rhetoric in the fight against piracy.

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