CHAPTER FIVE

MULTILATERAL SECURITY CO-OPERATION IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

The large expanse of oceanic waters separating Africa and South America are now viewed as bridges that need to be strengthened on all fronts, that is politically, economically, socially and in the security sphere. It is therefore not surprising that South Africa's attempts to engage her neighbours across the Atlantic Ocean are intensifying.   While it is true that some interaction, especially in the diplomatic arena, takes place on the mainland of the countries involved, it is equally true that the main area of concern is the security of the vast area covered by the contiguous waters of the ocean. It is also critical to note that these waters are the navigation routes for many other countries, which may affect (both positively and negatively) the way that such security is ensured in the South Atlantic region. To this effect, countries on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean have to take cognisance of other extra-regional powers that have a direct or indirect interest in the region. There are eternal fears that the region could be used in future as a battle theatre for nuclear exchanges as almost occurred during the Cold War, or even be used for nuclear testing of weapons of mass destruction. It could also be used to transport dangerous materials that, in the event of an accident through negligence, ignorance or sabotage, would seriously affect the littoral states. In addition to these fears, the region provides the lifeline or umbilical cord that links countries on both sides of the ocean. Thus, in economic terms, there is a need to protect the environment, and combat trans-oceanic criminal activities such as drug-trafficking, sea piracy and marine poaching.

The previous chapters have demonstrated the nature of the interaction between South Africa and the Mercosur member countries in the economic and military spheres. Most of the activities discussed take place on a bilateral basis and also largely on the mainland of the countries concerned. However, this chapter seeks to highlight the geographic nature of the South Atlantic region and the totality of activities that involve all the littoral states in the region. It is also important that the South Atlantic region be clearly demarcated both for

analytical purposes and also because potential conflicts emanate from the various interpretations of the geographic parameters of the region, and how it extends into Antarctica. It further identifies possible areas that could have a potential for conflict and the mechanisms that have been developed to deal with them. It analyses the nature and significance of strong military capabilities in order to be able to protect the natural resources for the benefit of humanity and littoral states. It concludes with the efforts that have been undertaken in order to ensure co-operation and co-ordination of military establishments and the role of extra-regional powers in such initiatives. These initiatives are highlighted through some of the major joint military exercises in the South Atlantic region in which South Africa participated.

2.   DEFINING THE SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION

There is no absolute agreement about the geographic parameters of the so-called South Atlantic region. However, there is a general understanding and consensus that it is that portion of the South Atlantic Ocean which is situated between the latitude somewhat north of the Equator and Antarctica, south of parallel 70^0S, and between the approximate longitudes of 70^0W and 20^0E. Further south, there is the Antarctic Circle, latitude $66^033'5''$[1] (see Map 2).

The South Atlantic region comprises four main archipelagos and islands of any significant size, that can be viewed as American, Antarctic, African and mid-Atlantic groups. The mid-Atlantic islands are Ascension, Santa Helena, Tristan Da Cunha, Gough and Bouvet. The African island group consists of Fernando Po, Annobon, Príncipe and São Tomé. On the American side there are Fernando de Noronha, Trinidad, Martin Vaz, Falklands/Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich. The so-called Antarctic group, which is located south of the parallel 60^0S, includes the South Orkneys and South Shetlands. It is noteworthy that, geographically-speaking, South Georgia, South Sandwich and Bouvet could also be regarded as sub-Antarctic islands. Tierra del Fuego and Staten Island are not included in these groups simply because they belong to the main South American continental mass.[2]

The main feature of the region is that it has three coastlines, namely, the African, American and Antarctic. The African coastline extends from Guinea-Bissau to the Cape and stretches over 7 800km of which 1 200km cover the deserts of Angola and Namibia. There are sixteen African states sharing the same coastline in the region. The coastline also includes six other

Map 2:   GEOGRAPHIC AND GEOPOLITICAL DEMARCATION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN
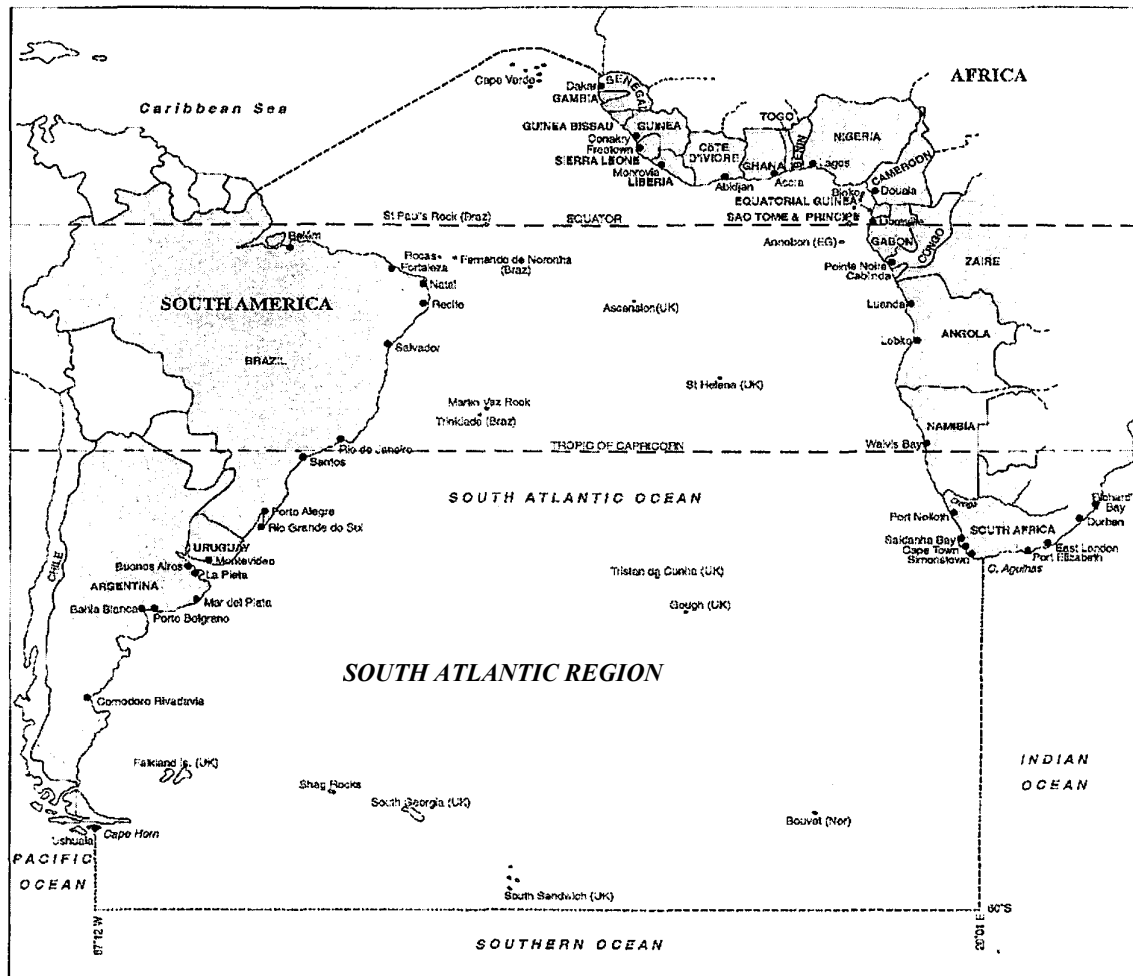
Source: *Adapted from* Pinheiro Guimarães, S. (ed.) 1996. *South Africa and Brazil: Risks and Opportunities in the Turmoil of Globalization*. Rio de Janeiro: International Relations Research Institute, p. 48.

Mediterranean countries. There are relatively few natural harbours with the following being the most important: Freetown in Sierra Leone, Boma in the Congo, Libreville in Gabon, Duala in Cameroon, Luanda in Angola, Walvis Bay in Namibia and Cape Town in South Africa.[3]

The American coastline stretches from Cabo San Roque in the North-East of Brazil to Cape Horn in the Archipelago of Tierra del Fuego. It extends for 9 000km, of which 4 179km belong to Brazil, 330km to Uruguay and 4 500 to Argentina. The American coastline is well-endowed with good natural harbours, particularly in the northern part which includes Brazil and Uruguay. These include Recife, Salvador, Rio de Janeiro, Paranaguá, Santos, Porto Alegre and Río Grande.[4]

The Antarctic coastline extends from the Antarctic Peninsula to the Land of Maud (or Queen Maud) facing Cape Town. This is one of the most inaccessible coastlines in the world, particularly from the Wedell Sea side. Given the fact that the area south of the Southern Ocean and the Antarctic constitute a separate geo-strategic subsystem, the 60^0S latitude is regarded as the southern limit of the South Atlantic region.[5] The South Atlantic region can be accessed from three fronts, namely, from the North Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific Ocean.[6] It is this inter-connectedness which, among others, necessitated the creation of a security architecture which embraced all the Americas.

3.   **THE INTER-AMERICAN SECURITY SYSTEM**

The immediate post-World War II environment was characterised by the dominance of the 'balance of power' notion of the international political system and the concomitant strategic positioning of military forces. This saw the seeds of the subsequent Cold War blossoming beyond the areas of influence of the arch-rivals, namely, the US and the former Soviet Union. From the Soviet Union's perspective, a strong foothold had already been established in the South Atlantic region. With the creation of the South American Secretariat of the Comintern in 1928, Communist parties were flourishing in the region. Countries such as Chile, Colombia and El Salvador had strong communist parties. However, the Soviet Union realised that there was an increasing threat of renewed attacks from Nazi Germany against it, and that it needed to open negotiations with the US and the UK. In order to be able to deal with Adolf Hitler in a credible manner, all the international resources had to be focused on defence. Consequently, Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, dissolved the Comintern in 1943, just before the end of WW II in order to re-position the Soviet Union on a sound strategic footing with Roosevelt and Churchill from the US and the UK respectively.[7]

From the US's conceptualisation of her southern neighbours, Latin America was perceived as a single entity with which it had to create a relationship of dependency in virtually all spheres, especially politically, economically and militarily. But the most prominent of these spheres was the military one. Thus, the US proposed during the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Continental Peace and Security, held in Mexico City, that there should be a comprehensive security system for the whole Western Hemisphere. The primary aim of such a system would be to prevent and repel threats and acts of aggression against any of the

countries of the Americas. Consequently, the <u>Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance</u> – popularly known as the <u>Rio Treaty</u> – was signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 2 September 1947 and entered into force on 3 December 1948.[8]

As Table 24 indicates, all the Mercosur countries, including the associate members, were the original signatories of the <u>Rio Treaty</u>. However, the ratification and accession process was done in a chequered manner. With the exception of the US which ratified the treaty only three months after it was opened for signature (12 December 1947), the other Mercosur countries delayed by at least a year. These could be attributed to many factors, including that the US was the driving force behind the conclusion of the treaty in order to thwart Soviet penetration of the region, and that countries such as Argentina and Brazil were still experiencing simmering tensions in the internal political sphere.

Table 24:   SIGNATURE AND RATIFICATION OF RIO TREATY BY SELECTED COUNTRIES

Country	Signature	Ratification
Argentina	2 September 1947	19 July 1950
Bolivia	2 September 1947	18 July 1950
Brazil	2 September 1947	5 March 1950
Chile	2 September 1947	28 January 1948
Paraguay	2 September 1947	7 July 1948
United States of America	2 September 1947	12 December 1947
Uruguay	2 September 1947	7 September 1948

Source: United Nations Information Service. United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS).
                 www.untreaty.un.org

The <u>Rio Treaty</u> is essentially a hemispheric-wide mutual defence pact. It was largely based on an asymmetrical relationship between the US and other states. The *causus foederis* (or the hair-trigger clause) of the pact is found in Article 3 which states that "[t]he High Contracting Parties agree that *an armed attack by any State against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States* and, consequently, each one of the said Contracting Parties undertakes to assist in meeting the attack in the exercise of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations."[9] [own emphasis added] It is notable that the <u>Rio Treaty</u> was concluded at the time when the bipolar international system led by the US and the former Soviet Union was

beginning to take shape but had not reached the intensity and sophistication of the late fifties and early sixties.

Through the Rio Treaty the US succeeded in ensuring that the whole of the Western Hemisphere fell under its strategic military umbrella and that any possible penetration (overtly or covertly) by the Soviet Union would be rendered impractical. In line with the asymmetry of the defence pact, the US built in a clause that would enable it to unilaterally take action if there was a perceived or real threat to security of the Western Hemisphere. Article 3(2) of the Treaty states that "[o]n the request of the State or States directly attacked and until the decision of the Organ of Consultation of the Inter-American System each one of the Contracting Parties may determine the immediate measures which it may individually take in fulfilment of the obligation contained in [Article 2] and in accordance with the principle of continental solidarity." Both of these articles became useful during the Cuban crisis of 1962 when the former USSR attempted to position missiles in Cuba. In addition to the UN Charter and other relevant resolutions, the US invoked Article 6 of the Rio Treaty in order to gain support among the American states to thwart Soviet penetration of the Western Hemisphere. Article 6 states that:

> If the inviolability or the integrity of the territory or the sovereignty or political independence of any American State should be affected by an aggression which is not an armed attack or by an extra-continental or intra-continental conflict, or by any other fact or situation might endanger the peace of America, the Organ of Consultation shall meet immediately in order to agree on the measures which must be taken in case of aggression to assist the victim of the aggression or, in any case, the measures which should be taken for the common defense and for the maintenance of peace and security of the Continent.[10]

However, the Rio Treaty remained an essentially military response to a greater strategic challenge posed by the Soviet Union. It was against this background that subsequent to the conclusion of the treaty, the Organisation of American States (OAS) Charter was signed on 30 April 1948 in Bogota, Colombia, which enabled the US to entrench its dominance. The OAS Charter stipulates in Article 2 that its purposes are, amongst others,

- To strengthen the peace and security of the continent;

- to prevent possible causes of difficulties and to ensure the pacific settlement of disputes that may arise among the Member States; and

- to provide common action on the part of those States in the event of aggression.[11]

Thus, the <u>Rio Treaty</u> and the <u>OAS Charter</u> were mutually complementary and therefore became major instruments for engaging other countries across the Atlantic Ocean.

With the demise of the former Soviet Union, there has been a drastic change in the approach and possibly in the nature and intensity, of the commitments of the <u>Rio Treaty</u>. However, there have been a series of confidence-building measures (CBMs) with a view to ensuring hemispheric security. In 1991, the OAS General Assembly adopted a resolution in terms of which a set of CBMs were to be developed.[12] In 1993, the General Assembly adopted another resolution which entrusted the Assembly with the task of convening experts on CBMs.[13] The experts' meeting eventually took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in March 1994. The process of ensuring broad regional security in the Western Hemisphere (longitudinal) was concurrently being complemented, if not rivalled, by another one that sought to create hemispheric security in the Southern Hemisphere (latitudinal).

4.   SOUTHERN CROSS ALLIANCE

The geographic location of South Africa has always been recognised as strategic from economic and military points of view. Being flanked by the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and also having powerful maritime nations on both sides such as Argentina and Brazil in the west and Australia in the east, South Africa found it prudent and crucial to highlight the geo-strategic importance of the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope. To this effect, South Africa argued that since the formal boundary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was the Tropic of Cancer, there was a strategic vacuum in the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. There was also a strong perception that the West's maritime traffic would require a well-developed land base from which to operate during crisis situations. In this respect, South Africa could play an important role due to her geo-strategic location. Based on these factors, South Africa, which lies between the 5th and 45th latitudes, shared hemispheric interests and therefore formed a "natural geographic-military-strategic belt" known as the "Southern Cross Belt".[14]

Furthermore, the threat of communist infiltration was also perceived as posing a serious danger to the countries in the Southern Hemisphere. There was a general understanding by the West of the Soviet Union's maritime-strategic designs. These designs were known to include the following: the development of a global maritime capability; the establishment of a maritime presence of a military as well as non-military nature in distant areas; the procurement of supporting base facilities that could be used to deny or undermine Western maritime presence; the diplomatic use of the Soviet Navy in support of Soviet expansionism and the extension of its influence especially in Africa; and lastly, the ability to ensure successful interdiction of Western shipping.[15] From this perspective, the military significance of South Africa's Simonstown Naval Base both as a possible target of the Soviet Navy and its potential use for interdiction of shipping, was highlighted. Given this geo-strategic relevance and being vehemently anti-communist in orientation, South Africa felt it had a valid case for being politically sheltered by the West.

By the mid-1970s, the US-led anti-communist alliance-formation process was almost complete. The US had already signed the Rio Treaty which covered the Western Hemisphere. The US had also signed the ANZUS Treaty, which involved Australia, New Zealand and the US, and the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) had also been formed. There was no similar organisation in southern Africa, which, as South Africa argued, left a strategic gap that might be filled by Soviet forces. In most cases, the initiative to establish such regional military groupings was taken by significant regional powers with the help of the US. Similarly therefore, South Africa was justified to call for the creation of a Southern Cross Alliance. The alliance would 'seal' the open flank in the West's defence system. It would be responsible for conducting appropriate political and military operations in order to thwart any possible incursion by the Soviet bloc. According to some analysts, there was already an increasing Soviet presence in the South Atlantic through front organisations (liberation movements) and the OAU, which was also perceived to be opposed to white governments in southern Africa.[16]

The Cape sea route was particularly well-suited for interdicting any maritime traffic that was bound for either East or West. Through the creation of the southern alliance, a credible maritime force, comprising of such powers as Argentina, Australia and Brazil and with appropriate land bases in South Africa, could be grouped together. However, without a

properly co-ordinated link with the West's nuclear capability, the strategy would be bound to fail because its deterrence value would be diminished. Thus, it was important that the US's nuclear shield would have to be extended southwards to cover the Southern Hemisphere as well.[17]   However, South Africa's ego-perceptions of the country's maritime-strategic significance did not resonate well with her potential Western partners, thus resulting in measured responses from the West. As the idea of a hemisphere-wide military alliance fizzled out, it became necessary to realign the strategic focus towards the Western front, namely, the South Atlantic region.

5.   **THE SOUTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION**

The failure of South Africa to successfully convince the Western nations, especially the US, to support the formation of a latitudinal hemisphere-wide defence organisation, necessitated a re-look at other strategic options. It became apparent to the South African military strategists that a hemispheric defence pact was an over-ambitious enterprise. The best alternative was to concentrate on the South Atlantic region where there was a possibility of tacit and measured support. For the US, such a move would be more viable if it would also include some signatories to the Rio Treaty. It is noteworthy that the idea of forming a South Atlantic defence organisation was not new. When General Castello Branco became the President of Brazil after the military take-over in 1964, he discussed the question of defending the route around the Cape with Prime Minister Salazar of Portugal. Both countries (Brazil and Portugal) were already economically and politically bound by the 1953 Luso-Brazilian Treaty of Friendship and Consultation.[18] However, the idea never enjoyed popular support among the immediate neighbours as it included the involvement of South Africa. Thus, it receded without any concrete action.

The idea of a South Atlantic defence organisation was revived in 1977 when a commander of the Uruguayan Navy proposed that a military pact involving all the countries in the South Atlantic region should be concluded. An organisation to be known as the South Atlantic Treaty Organisation (SATO) would be modelled along the lines of NATO. The proposal purported that the pact would be able to thwart Soviet Union military aggression against any state in the region. It was discussed at length during the eighth meeting of the Foreign Ministers of River Plate basin countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay). Unlike in the mid-1960s, the new government of Brazil, a crucial regional hegemon, was

vehemently opposed to the proposition.[19]   The Brazilians believed that the formation of SATO would trigger an arms race in the region and that it could not be formed without co-operation from the Western powers, especially the US. In addition to being bound by the provisions of the Rio Treaty and the OAS Charter, the South American countries would not have sufficient resources to face up to the challenge of confronting the Soviet Union.[20]

Argentina and South Africa usurped the SATO idea and became its principal advocates. Both countries argued that the formation of SATO would also help ensure safe passage and secure trade routes around the Cape of Good Hope. For South Africa, the SATO idea presented an ideal opportunity to obtain allies for South Africa and therefore partial nullification of the country's international *pariah* status.   According to the South African ambassador to Argentina at the time, SATO would facilitate "joint defence of Christian and democratic principles" against international communism.[21] While Argentina was in favour of the SATO idea, reservations were expressed about participating in a military alliance that included Chile before the dispute over the Beagle Channel had been resolved.[22]   Furthermore, it was increasingly becoming unpalatable and imprudent to be seen by the international community as a South African ally.[23] This was even more so when some of the South American states started democratising.

Argentina, which had always been vacillating in its alliance-formation strategy from being close to the Third World and Western countries, was shocked to be informed that the UK, the US and South Africa were contemplating to establish a military base on the Falklands/Malvinas islands. Argentine Foreign Minister, Nicanor Costa Méndez, expressed concern over the proposal during the meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Movement, in Havana, Cuba. South Africa vehemently denied the allegations and countered by accusing Argentina of using 'transitory strategic digressions' in her diplomacy.[24]   However, the outbreak of the Falklands/Malvinas War (also known as the South Atlantic War) in 1982 interrupted the debate on the formation of a SATO. The accusations against South Africa and the subsequent outbreak of the war over the Falklands/Malvinas islands, negatively affected South Africa's relations with Argentina and Brazil, and also disrupted the momentum of South Africa's thrust to counter international isolation. Ironically, there were allegations, as stated previously, that South Africa gave military support to Argentina during that war. However, it is irrefutably true that South Africa denied the UK permission to use Simon's Town as a halfway station for logistic purposes during the war. At the time of the outbreak of

the South Atlantic War, South Africa was already bound by a ten-year old military pact which also involved Argentina, Brazil, Israel, Paraguay and Taiwan.[25] It is not clear what the impelling reasons for concluding such a pact were, nor is there an indication of the extent of its obligations towards member states. But the immediate post-South Atlantic War period saw South Africa being ostracised or mildly isolated by other pact members. This change in attitude towards South Africa could not be explained by the changes in the internal dynamics of the pact countries, because all of them were still either *pariah* states or under military rule. It is possible that external pressure from potential allies was exerted on the pact countries to downgrade interaction with South Africa.

South Africa therefore decided to exert more pressure on Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru to pursue the idea of SATO, and also to induce them into adopting more South Africa-friendly policies. However, being a member of the Andean Group, Peru was pressurised into severing ties with South Africa. At that stage, that is the early 1980s, South Africa entered into a joint partnership with the UK in constructing a giant irrigation project in Peru. It was this joint project which became a determining factor in Peruvian-South Africa relations. Unlike Peru, Bolivia was a different case as it was of no immediate strategic value to South Africa, except for providing alternative shipping routes and ports in case there were problems with the Peruvian routes. Furthermore, South Africa had very strong relations with Chile, which would also provide alternative port facilities. It was only Paraguay that really had become excessively dependent on South Africa. This followed the signing of four agreements on mutual co-operation with Paraguay, which were maintained, despite the subsequent introduction of democracy in Paraguay.[26]

On a broader scale, some South American countries had global aspirations that contradicted their national realities. One of the dilemmas in this regard was to follow the Third World agenda without alienating themselves from the rich North. Was it to be neutrality or non-alignment as the NAM was proposing? A vexing question, which remained a challenge for the developing countries of the South, was how they could ensure security, *albeit* limited, on a regional basis without aligning themselves with either of the superpowers. Alignment with either the US or Soviet Union had as many advantages for the country or region concerned as it had disadvantages. Nasser, for instance, once argued that "[a]n independent policy based on non-alignment and positive neutralism will make of our countries a great force permitting an independent say."[27] The developing countries believed that non-alignment would not only

"be sufficient to reduce world tension and conflict, and to enhance world peace, cooperation, and stability", but was also "essential in establishing cooperative arrangements among developing nations and reducing the chances for regional animosity."[28] However, geographic proximity to the superpowers often left the neighbouring countries with little or no choice when deciding on alignment.

The SATO idea was a potential solution to the security dilemma of the South Atlantic region but it soon receded as well. It could be argued that while South Africa remained a militarily strong state that would be capable of carrying out trans-oceanic operations in co-operation with other SATO states, the country politically presented a weak link that caused division among potential alliance partners. This observation is largely based on the fact that the SATO idea was deemed logically defensible and therefore it intermittently continued to re-emerge.

Thus, a plethora of factors militated against the realisation of a regional defence organisation (to be known as SATO). These included the following: firstly, the geographic scope of the area and sheer distances separating Southern African and South American sub-regions. Secondly, the superimposition of cultural differences on geographic factors aggravated difficulties associated with social, political and economic exchanges. Thirdly, there were limited maritime capabilities of the South Atlantic littoral states, especially from the African side, with the exception of Nigeria and South Africa, which had relatively superior sea-going naval capabilities. Lastly, there was the reluctance of the littoral states to relinquish or subject self-centred national interests for the benefit of the South Atlantic region.[29] This situation allowed for other strategic avenues to be explored to ensure co-operative trans-Atlantic relations in the Southern Cone.

6.   **ZONE OF PEACE AND CO-OPERATION IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC (ZPCSA)**

As it increasingly became evident that the SATO idea was not viable and therefore not likely to materialise in its original form, the newly democratising countries on the western South Atlantic region, particularly Brazil, realised that an alternative had to be found. This became even more urgent as the South Atlantic remained vulnerable to numerous security threats - ranging from sea piracy to possible infiltration by the Soviet Union as the latter's fishing conflict with Argentina in 1978 signalled. Furthermore, there was a conscious effort to

remove the East-West conflict from the South Atlantic region by marginalising British military presence in the southern islands. As already indicated, the need for a regional defence organisation was indisputable, but the composition and mechanisms of such an organisation necessitated accommodating South Africa - a proposition that could prove politically expensive to entertain.[30]

6.1   The ZPCSA AS A NEW ALTERNATIVE

The late 1970s and early 1980s were crucial periods for the South Atlantic region. Internal or sub-regional challenges relating to disputed borders (for example, Chile and Argentina); regional hegemonic rivalry (Argentina and Brazil); military rule (most of Latin American and some African countries); and apartheid in South Africa, plagued countries bordering on the South Atlantic. On the African side of the South Atlantic Ocean, South Africa was militarily involved in both South West Africa (now Namibia) and Angola. As already indicated, both superpowers were actively involved in Africa, especially, in Angola. South Africa's foreign policy alignment was inclined towards the West but her internal political situation was a matter of great concern to the UN member states. The UN sought to take strong action against South Africa, and, to this effect, various resolutions were adopted. However, some key countries occasionally abstained from voting for such resolutions. These countries included the UK, the US and France – South Africa's significant trading partners without whose support, no decision could have the desired effect.[31]

On the Latin American side, it was only after the partial resolution of the Chile-Argentina border dispute in the late seventies, and the realisation by Argentina and Brazil (starting with the signing of the Tripartite Agreement – involving the two countries and Paraguay – on 19 October 1979) that rivalry between them was not benefiting either of them, that relatively stable interstate relations were restored on the western shores of the South Atlantic Ocean. According to some analysts, this signalled the beginning of Argentina's reluctant acceptance of Brazil's hegemony in the region.[32]

However, the outbreak of the war over the Falklands/Malvinas islands in 1982 focussed attention on the South Atlantic region. The possibility of escalation involving the two superpowers increased. The aftermath of the South Atlantic War, particularly from the British government's side, demonstrated beyond doubt the strategic importance of the South Atlantic

region to the UK in its dual capacity as a claimant of the Falklands/Malvinas islands[33] and a member of NATO. During the process which De Hoyos calls the "Gilbratization[34] of the [Falklands] islands", and captured in what Margareth Thatcher called "Fortress Falklands", the UK spent over three billion pounds on fortifying the islands and stationing more than 3 800 professional soldiers on them.[35] The strategic value of these islands to NATO was perceived to be securing US and West European access to Antarctica, the Drake Passage and the South Atlantic sea lanes.[36] Some of NATO's, but specifically the US's, large aircraft carriers could find it difficult to pass through the Panama Canal.[37] Also noteworthy, is the fact that the UK maintained (and still maintains) a significant presence in the South Atlantic region through its islands – Ascension, St. Helena, Tristan da Cunha, Gough and South Georgia.

During the mid-1980s, Brazil proposed the formation of the ZPCSA as a countervailing idea to SATO. Being a major regional power in South America, Brazil succeeded in mustering adequate support among the littoral states of the South Atlantic Ocean, excepting for South Africa and Namibia where the former was isolated and the latter still governed by the former. Brazil's erstwhile arch-rivals – Argentina and Chile – supported the proposal. The watershed in trans-Atlantic relations in the Southern Cone came when the UN General Assembly passed Resolution A/RES/41/11 on 27 October 1986 during its 50th plenary meeting.

This resolution declared the Atlantic Ocean, in the region situated between Africa and South America, a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic. Article 2 of the resolution called upon "all States of the zone of the South Atlantic to promote further regional co-operation, inter alia, for social and economic development, the protection of the environment, the conservation of living resources and the peace and security of the whole region". In Article 3, it further called upon "all States of all other regions, in particular the militarily significant States, scrupulously to respect the region of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation, especially through the reduction and eventual elimination of their military presence there, the non-introduction of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction and the non-extension into the region of rivalries and conflicts that are foreign to it." It is noteworthy that in voting for the resolution, 124 states voted in favour, eight abstained (all from the industrialised countries) and only one – the US – voted against it.[38] This is quite understandable as the establishment of the ZPCSA essentially implied the total 'demilitarisation', and therefore 'denuclearisation', of the South Atlantic region. Lastly, in

Article 5, the resolution reaffirmed that "the elimination of apartheid and the attainment of self-determination and independence by the people of Namibia, as well as the cessation of all acts of aggression and subversion against States in the zone, are essential for peace and security in the South Atlantic region, and urges the implementation of all United Nations resolutions pertaining to colonialism, racism and apartheid."[39]

Thus, Resolution A/RES/41/11 covered four major areas that had far-reaching consequences for the South Atlantic region, namely, socio-economic development; the environment; peace and security; and lastly, emancipation of South Africa and its colonial territories. While these areas are mutually reinforcing and complementary, a brief discussion of the peace and security focus is particularly relevant for this section. In previous chapters it was noted that the modern understanding of security is no longer limited to the military sphere, but incorporates other aspects such as socio-economic development and the environment. However, it is undeniably true that the existence of credible and adequate military capabilities help ensure that other endeavours such as development and environmental conservation succeed.

The successful implementation of these focus areas would require that littoral states and extra-regional powers complied with the provisions of the resolution. Therefore, specific programmes would have to be devised and implemented by the relevant parties, for example restricting military activity in the zone area. To this effect, UN General Assembly Resolution 42/16 of 10 November 1987 urged the international community to assist the region in the implementation of such programmes.[40] Similar calls have been made to the ZPCSA member states since the ZPCSA's first meeting that was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 25-29 July 1988; then in Abuja, Nigeria (25-29 June 1990); and lastly in Brasilia, Brazil (21-22 September 1994).[41] Beside the Ministerial meeting of the ZPCSA that was held at the UN Headquarters on 5 October 1993,[42] the fourth ZPCSA meeting held in South Africa, in April 1996, was unique in many ways. Held under the theme "Bridging the South Atlantic", the 1996 ZPCSA meeting not only welcomed South Africa into the South Atlantic littoral states, but also emphasised the strategic importance of the region to both sides of the South Atlantic. Various organisations pledged their support for the ZPCSA activities. For instance, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) indicated that "it could assist the zone to address the degradation of the marine environment resulting from sea-based activities and enhance their capacity to prevent and mitigate the impact of marine pollution, with particular emphasis

on the implementation of internationally agreed standards for the protection of the marine environment."[43]   The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) stated that with its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, it could contribute to the implementation of UN resolutions, through "the encouragement, promotion and support of regional co-operation among the countries of the region in the study and observations of the South Atlantic."[44]   However, it was the question of control of nuclear weapons prevalence on the South Atlantic that was to prove contentious for the extra-regional nuclear powers.

6.2   DENUCLEARISATION

The formation of the ZPCSA and its denuclearisation clause was not the first initiative to rid the whole of South America and the South Atlantic region of weapons of mass destruction. The global impact of the emerging South Atlantic security architecture became conspicuous when, at the height of the Cold War, Brazil proposed in 1961 that the whole of Latin America should become nuclear-free. The consequences of the proposal were going to be far-reaching, not only because of the geographic extent that it would cover but also because it would prove restrictive for the US in its containment strategy against the Soviet Union. The Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 revitalised and gave impetus to the Brazilian idea, culminating in the joint declaration by the Presidents of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico, which expressed the desire to conclude the treaty declaring South America a nuclear-free zone. The military take-over in Brazil in 1964 proved to be a temporary setback but Mexico took the lead and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean was signed in Tlatelolco, Mexico – hence the Treaty of Tlatelolco – on 14 February 1967. When the UN gave its support to the treaty, it entered into force for a very limited number of states on 22 April 1968.[45]

In terms of Articles 1 and 4 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the whole of Latin America and its "territorial sea, air space and other space over which the State exercises sovereignty" became the zone within which "the testing, use, manufacture, production or acquisition by any means whatsoever of any nuclear weapons, by the Parties themselves, directly or indirectly, on behalf of anyone else or in any other way" is prohibited.[46] Taking the interests of the US into consideration, the treaty did not prohibit the transport of nuclear weapons in the zone, nor the use of nuclear power in general. With Cuba refusing to sign the treaty, both Argentina and

Chile conditionally signed and ratified it with a proviso that it would only apply to them when all the other relevant states had done so as well. Failing to secure the co-operation of Cuba, the military governments of Argentina and Brazil went ahead with their nuclear weapons programme, thus rendering the whole treaty a dubious achievement.[47]

However, the adoption of Resolution A/RES/41/11 of 27 October 1986 by the UN General Assembly, gave impetus to the notion of total denuclearisation of the South Atlantic region. It also became evident that some form of co-ordination and harmonisation had to be achieved between the ZPCSA and the signatories to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. During the twelfth regular session of the Council of the Agency for the Treaty of Tlatelolco, it was decided that a viable formula would have to be devised in order to establish an appropriate mechanism for co-operation between the two nuclear weapons-free zones.[48] The Treaty of Tlatelolco came into force in 1992 for twenty-four states in the region when Saint Vincent and the Grenadines signed it.[49]

Unlike the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which had two additional Protocols to provide for states falling outside the Western Hemisphere, the ZPCSA relies on Resolutions 49/26 of 22 December 1994 and 49/84 of 11 January 1995 of the UN General Assembly in requesting extra-regional states to comply with the nuclear-free status of the Zone. Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which was later signed and ratified by The Netherlands and the UK but rejected by France and the US, urges the signatories "to undertake to apply the status of denuclearization in respect of warlike purposes as defined in Articles 1, 3, 5 and 13 of the Treaty [of Tlatelolco] in territories for which, *de jure* or *de facto*, they are internationally responsible and which lie within the limits of the geographical zone established in that Treaty."[50] Protocol II obliged the signatories from the nuclear states to respect the non-nuclear status of Latin America and to "undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Contracting Parties" of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.[51] This Protocol was signed by almost all known nuclear powers (People's Republic of China, France, the UK and the US), except the former Soviet Union. However, Russia later signed it after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.[52] Cuba only signed the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 25 March 1995 but has still not ratified it. By 1995, the amended Treaty of Tlatelolco was already fully in force for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Suriname and Uruguay — the majority of the Mercosur countries.[53]

In Resolution 49/26 of 22 December 1994, the UN General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the decisions, particularly the Declaration on Denuclearisation, adopted by the ZPCSA member states during their third meeting in Brazil on 21 and 22 September 1994.[54] The subsequent UN resolutions, notably, Resolution 49/84 of 11 January 1995, once again commended the Declaration on Denuclearisation as it contributed to the UN's efforts at "disarmament [and ensuring] effective international control [of] nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction with a view to strengthening international peace and security."[55] Resolution 49/84 further recognises and promotes international co-operation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It concludes by calling upon "all states to co-operate fully for the achievement of the objective to turn the region of the South Atlantic into a nuclear-weapon-free zone." In South Africa, the issue of peaceful use of nuclear energy and the operationalisation of the agreements to that effect on the whole African continent, has pre-occupied officials particularly since 1993 when the Nuclear Energy Act of 1993 and the Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 1993 were passed.[56]

The declaration of the ZPCSA was a welcome addition to other zones declared free of nuclear weapons. The other nuclear-free zones are the Treaty of South Pacific Zone of Peace (also known as Treaty of Rarotonga, signed on 6 August 1985); the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty – also known as the Pelindaba Treaty – signed in Cairo, Egypt, on 11 April 1996; and the South East Asian Zone of Peace (Treaty of Bangkok, signed on 15 December 1995). These treaties, together with the Antarctic Treaty (signed on 1 December 1959), collectively contribute towards rendering the Southern Hemisphere and more than 50 per cent of the globe free of nuclear weapons. It is notable that, with the exception of the Pelindaba and Bangkok Treaties, all other zones of peace treaties were negotiated during the height of the Cold War. Thus, the process of ratifying these treaties seems to have been much easier in the post-Cold War era than was the case before.

Furthermore, treaties such as the Limited/Partial Test Ban Treaty (8 August 1963); the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1 July 1968); the Seabed Treaty (11 February 1971); and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (10 September 1996) contribute to the objectives of both non-proliferation and disarmament of nuclear weapons. Thus, there is an emphasis on non-possession, non-deployment and non-use of nuclear weapons. Most of the ZPCSA countries have signed and ratified most of these treaties. Of all the ZPCSA member states, only Brazil, Argentina and South Africa have ratified the Comprehensive

Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) – ratified respectively on 24 July 1998, 4 December 1998 and 30 March 1999, while Cameroon, The Gambia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone had still not yet signed it by the end of 2001. The significance of the ratification of the CTBT stems from the capability of Argentina and Brazil to detect any nuclear explosions. For instance, by 1998, of the 321 monitoring stations and 16 laboratories available world-wide to detect nuclear explosions, Argentina had eight stations, Brazil six and each had one laboratory.[57]

Concerning the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), all the ZPCSA countries have signed it.[58] For many years, Argentina, together with countries such as Pakistan and India, was diametrically opposed to the NPT due to the latter's discriminatory nature. Argentina argued that the NPT entrenched the monopoly of nuclear weapons in favour of the known nuclear states of the North. However, Argentina acceded to the NPT on 10 February 1995.[59] The Limited Test Ban Treaty has not yet been signed by Angola, Congo (Brazzaville), Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Namibia, Sao Tomé e Principe and Uruguay. The Seabed Treaty still needs to be signed by Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Gabon, Namibia and Nigeria.[60] It is also noteworthy that South Africa was the first country in the world "that had fully developed, and then voluntarily dismantled her military nuclear capability."[61] This is reflected as part of South Africa's efforts to rid the continent of indiscriminate and excessively harmful weapons, including landmines.

As much as a need was identified for co-operation and co-ordination between the ZPCSA countries and the signatories of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, similarly, an appropriate mechanism will have to be devised to synchronise the undertakings of the Pelindaba Treaty with those of the ZPCSA. However, one major weakness of the two Treaties (Tlatelolco and Pelindaba), as is the case with other zones of peace, is that they cover land and territorial seas, but do not cover the high seas.[62] This leaves a strategic vacuum which could be exploited by unscrupulous elements such as sea pirates, illicit traffickers of drugs, and nuclear and radioactive materials, who normally have extensive resources to pose a credible challenge to the navies of most littoral states in the South Atlantic region. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) there is a dramatic increase in incidents of illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials, especially from the territories that constituted the former Soviet Union. The IAEA maintains an extensive database to try and keep track of illicit trafficking in weapons-grade nuclear and radioactive materials. As of 31 March 2001, the

IAEA recorded more than 550 incidents of illicit trafficking in these materials with the peak being between 1993 and 1994.[63]

Given these weaknesses and threats, there have been suggestions that the treaties that declare nuclear-free zones should be consolidated into a single document that declares the whole Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas to be nuclear-free. However, numerous factors militate against such a prospect.[64] Among these are the lack of total contiguity among the various zones and the complexity of the negotiation process. For instance, from the four nuclear-free zones (Tlatelolco, ZPCSA, Pelindaba, Rarotonga and Bangkok, excluding Antarctica, there are 108 countries plus the five nuclear weapons states, but only less than half, namely 47, are situated in the Southern Hemisphere. The challenge becomes even more acute for South Africa which is a party to most of these regional arrangements, namely the ZPCSA and the Pelindaba Treaty.

6.3   SOUTH AFRICA AND THE ZPCSA

When South Africa and Namibia joined the ZPCSA, with the former subsequently assuming the chair in 1996, the ZPCSA gained momentum in consolidating peace and security in the Atlantic region. The value of the ZPCSA to its member states, in general and to South Africa, in particular, varies significantly. This is largely determined by factors such as the length of the coastline (for instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC – compared with South Africa); maritime traffic on the immediate coastline; and the dependence on, and the capacity to, optimally utilise marine resources.

From the South African perspective, both economic and strategic considerations justify military involvement in the ZPCSA region. The vulnerability of South Africa's western shores to drug trafficking and small arms proliferation, and also the need to protect fishing resources, the environment, communication sea lanes and trade routes on the Atlantic, remain among the main concerns for the country. The former South African Deputy Minister of Defence, Ronnie Kasrils, once observed that "[t]hose thousands of kilometres of open sea and coastline beckon the gunrunners, the drug smugglers, the international mafia, the terrorists and the pirates of all nationalities, who are fast becoming the greatest security threat of our time."[65] However, it is economic considerations which increase South Africa's justification for military involvement in the region (see Table 25).

The fishing industry alone, which directly employs some 30 000 people, contributes about R2 billion to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and operates about 3 000 vessels out of 13 harbours. Besides, about 85 per cent of South Africa's trade (by value) and 55 per cent of the country's oil imports are conducted by sea.[66] The other ZPCSA member states on the African side of the Atlantic Ocean with significant fish catches, include Benin, Cameroon, the DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone.[67]

Table 25:   SOUTH AFRICA'S TRADE WITH THE ZPCSA MEMBERS, 1999

SUB-REGION	COUNTRY	IMPORTS (Rm)	EXPORTS (Rm)
ECOWAS	Benin	0.005	84.5
	Cape Verde	0.7	20.9
	Côte d'Ivoire	106.0	239.3
	Gambia	0.6	10.5
	Ghana	25.4	560.4
	Guinea	0.6	62.9
	Guinea-Bissau	0.5	0.8
	Liberia	2.1	11.6
	Nigeria	1 236.1	514.0
	Senegal	3.5	72.9
	Sierra Leone	7.9	15.7
	Togo	63.5	39.7
	SUBTOTAL	*1 446.905*	*1 633.20*
MERCOSUR	Argentina	1 121.4	457.7
	Brazil	1 376.1	947.5
	Uruguay	35.4	51.4
	SUBTOTAL	*2 532.90*	*1 456.60*
SADC	Angola	196.8	1 280.0
	DRC	18.0	807.4
	Namibia	3.8	0.001
	SUBTOTAL	*218.6*	*2 087.401*
UDEAC/CEMAC[68]	Cameroon	18.9	70.0
	Congo	19.0	115.9
	Equatorial Guinea	3.8	86.0
	Gabon	25.0	87.6
	São Tomé e Principe	0.01	6.2
	SUBTOTAL	*66.71*	*365.7*
GRAND TOTAL		*4 265.115*	*5 542.901*

Source: Adapted from *South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA). 2000. **The South African Yearbook of International Affairs, 2000/2001**. Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs.*

The main destinations for the bulk of South Africa's exports (by value) within the South Atlantic region, are Mercosur and SADC, while ECOWAS and Mercosur have a significant import share from South Africa (Table 25). Even though South Africa enjoys a marginally favourable trade balance in terms of the ZPCSA member states, South Africa's total exports to these states constitute about 12 per cent and 41 per cent of exports to the EU and NAFTA respectively. Thus South Africa's security interests in the South Atlantic also include ensuring safe and unhindered passage to the northern markets. The ZPCSA member states also benefit from the Cape Sea route which remains important for global maritime commercial activities, especially oil transfers – with between 30 and 50 oil tankers sailing around the Cape every month.[69]

6.4   THE NAVAL POTENTIAL OF THE ZPCSA

Brazil and South Africa individually and collectively wield enormous influence both within their respective regions and the ZPCSA as a whole. This was emphasised by Luiz Felipe Lampreia, a former Brazilian Foreign Minister, during his visit to South Africa in 1995. During his interview with the Unisa Centre for Latin American Studies in 1995, Lampreia stated that "dialogue regarding integration, commercial expansion and economic development will revolve around the axis formed by Brazil and South Africa within their respective regions." On the geo-political and strategic significance of the ZPCSA, Lampreia observed that the South Atlantic region must be taken care of, "not only as the maritime passage of a significant part of the world navigation (transportation of oil, important goods, etc.) but also as a zone of particular wealth in terms of maritime resources."[70] Thus, the value of trans-Atlantic co-operation in the Southern Cone had to be viewed across the whole spectrum of security, including economic security.

As Table 26 indicates, there are notable differences between the various sub-regional groups constituting the ZPCSA region in terms of the size of the economy, population and defence expenditures. While the largest number of countries are in the ECOWAS sub-region, followed by UDEAC/CEMAC, then SADC and lastly Mercosur, in terms of economic size and defence expenditure, the reverse order applies – with Mercosur being the largest and ECOWAS the smallest. South Africa's size in terms of GDP and defence budget is more than the combined sizes for ECOWAS, other ZPCSA members from SADC and the UDEAC/CEMAC states. This explains the importance of South Africa within the ZPCSA

with regard to making substantial contributions from the African side of the South Atlantic Ocean.

Table 26:   ZPCSA COUNTRIES' GDP, DEFENCE BUDGETS AND POPULATIONS

SUB-REGION	COUNTRY	GDP 1999 (US$Bn)	DEFENCE BUDGET, 2000, (US$m)	POPULATION, 2001, (million)
ECOWAS	Benin	2.4	37	6.3
	Cape Verde	0.3	8	0.5
	Côte d'Ivoire	13.1	134	17.1
	The Gambia	0.5	15	1.2
	Ghana	10.1	45	20
	Guinea	3.6	55	7.6
	Guinea-Bissau	0.3	3	1.2
	Liberia	0.5	15	3
	Nigeria	50	340	116
	Senegal	5.2	62	9.7
	Sierra Leone	0.7	9	4.5
	Togo	1.5	31	5
	SUBTOTAL	*88.2*	*754*	*192.1*
MERCOSUR	Argentina	283	3.8	37.3
	Brazil	600	9 900	164
	Uruguay	13.7	227	3.3
	SUBTOTAL	*896.7*	*10 130.8*	*204.6*
SADC	Angola	6.1	542	12.4
	DRC	5.3	400	49
	Namibia	2.7	96	1.9
	South Africa	128	1 900	40.3
	SUBTOTAL	*142.1*	*2 938*	*103.6*
UDEAC/CEMAC*	Cameroon	10.2	155	15.5
	Congo	2.2	73	3.1
	Equatorial Guinea	0.5	11	0.5
	Gabon	6.4	126	1.5
	São Tomé e Principe	N/a	N/a	N/a
	SUBTOTAL	*19.3*	*365*	*20.6*
GRAND TOTAL		*1 146.3*	*14 187.8*	*520.9*

Source: The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). 2000. ***The Military Balance, 2000/2001***. London: Oxford University Press.

'*' – These groupings have the same membership

'N/a' denotes 'data not available'

Due to the large mass of water binding the ZPCSA member states, it is their collective naval capacity that could be utilised effectively to the benefit of the South Atlantic region in terms of their security needs. Navies are generally categorised as follows:[71]

- *Global navies*. These navies, such as the US Navy, have a global reach and can operate simultaneously in different geographic theatres without any substantial loss of combat effectiveness.

- *Ocean-going navies.* Despite their ability to deploy in distant waters, ocean-going navies cannot engage enemy forces simultaneously in different geographic theatres of war without compromising their combat effectiveness. France and the UK are examples of this category.

- *Littoral navies*. Such navies can hardly operate outside their contiguous waters, that is, the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

- *Coastal navies*. These navies are mainly capable of safeguarding the coastline and cannot challenge any naval threat without the protection of the allies.

- *Constabulary navies*. Such navies are primarily designed to execute constabulary duties.[72]

Generally, factors that determine the size of a navy include the level of economic development, existence of naval threats, and size of defence budget. Arguably none of the ZPCSA navies can be categorised as 'ocean-going', but Brazil and South Africa do possess a littoral naval capability (Table 27). This is particularly important given the expected increase world-wide of populations living within 50km of the sea from 50 to 70 per cent by 2025. With the dramatic increase in populations, it can be envisaged that there will be a corresponding possibility of excessive human activity along the coast, thus increasing the need to patrol such coastlines. It is believed that about 93 per cent of sea-related crimes are committed within 12 nautical miles from the shores.[73] Currently, the patrol capacity of the Zone states is limited and unevenly spread (Table 27).

Table 27:   NAVAL PATROL CAPABILITIES (2000) AND MERCANTILE MARINE (1997/8) OF THE ZPCSA MEMBER STATES

Country	Navy		Mercantile Marine (1998)	
	Personnel	Patrol and Coastal Combatant Craft	Number of Vessels	Gross Tonnage
Angola	1 500	7	123	73 907
Argentina	17 200	15	501	498 700
Benin	100	1	6	9 00
Brazil	48 600	50	504	417 100
Cameroon	1 300	2	58	12 900
Cape Verde	50	-	38*	16 481*
Congo	800	3	20	3 800
Côte d'Ivoire	900	3	35	9 500
DRC *	900	6	20	12 900
Equatorial Guinea	120	-	2*	3 457*
Gabon	500	2	34*	32 178*
Gambia	70	-	6*	1 490*
Ghana	1 000	4	172*	113 528*
Guinea	400	2	30	11 200
Guinea-Bissau	350	3	23	6 079
Liberia	N/a	N/a-	1 717	60 492
Namibia	100	2	105	54 794
Nigeria	5 000	6	493	451 900
Sao Tomé e Principe	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Senegal	600	10	198	51 000
Sierra Leone	200	3	52	18 792
South Africa	5 190	9	192	383 700
Togo	200	2	6*	1 073*
Uruguay	5 500	10	89*	124 369*
TOTAL	**90 580**	**140**	**4 424**	**2 360 240**

'N/a' denotes *'data not available'*

* denotes *'data available only for 1997 in Jane's Fighting Ships, 1997-1998.'*

***Sources:*   *Adapted from* Maher, J. et al. (eds.) 2001. **The Europa World Year Book 2001, Vols. 1 & II.** London: Europa Publications; The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). 2000. **The Military Balance, 2000/2001**. London: Oxford University Press; Sharpe, R. (ed.) 1997. **Jane's Fighting Ships, 1997-1998**, **100**[th] **Edition**. Coulsdon: Jane's Information Group.

As Table 27 indicates, about 80 per cent of the ZPCSA's naval personnel comes from the countries on the western shores of the region (Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay), while about half of the remaining 20 per cent comes from the south-eastern quadrant of the region - coincidentally from the countries which also form part of SADC - Angola, the DRC, Namibia and South Africa. This dual membership, as is the case with the other countries north of the

DRC, provides a cushion for the SADC countries against trans-oceanic criminal activity, especially narco-trafficking.

The African members of the Zone seem to have a superior patrol craft capacity compared to their Latin American counterparts, which only have about 27 per cent of the total. The SADC countries in the Zone region retain only about 20 per cent (see Table 27). While this apparent numerical superiority in patrol craft of the African member states of the Zone is a positive indication that, at least coastal patrols and safety-and-rescue operations could be executed, it is not clear what the level of serviceability of these vessels is (in Nigeria, for instance, only a third of listed vessels were serviceable in 1998).[74] This stems from many factors, including the declining defence budgets both as a global trend and constraints imposed by the two Bretton Woods institutions (the International Monetary Fund – IMF – and World Bank); internal political instability; and a lack of suitable and well-maintained ports that could attract substantial commercial maritime traffic from abroad.[75]

With a 3 000 km-long coastline and an EEZ of about 4,3 million km^2, including the Prince Edward island group, South Africa has the greatest naval responsibility on the whole African continent. South Africa's EEZ is about twice that of India which is 2,2 million km^2.[76] As a general trend world-wide, including the advanced naval powers of the North, the division of national defence budgets in ZPCSA countries does not favour the navies. This can be seen in Table 28, which shows the ratio of defence budget allocation for the navies, air forces and armies in some of the ZPCSA countries[77]

Table 28: RATIO OF BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE NAVY, AIR FORCE AND ARMY, 1998

Country	Ratio
Argentina	1:1:1,5 (N:AF:A)
Brazil	1,2:1:1,7 (N:AF:A)
South Africa	1:2,3:5,2 (N:AF:A)

N=Navy; AF=Air Force; A=Army

Source: Edmonds, M. and Mills, G. 1998. ***Beyond the Horizon: Defence, Diplomacy and South Africa's Maritime Opportunities***. Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), p. 58.

This bias in favour of the armies stems from many factors. These include their non-capital intensive nature (therefore fairly cheap); personnel intensive (thus contributing towards alleviation of unemployment); and their utilitarian value (for instance, law enforcement during internal political instability, peace support operations, peace-building operations, relief operations and so forth). In Africa, no country has allocated more than a third of the national defence budget to the navy.[78]

Also noteworthy in Table 27 is the extent of potential mercantile traffic in the region. The potential 4 424 mercantile vessels with a total tonnage of 2 360 240, which excludes vessels from other regions, shows the importance of securing the trade routes in the Atlantic region. The level of co-ordination of maritime traffic within such a large region is an absolute necessity. Thus, the significance of the framework of the South Atlantic Maritime Area Co-ordination (CAMAS) cannot be overemphasised. Established in 1966, CAMAS comprises Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay (all of which are also members of Mercosur). The main aim of CAMAS is to control merchant shipping through exchange of data on the ships passing through 'designated South Atlantic Maritime Area.'[79] Like the ZPCSA, CAMAS has limited membership but attempts are being made to broaden membership to cover the entire South Atlantic**.** Since it was established during the Cold War era, the objectives and *modus operandi* of CAMAS, to a large extent, still reflect the ideological trappings of the past and might therefore need to be revised, possibly within the framework of the ideals of the ZPCSA.

In the military sphere, the approval in November 1998 of the SANDF's arms acquisition programme by the South African cabinet, could greatly improve the naval capabilities of the ZPCSA countries. In terms of the acquisition programme (Table 29), the SANDF will acquire corvettes, submarines and maritime helicopters, thus enabling the SA Navy to execute its patrol responsibilities in the South Atlantic and also to participate, possibly in future, in ZPCSA-wide naval exercises.

Table 29:   SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE'S ARMS ACQUISITION PROGRAMME, 1998

Product	Preferred Supplier	Quantity	Value (Rm)
Corvettes	German Corvette Consortium	4	6 001
Submarines	German Submarine Consortium	3	5 212
Maritime Helicopters	GKN Westland, UK	4	787

Sources: South African Department of Defence's ***Bulletin***, 19 November 1998; and ***Business Day*** (Johannesburg), 19 November 1998.

6.5   A SOUTH ATLANTIC RIM ASSOCIATION

Some observers have argued that the declaratory nature of the ZPCSA is hampering progress in many areas of strategic interest in the region. They further argue that the collective achievements, potential and capabilities of the ZPCSA member states will have to be consolidated. To achieve this, a formal Zone-wide organisation – almost similar to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the EU – should be established. This grouping, to be known as the South Atlantic Rim Association (SARA), would be instrumental in promoting shared values across the South Atlantic.[80] The proponents of the SARA notion are of the view that issues such as security, peace, human rights, poverty and a free market system in the South Atlantic region, will be better addressed and co-ordinated as national policies will be harmonised.

It is not clear whether the proposed SARA will come to fruition, given the diverse nature of the ZPCSA countries. The unequal levels of economic development; vulnerability to different security challenges; and the pace of democratisation within individual countries, could make the SARA notion a remote possibility. However, there are common challenges and values which, when promoted, could result in SARA becoming a reality much sooner. These include improving South-South co-operation; the denuclearisation of the region; the campaign against trans-Atlantic criminal activity (drug trafficking, piracy, illegal fishing); co-ordination of environmental policies (prevention and control of oil leakages from tankers); promoting trade and tourism; and co-ordinating regional capabilities for search-and-rescue operations, as well as providing a firm regional perspective when dealing with the Antarctic issue.

The potential impact of a South Atlantic regional organisation can be deduced from some of the trans-Atlantic joint military exercises that have been held in the region. While these exercises have not been held by virtue of being members of the ZPCSA – because not all participants were members of the ZPCSA and they included extra-regional powers – they have demonstrated without a doubt the absolute necessity for co-ordinated national policies relating to security in the region.

6.6   JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES

The vast ocean separating the countries in the South Atlantic region necessitates that any military exercise should largely involve naval forces. This does not necessarily preclude the possibility of joint land and air forces' operational exercises, especially amphibious landing and bridgehead-formation. However, the most inhibiting factor preventing or limiting the possibility and frequency of joint military exercises, is the fact that countries in that region are mostly developing, with Argentina, Brazil and South Africa classified as middle-income emerging countries. Further complicating matters are limitations imposed by language proficiency.

As already indicated, even though the South Atlantic countries have not yet conducted any joint military exercises by virtue of being part of either Mercosur or ZPCSA, some countries, especially, Argentina, Brazil and South Africa have participated in a few US-sponsored naval exercises, namely the ATLASUR (Atlantic South/South Atlantic), the UNITAS and the TRANSOCEANIC.

6.6.1   *Exercise ATLASUR*

This joint military exercise involves four countries, namely, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Uruguay. Its primary aim is to ensure and enhance interoperability of military equipment and harmonisation of military operating procedures during operations. It takes place every two years and participating countries take turns in hosting the exercise. However, it is held alternately every two years off the South American and South African coasts, thus resulting in South Africa having to host it every second turn. While the planning phase of the exercise is conducted long in advance, the actual practical phase of the exercise lasts for two weeks. The exercise depends largely on funding by the US.[81] As Table 30 indicates, South Africa has

taken part in all ATLASUR exercises since 1994, most of which were conducted in South African waters.[82]

Table 30: ATLASUR EXERCISES INVOLVING THE SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY AFTER 1994

Date	Countries Involved	Series	Comments
May/June 1995	Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Uruguay	III	Exercise held in Brazilian territorial waters.
November 1996	Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Uruguay.		Preparatory meeting for Ex ATLASUR IV held in South Africa.
April 1997	Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Uruguay	IV	Exercise held in South African territorial waters
November 2001	Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Uruguay		Preparatory meeting for Ex ATLASUR V held in South Africa.
April 2002	Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay	V	Exercise held in South African territorial waters.

Source: Information provided by Department of Defence Headquarters, Directorate Foreign Relations, Corporate Staff Division, Pretoria, 2 October 2001

6.6.2   *Exercise UNITAS*

Unlike ATLASUR, the UNITAS exercise is much bigger in terms of the number of participating countries, duration and the scope of its operation. It involves Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela and the US, with South Africa participating on invitation from one of the participating countries in that particular country's section of the exercise. For instance, SAS DRAKENSBERG and units of the SANDF participated in Ex UNITAS from North America to South America during 1996.[83] The exercise is designed to provide participating countries the opportunity to conduct combined naval operations in furtherance of mutual defence objectives. It takes place every year in the South Atlantic region. While the exercise takes place during the period from July to December, the actual practical phase lasts between 10 and 14 days.[84]

6.6.3   *Exercise TRANSOCEANIC*

While both ATLASUR and UNITAS are practical exercises involving military ships and military personnel at sea in defensive and offensive roles, TRANSOCEANIC is a naval control shipping exercise. As it is a communication and procedural 'paper' exercise, there are

no naval vessels used at sea. Participating countries are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, South Africa, Uruguay, Venezuela and Panama, with the latter involved for the first time in 2001 as an observer ((Table 31). The primary goal of the exercise is to test and evaluate the procedures for Naval Control and Civil Direction of Maritime Traffic and Fishing, during a period of tension with limited aggression, which increases progressively on the basis of a fictitious scenario. The exercise is held annually and lasts for about 12 days.[85] Given the nature of potential events that may disrupt the smooth flow of maritime traffic on the South Atlantic, Ex TRANSOCEANIC presents an opportunity to optimally explore all options without incurring exorbitant expenses for 'live' exercises.

However, military exercises in the South Atlantic Ocean have not been limited to those sponsored by the US but have also included combined military exercises that are arranged on a bilateral basis. For instance, a Brazilian Task Group consisting of two frigates conducted an operational visit to Cape Town during September 1996. Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay participated in the SA Navy's 75th celebrations during April 1997, while during 1997, a senior officer from Brazil attended Ex MORNING STAR. Similarly South Africa has also had a joint military exercise with Chile. A SA Navy officer joined his counterparts from the US, UK, Australia and New Zealand during Ex BUOY which was held in Chile in April 2000.[86]

Table 31:   **TRANSOCEANIC EXERCISES INVOLVING THE SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY AFTER 1994**

Date	Countries Involved	Series	Comments
August 1995	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela	X	
August 1996	Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela	XI	
August 1997	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela	XII	Participating countries (except Paraguay) held critique conference on the exercise in South Africa in October 1997
August 1998	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela	XIII	
August 1999	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela	XIV	Participating countries (except Paraguay) held critique conference on the exercise in South Africa in October 1999
August 2000	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador,	XV	Participating countries

	Peru, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela		(except Paraguay) held critique conference on the exercise in Argentina in October 2000
August 2001	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela	XVI	
August 2002	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela	XVII	

Source: Information provided by Department of Defence Headquarters, Directorate Foreign Relations, Corporate Staff Division, Pretoria, 2 October 2001.

6.7   PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF THE ZPCSA

In addition to the lack of proper co-ordination of activities of common interest across the South Atlantic Ocean, it is evident that there are still numerous challenges in harmonising policies and strategies in the region. One such challenge emanates from the exclusive nature of the ZPCSA. The delineation mechanisms used to determine the membership of ZPCSA were a combination of geographic and ideological factors. In geographic terms, the ZPCSA stretches far beyond what is traditionally regarded as the South Atlantic region.[87] The common concern of the ZPCSA member states to both 'de-ideologise' security by non-alignment in the East-West confrontation and 'denuclearise' by demilitarising the South Atlantic region, not only ensured that countries beyond the region were included, but it also ensured exclusion of known nuclear powers with direct and strategic interests in the region – notably the UK and the US.

Some analysts believe that the narrow exclusive nature of ZPCSA membership, even for the countries with territorial interests in the region, could prove counter-productive. According to Grove[88], any security framework which excludes the UK, despite the latter's claim of sovereignty to the island groups, could render such a framework incomplete – probably similar to the scenario prior to Namibia and South Africa joining the ZPCSA in 1990 and 1994 respectively. In addition, when the UK enforces her EEZ – 200 nautical miles – around the island groups in the Atlantic region, the limitations of exclusivity in the Zone's security framework become even more evident. States can conduct military activities in their respective EEZs.[89] However, it is encouraging to note that France, the People's Republic of

China, the Russian Federation, the UK, and the USA – the known and recognised nuclear states – have also signed the three Protocols of the Pelindaba Treaty.

The recent developments on both sides of the South Atlantic region bring both uncertainty and hope for the future security of the region. On the African side, there are still unresolved or partially unresolved conflicts in for instance the DRC and Liberia. Perhaps the most serious is the multi-national nature of the DRC conflict, which involved most of her neighbours, either in support of the DRC government or the rebels. The 'mild' diplomatic tensions between Namibia and Botswana over a border dispute, do not contribute to regional peace and stability in the South Atlantic. Even though conflicts in the DRC, Liberia and Sierra Leone seem to be partially resolved, scars left by many years of violent internal conflict remain visible. The resumption of hostilities in Guinea-Bissau in violation of the Praia (Cape Verde) cease-fire agreement signed on 26 July 1998, is also cause for great concern to the ZPCSA region. Nigeria's return to civilian rule after many years of successive military governments, however, provides hope that sustainable peace and security in the north-eastern quadrant of the ZPCSA is eventually prevailing.

The western side of the ZPCSA region has also undergone massive change in the political sphere, thus sending mixed signals with regard to the security situation in the region. The political relations between Argentina and the UK have improved considerably over the last few years. This *rapprochement* has seen high profile diplomatic visits taking place between the two countries. For instance, former Argentine President, Carlos Menem, paid a six-day visit to the UK on 27 October 1998, while Prince Charles reciprocated the visit by spending three days in March 1999 on the disputed islands (Falklands/Malvinas). In the aftermath of Menem's visit, the UK announced a partial lifting of the 16-year arms embargo imposed on Argentina after the Falklands War. This would be done with a proviso that "[l]icences will only be granted for exports that we are satisfied would not, now or in the foreseeable future, put at risk the security of our Overseas Territories in the South Atlantic or our forces operating there."[90]   Therefore, the military-political situation regarding the Falklands/Malvinas islands has not yet been resolved. Even though the British naval defence around the island group has been scaled down with the departure of the destroyer HMS Sutherland – the last ship of the many frigates and destroyers stationed there since 1982 – this does not signal the end of British military involvement in the region. The recently established South Atlantic Patrol Task Group of the Royal Navy – comprising the HMS Marlborough and

tanker RFA Gold Rover – will still be responsible for the disputed islands as part of its patrols off West Africa.[91]

The security aspect of the ZPCSA with regard to the Falklands/Malvinas and its ramifications involving the UK, has always been one of the major challenges facing the ZPCSA member states. During the ZPCSA meeting held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 21 and 22 October 1998, South Africa handed over the chair of the ZPCSA to Argentina. At this meeting the ZPCSA members recommitted themselves to exchange of comprehensive information about each ZPCSA country; sharing information on registration of fishing vessels; promoting trade; combating drug trafficking; and considering joint initiatives against illicit manufacturing and trafficking in small arms and related materials.[92]

7.   CONCLUSION

The security architecture of the South Atlantic region is characterised by a number of security instruments that overlap largely more by accident than by design. It is also characterised by massive inequality of littoral states in terms of economic development, military capabilities, and vulnerability to security threats such as narco-trafficking and sea piracy. The various instruments and models that have been used to provide blanket security for the South Atlantic littoral states have had limited success due to the disjointed nature of such instruments and apparently insufficient political will of the main role-players. These instruments were initially designed to deal with Cold War threats as determined by the US and the former Soviet Union. With the demise of the Cold War, little has been done to realign these instruments with the post-Cold War exigencies. For instance, while the Rio Treaty still remains in place, there is no doubt that the US's commitment to the treaty's provisions is somewhat weakened and only invoked during times of dire need such as dealing with international terrorism following the events of 11 September 2001 in the US.

South Africa's efforts to become linked to the security umbrella of the Western Hemisphere, firstly through the formation of the Southern Cross Alliance and later the South Atlantic Treaty Organisation, along the lines of NATO, were well-intentioned but failed because of the potential partners' refusal. At no stage was the validity or the necessity of such security alliances ever denied by any party, but South Africa's potential participation remained a contentious point and represented a weak link. Thus, the advent of democracy in South

Africa in 1994 and its subsequent membership of the ZPCSA, was a major step in the direction of creating a strong organisation (SARA notion) that covers the whole of the South Atlantic region. However, one of the challenges is that the original threat, namely, the potential infiltration of the South Atlantic states by communism, has disappeared. The formation of such an organisation would be dealing with 'new generation' threats that are not necessarily military in nature but require a strong military presence or support. Some of the pressing issues facing the South Atlantic region include combating trans-oceanic criminal activity; protecting the environment and marine resources; and the promotion of commercial activity for mutual benefit.

In the military sphere, it is evident that the collective patrol capacity of the region still requires attention. Some of the ZPCSA countries have advanced shipbuilding and ship-repair capacity which, if properly co-ordinated, could help ensure that most of the ZPCSA vessels are sea-worthy. To this effect, personnel exchange programmes, which focus on both transfer of technical skills and the sharing of resources, will have to be introduced in the South Atlantic region.   Some of these issues could perhaps be facilitated by the formal institutionalisation of the ZPCSA through the establishment of the South Atlantic Rim Association.

Joint exercises involving all or most of the ZPCSA naval forces with a view to improving interoperability remain crucial. As was discussed in this chapter, there are a limited number of joint military exercises which are not undertaken on the basis of membership of the ZPCSA but largely on the basis of mutual understanding and sharing common oceanic boundaries. These exercises have taken place primarily because of US funding, thus posing a dilemma for the littoral states if the US were hypothetically to ask, for instance, for permission to transport nuclear waste or conduct military manoeuvres in the South Atlantic waters. While this does not seem to pose an immediate threat to the continued existence of, and adherence to, the denuclearisation clauses of the Tlatelolco and ZPCSA arrangements, there is little doubt that the ZPCSA countries might be expected by the US to protect its interests in the region and possibly support positions in international forums.

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