Namibia's foreign relations in a changing world – An appraisal

Anton Bösl*

> If a man does not know to what port he is steering, no wind is favourable to him.[1]
>
> Seneca

This introductory appraisal discusses, in its first part, the concepts of *foreign affairs* and *international relations* and their changing environment in general, but also specifically as regards Namibia. The appraisal informs the reader about historic contexts that have shaped and the current dimensions that continue to mould Namibia's foreign relations, and outlines some perspectives and recommendations for the way forward.

In its second part, the appraisal provides abstracts of the 20 chapters of the publication at hand.

Introduction

Namibia is neither geographically nor politically an island or otherwise isolated, but rather an integral part of the southern African region, an active member of the African Union, and a sovereign member state within the international community. Namibia has always been embedded in social, historic, economic and political relations and interactions with its neighbours in the region and beyond. Due to the small size of its population and its economy, Namibia has always depended on its vital bonds with other countries in the region, but also in the global community. Namibia's foreign relations and their prudent formulation and management determine the sustainability of the country and the economic perspectives of its people. Foreign affairs have an impact on every person's life.

After more than two decades of statehood, and given the transformations of the geopolitical order since then but also considering the grave impact of the globalisation dynamics on the degree of political and economic interdependencies and vulnerabilities, it is relevant to ask how Namibia has been managing these foreign and international relations. Such an assessment is essential for reflecting on the country's foreign relations and adjusting them, where necessary, in order to gain a perspective of prosperity for the 21st Century.

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* Former Resident Representative for Namibia and Angola, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Windhoek (2006–2011).

1 Seneca, Lucius Annaeus. *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, VIII, LXXI, 3.

This publication intends to inform the reader about the history, the status and the management of Namibia's foreign affairs and international relations, its norms and values, its national interests, and its strategic objectives. The implicit key premise is the concept of a *nation state*, represented by a government with authority over a territory and its population, with the capacity to enter into and maintain relations with other sovereign states and supranational organisations aiming to pursue the realisation of the interests of its people.[2] Another key premise is the existence of an international order that was mainly shaped after World War II, with rules and institutions that have developed since 1945 in a quest to ensure countries enjoy peaceful relations among themselves.

Based on these premises, the 20 chapters in this volume provide relevant information about several facets of Namibia's foreign relations. Although they are part of a unified anthology, the chapters differ in academic approach, methodology, style, genre and semantics. Due to the lack of distinct and internationally agreed definitions, the concepts and phrases of *foreign affairs* and *international relations* are often used synonymously – not only colloquially, but also, at times, by the scholars in this publication. Hence, it is appropriate to briefly refer to the terms' commonalities, similarities and differences.

There is a broad consensus in academia, particularly among political scientists, that the concepts of *foreign affairs* and *international relations* share the fact that they define the role of the actors, interests, strategies and transboundary activities on a bi- or multilateral level, based on international law.

The term *foreign affairs*, on the other hand, which is also used as a synonym of *foreign policy*, describes the relationships between and among states or countries and their national governments as well as supranational organisations. The term *international relations*, however, also takes into account the heterogeneous interactions of the peoples of different states and countries from a bird's eye view. Due to the increasing political importance of international and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), of multinational corporations and of informal political processes, their role is at times also considered part of what constitutes *foreign affairs*.[3] Although both dimensions – foreign relations and international relations – are discussed in an interdisciplinary manner in the contributions to this publication, *foreign relations* has deliberately been chosen for its title for the sake of brevity.

The publication does not and cannot cover all facets of Namibia's foreign relations and, in this respect, therefore, is not comprehensive. The selection of contributions for this publication follows the criteria of relevance of content and of the availability of authors at hand. Thus, only five countries in respect of which Namibia maintains bilateral relations are available; in alphabetical order, these are Angola, China, Germany, South

2 Krasner (1993:235–264).
3 Mingst (2007).

Africa and the United States of America, whereas the publication covers Namibia's most important multilateral relations. In the six remaining chapters, several obvious interfaces with other policy fields – beyond the classic foreign affairs' distinction between *bilateral* and *multilateral* relations – are discussed.

Historic contexts

Namibia's foreign relations, and the principles, policies and formulations on which those relations depend, have been shaped significantly by the diplomatic and the armed liberation struggle to achieve independence.[4] The experience of the struggle was also indisputably formative in respect of the country's post-independence foreign relations, and is very obvious in Namibia: some aspects are immediately visible by way of physical structures, e.g. official state buildings (e.g. the new State House, the Independence Memorial Museum) as well as various buildings for its executive branch, legislative branch (e.g. the National Council) and judiciary (e.g. Supreme Court). These buildings not only display the architectonic style and quality of construction of countries like China and North Korea, who provided assistance during the struggle, but also symbolise an ongoing – albeit not always transparent – political influence: they are a metaphor for solidarity politics and for the comradeship of the like-minded.

The diplomatic and armed liberation struggle contributed to the national identity of Namibia and is – after more than two decades – still a perceptible element of political continuity and an influential element of the country's post-colonial international relations. It should be emphasised, however, that during the struggle era and after Namibia's independence in 1990, grave geopolitical changes have taken place that have significantly influenced its foreign relations.

The détente between East and West, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War with its bipolar rivalry, and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact made it necessary for many states to reflect the changing geopolitical realities in their foreign policies. In particular, African states that had enjoyed and cherished relations with Warsaw Pact states had to reconfigure their foreign relations accordingly. Namibia's being freed from colonial oppression at a time of rapid political transformations and on the eve of a new multipolar world order influenced the Constituent Assembly's drafting of the Namibian Constitution and its foreign relations principles.[5]

The ideological and political vacuum resulting from the end of this bipolar rivalry for global hegemony after 1990 enabled China, as a leading international player, to increase

4 Several chapters in this publication highlight this connection, e.g. Chris Saunders' "Namibia's diplomacy before Independence", and Peter Katjavivi's "Namibia's bilateral relations with Germany: A crucial relationship".

5 See also Bösl et al. (2010).

its influence on the African continent, prompting many African – including Namibian – leaders to 'look East' by opening up and redirecting their foreign policies towards the Asian superpower.[6]

The geopolitical caesura of the 1990s and Namibia's independence also changed the country's strategic environment significantly. For the southern African region, it heralded the imminent demise of the era of apartheid and confrontation, and paved the way for more or, in some cases, nascent political and economic cooperation. It renewed scholarly interest in the concept of *region* and the political concern regarding regional multilateralism emerging as building block of a new international economic order.

Namibia gained its sovereignty during a global epoch when hardly any challenge could be resolved anymore by countries acting unilaterally. The political and economic interdependencies between and among countries – especially in the case of Namibia – run very deep, while new dependencies are becoming visible. Cognisant of this fact, Namibia has always actively cooperated with many multilateral and international institutions.

Current dimensions

Like any other country in the world, Namibia is also currently influenced strongly by the inevitable and dynamic process of globalisation.[7] This process is causing an unprecedented degree of interdependence, with profound consequences for nation states as regards not only their economies, but also their foreign relations, foreign policies, and the role of diplomacy and diplomats.[8]

The political, economic and social networks that globalisation has generated span the planet. They have created individual liberties and political space and have opened up unexpected opportunities for growth, cooperation and development; but they have also led to several challenges and windows of vulnerability.[9]

The globalisation process has both revolutionised global trade and commerce and expedited it by way of major technical innovation, especially in the communications

6 See André du Pisani's chapter entitled "Namibia and China: Profile and appraisal of a relationship" in this publication.

7 With his critique of globalisation and the negative impacts which he identifies, especially for developing countries, Nobel laureate Joseph E Stiglitz has provoked very controversial responses; see e.g. Stiglitz (2003, 2006). The impact of the globalisation process on foreign and security relations is exemplarily discussed for the case of Germany in SWP & GMF (2013).

8 As a consequence of the globalisation process, the new role of diplomacy and of diplomats is discussed by Slaughter (2009) for the context of the USA, and by Bagger (2013) in the case of Germany.

9 Goldstein & Keohane (1993:3–30).

sector. However, new technologies and the rapid digitisation of communications have an ambivalent impact on interpersonal relations and on state power. Previously isolated societies are now immediately connected with global markets, rural villagers with their urban relatives. New technologies not only imbue state executives with new capabilities, they also potentially empower and equip violent non-state actors, and abet the leaking and distribution of confidential information affecting international relations.

Triggered by the accelerated process of globalisation and digitisation, the diffusion of power and authority within and between states has progressed.[10] This diffusion has diminished the role of sovereign states and of the existing international order and, consequently, has transformed the role of foreign relations and their stakeholders. New actors and international NGOs are gaining worldwide publicity and, hence, political importance. They inform discourses about and influence the national and international shaping of global governance policies and regimes.[11] Foreign relations are also influenced by the electronic transfers of huge volumes of money within milliseconds and by foreign direct investments, increasing the interdependency and vulnerability of countries and economies. Decision-makers in trade, industry and the banking sector also influence – willy-nilly – international relations.

Having pegged its national currency to South Africa's legal tender, Namibia is a model of how vulnerable and susceptible one economy can be to the effects of disturbances of its large neighbour's economy. Receiving a large part of the national budget from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) revenue pool adds yet another significant aspect of Namibia's economic interdependency.

Economic interdependency increases the relevance of economic diplomacy as part of foreign relations conduct.[12] Economic diplomacy is cognisant of a country's strategic economic environment, of the rules and regulations of regional economic communities, and of the world trade order. Economic diplomacy also acknowledges the importance of globalised markets and investment destinies, and applies the appropriate rhetoric aiming to attract investors to explore the potential of economic cooperation with a country. In the case of Namibia, its economic diplomacy must always be guided by the constitutional objective of "securing growth, prosperity and a life of human dignity for all Namibians".[13] However, public statements by decision-makers about economic emancipation can easily be misunderstood if they are conducted in the spirit and rhetoric of an unfinished struggle for the total – now economic – liberation of a country. Given the global interdependencies

10 See Nye (2011), who describes the changing nature of power and denotes the current, diffused form of power as 'soft power'.

11 See McGuire (2013).

12 See Keohane & Nye (2011), who, in their landmark publication, analyse the complex forms of power politics and interdependence, and the economic interests of state and non-state actors.

13 Article 98, Namibian Constitution.

of economies and of international and national investment protection treaties, insensitive statements on economic emancipation may have unforeseeable negative consequences on a country and the majority of people.

Considering Namibia's strong dependency on the export of few resources, raw materials and goods, and given the significant fluctuation of their demand and prices on world markets – with immediate effects also on domestic prices, economic diplomacy has become the cornerstone of Namibia's foreign relations. Namibia, being one of the richest sources of uranium in the world, is significantly dependent on the export of uranium oxide and, hence, on the effects of unforeseeable global events like the disaster of Fukushima in 2011. This event has been sensitising or shifting the opinion of many in the world on uranium, evoking an increasing number of calls for a ban on nuclear plants and even causing the drastic revision of Germany's national politics on nuclear energy supply. Unpredictable events like the one in Fukushima or the global financial and economic crisis of 2007/8 and their economic shocks[14] can only be cushioned by diversifying the country's economy, trade and industry and venturing into smart economic cooperation aiming to minimise dependencies.

International relations are influenced by local politics since politicians always consider the concerns of those who vote them into office. The prosperity of the citizen and the economic welfare of the country are imperative, therefore, also for the management of a state's foreign relations. The citizens, civil societies and media of a country should not only be well informed, but should also increasingly play the role of a critical watchdog – including as regards the realm of international politics. Debates about country's foreign affairs can, hence, not be restricted to parliaments or particular committees or expert circles. Neither should the increasing interest from all corners of society as regards public participation be underestimated; the same can be said for the potential of digital technology and media to swiftly organise mass events with unforeseeable consequences to national governments and regional stability – as exemplarily seen in the Arab world since the end of 2010. Governments should, therefore, adequately communicate their foreign policy goals and concerns – not only to convince their own citizens at home, but also to influence the perceptions and opinions of the international public.

Perspectives for the 21st Century

Geopolitical orders have never been static: they have undergone constant processes of transformation and reform. The current dynamics of globalisation and technical innovation are affecting states and their policies. Indeed, policies that are designed to manage a country's international relations with other states and international organisations are particularly exposed to these dynamics. Namibia and its foreign relations are no exception in this regard.

14 See Greenspan (2013).

Times of transition and great change often lead to individual and collective uncertainties; nonetheless, they usually evoke discourses on the foundations of our individual and common good; on the principles, norms and values that not only guide us as individuals, but also govern our ideological and political framework as well as our constitutions; and on effective conducting of our foreign relations. Although Namibia's foreign relations principles, as embodied in Article 96 of the Namibian Constitution, have remained as originally prescribed, the interests, norms and values they represented may by now have been transformed.

More than two decades after the Constitution was drafted, an assessment of the new strategic environment governing the principles, norms and values and formulations of Namibia's foreign relations is warranted. A decade after the first – and, so far, only – comprehensive account of Namibia's foreign policy and diplomacy management,[15] a reconsideration of its important findings is justified in order to adjust them to the contemporary environment.

Identifying the strategic interests that will guide foreign relations in a changing global environment is a complex effort; nonetheless, it is also a prerequisite for defining the strategic relevance of partners and relations – and a sufficient condition for possibly reorienting foreign policy.

The appraisal and reorientation of Namibia's foreign relations has to be guided by the paramount strategic goal to ensure that the international order remains peaceful, free, rule-based and cooperative as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.[16] The principles of democracy, the rule of law and justice for all,[17] upon which Namibia's Constitution is founded and on which its legitimacy is based, are not negotiable. As a member of multilateral organisations and as a signatory to their numerous international conventions, treaties and legal instruments, Namibia is embedded within their normative and political networks, resulting in several obligations and also shaping its foreign relations as a result.

Within this given framework Namibia can – as a true child of the United Nations – advocate for reforming the institutions of the international order, and contribute ideas for and assist in making the UN system more effective and legitimate. The increasing importance of global public goods paves the way for the rising paradigm of global governance aiming to solve international or global problems by integrating transnational stakeholders. New global fora with informal governance structures subsequently affect the architecture of the international order. Having benefited from the solidarity, sympathy and support of the international community, Namibia can now contribute towards the

15 Republic of Namibia (2004).
16 See Article 1, Chapter 1, Charter of the United Nations.
17 Article 1, Namibian Constitution.

adaptation and regulation of international conventions and protocols in general, and to protecting the global common good in particular.

Namibia has the potential of a strategic and important player. This role is not the sole domain of hegemonic, regional or emerging powers, but can also be assumed by small and less powerful countries.[18] Namibia could achieve further strategic importance by enhancing its ability and strengthening its determination to bring – via its foreign relations – political, economic or cultural influence to bear on strategic markets and at regional or global fora. This requires a realistic self-assessment and the determination to assume leadership in reaching common goals with others, and to shape global and regional affairs – at least in specific sectors.[19] Given the positive experiences of over two decades in respect of multilateral cooperation on an international and regional level, and having achieved an outstanding reputation in climate change and global environmental governance matters, Namibia might be well advised to strengthen its multilateral relations respectively, and play a model role.

Consequently, since 1990, Namibia has intensified and diversified its bilateral relations. Whilst the country has generally proved to be a reliable and predictable partner, there are cases when many of its citizens have not supported the conduct of relations with some countries. Indeed, as information about government officials' being found guilty of conflicts of interest becomes increasingly more public, there has been a concomitant rise in the number of citizens questioning their country's management of relations with specific countries. Thus, nation states always need to consider the opportunity costs and potential compromises to their reputation in their conduct of international relations.

Bilateral relations are never a one-way street: they are based on mutual benefits and/or dependencies. Indeed, Namibia's international partners have an interest in multi-dimensional relations, which include goods, investments, technology transfer, training, and resolving regional conflicts. If Namibia further explores and uses its potential and collaborates with like-minded, strategic partners and neighbours, it can develop sustainable long-term partnerships and credible foreign relations, contributing to peace, freedom, security and prosperity in the world. To this end, Namibia has still to live up to its potential.

A critical review of foreign affairs, and the values, interests, objectives and strategies associated with such international bonds, requires a steadfast commitment on the part

18 The difficulties experienced by less-important countries striving for influence are identified by Kahler (2013).

19 Three factors inhibiting a country's ability to translate its international ambitions into foreign policy achievements are identified – for the case of South Africa – by Alden & Schoeman (2013). These factors are the unresolved issue of identity, a host of domestic constraints linked to material capabilities and internal politics, and the divisive continental reaction to South African leadership.

of policymakers to allow inspirational ideas to flow freely. Such process is ideally also informed by –

- a society's broad understanding of itself and of the values and ideals that drive it
- opinion polls that explore and collate interesting information about the attitudes and aspirations of a country's citizens, and
- comparative studies that learn from the debates in and experiences of other countries.

Thus, the critical review contained in this publication, *Namibia's foreign relations: Historic contexts, current dimensions, and perspectives for the 21st Century*, is presented with the intention of informing and inspiring the discourse on the strategic outlook of the country's international relations. The abstracts that follow portray each of 20 selected authors' views on these aspects.

Abstracts of the chapters

Section I: Historic and normative aspects of Namibia's foreign relations

The first Section of this publication outlines the historic and normative context of Namibia's foreign relations. It informs the reader about the international and domestic diplomacy leading to Namibia's independence, and discusses the principles, policies, key stakeholders and institutions of Namibia's foreign relations.

In his chapter entitled **"Namibian diplomacy before Independence"**, Chris Saunders, a widely published South African historian, sketches key aspects of pre-Independence diplomacy, focusing on formal diplomatic activity by Namibians between 1945 until Independence in 1990. Saunders also reminds the reader of petitioning by Namibian traditional leaders before 1945 at the League of Nations, the forerunner to the United Nations (UN), in Geneva. After the establishment of the UN in 1945, the Herero Chief Council drafted the first petition by Namibia to the UN, followed by petitions from the liberation movements the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) and the Ovamboland People's Organisation, the forerunner of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO). In the end, SWAPO overtook SWANU in the competition for recognition as sole and authentic representation of the Namibian people by foreign governments and multilateral organisations – mainly the UN. SWAPO's intensive lobbying led the UN General Assembly to adopt resolutions to put the Namibia issue on the international agenda as far back as 1966. By opening offices in different countries and establishing political relations with governments of the West as well as with socialist countries, SWAPO managed the delicate balance of interacting with the opposing sides during the Cold War era. The persistent diplomatic efforts by SWAPO leaders finally led to the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 435 in 1978, which, through the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), paved the way to Namibia's independence in 1990. Saunders concludes that pre-Independence diplomacy was

formative for Namibia's foreign policy as well as for foreign relations in the post-Independence period, by providing an identity, an element of political continuity, and a firm foundation for its international standing.

The chapter **"Namibia and the United Nations until 1990"** is contributed by Dennis U Zaire, a Namibian lawyer working at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's Namibia Office. His chapter covers the time of the struggle for liberation from South Africa's occupation and from the apartheid system. The author sketches the international community's involvement in Namibia's attainment of independence, and focuses on the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and various other stakeholders. The chapter provides an overview of the various means deployed by the UN to help the Namibian people to achieve self-determination, which include the persistent consultation of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the opportunity for citizens to file petitions. The UN petitioners and the UN's support for them, as well as the 1966 ICJ judgment on Namibia and its implications, are elaborated. The author argues that, with the fateful 1966 ICJ verdict, a turning point in the struggle was reached, since it made SWAPO recognise that, besides the UN, they would need to deploy their own means as well, for example establishing a military wing. Hence, the chapter concludes that the goal of independence would not have been reached without the UN and the international community, but that the UN was not solely responsible for it. The period of 44 years in which the UN was involved, which includes the time of the struggle as well as its engagement in the transition to independence by way of UNTAG, constitutes the foundation for the multifaceted collaboration and friendly relationship between the UN and Namibia that we find today.

In his address entitled **"Germany's role in Namibia's independence"**, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Germany's long-term Foreign Minister (1974–1992), describes not only Germany's role but also his personal contribution to Namibia's transition to independence. He first sketches the framework conditions of German foreign politics (the Western Alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization/NATO, the Eastern Policy, the Hallstein Doctrine) and of international politics (anti-colonialism and the Non-aligned Movement). He critiques that, whilst the issue of self-determination and human rights in Europe (Helsinki Final Act) and in Germany (German Unification) was intensively debated, many Western countries took an indifferent attitude towards the decolonisation process and towards apartheid. Genscher explains the formation and joint efforts of the Group of Five – the five Western states represented in the UN Security Council in 1976, and highlights a dinner with the five Foreign Ministers and then President PW Botha of South Africa, which Genscher remembers as "one of the most interesting moments of my time as foreign minister". Genscher argues that the process leading to Namibia's independence was influenced not only by the developments in South Africa, but also by the changing conditions in the East/West divide. For Genscher, Namibia's process to independence became a model case of new thinking. Based on a lesson he draws from Germany's history, he argues that a stable and fair order can only be created if 'big' and 'little' people (and countries) negotiate at eye level.

Peya Mushelenga, serving as Namibia's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time of this publication going to print, in his chapter on **"Principles and principals of Namibia's foreign relations"** sets out the five fundamental beliefs governing Namibia's foreign relations as enshrined in Article 96 of the Constitution. Thus, Namibia should strive to –

- adopt and maintain a policy of non-alignment
- promote international cooperation, peace and security
- create and maintain just and mutually beneficial relations among nations
- foster respect for international law treaty obligations, and
- encourage the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means.

The author presents not only the Constituent Assembly's reasoning for drafting these five principles, but also portrays the impact they have since had in respect of foreign policy. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the key drivers of Namibia's foreign relations and the different political styles espoused in implementing and augmenting Namibia's foreign affairs principles, namely by Namibia's Presidents, Sam Nujoma and Hifikepunye Pohamba, but also her Ministers of Foreign Affairs: Theo-Ben Gurirab (1990–2002), Hidipo Hamutenya (2002–2004), Marco Hausiku (2004–2010), and Utoni Nujoma (2010–2012).[20] The author also refers to the role of the Deputy Ministers and institutions involved in foreign policy formulation, primarily the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose White Paper entitled *Namibia's Foreign Policy and Diplomacy Management* was published in 2004. The author concludes that neither the Parliament's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security nor the opposition parties or civil society have had a significant impact on foreign policy formulation to date.

Section II: Namibia's bilateral relations

This section explores Namibia's bilateral relations with some selected countries, namely – in alphabetical order – Angola, China, Germany, South Africa and the United States of America.

Hidipo Hamutenya, former Namibian Minister of Foreign Affairs (2002–2004), in his chapter entitled **"Namibia and Angola: Analysis of a symbiotic relationship"**, describes the historic, political and economic ties between the two neighbouring countries. The chapter explains the interwoven process leading to the independence of both countries. It elaborates why the Namibian liberation movement, SWAPO, in the beginning had strong ties with the Angolan liberation movement, UNITA (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola/National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and only after Angola's independence in 1975 became an ally of the MPLA

20 The incumbent Foreign Minister, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah (2012 to date), is not included in the discussion since her appointment occurred after the content of the text had been finalised for the editing and publishing process.

(Movimiento Popular para la Liberacão de Angola/Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), which has ruled the country since then. The chapter informs the reader about the important role played by Cuba and the Soviet Union in favour of the MPLA, and the UN's role in the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. The discussion includes the civil war between UNITA and the forces of the MPLA Government after Namibia's independence in 1990, which delayed the normalisation and formalisation of relations between the two countries. Therefore, the Angolan–Namibian Joint Commission of Co-operation (ANJCC), which was established in 1990, could only conclude bilateral agreements after the end of warfare in Angola in 2002. Thus, in 2003, the Agreement on Reciprocal Protection and Promotion of Investment was concluded, and in 2004, the Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation. Other bilateral agreements that have been signed and the challenges especially on trade are mentioned. The chapter informs the reader about international cooperation frameworks such as the Benguela Current Commission, the collaboration on establishing the Trans-Cunene Corridor as a road and rail network between the two countries' main ports, and the joint management – and silent tensions – entailed by the shared Okavango and Cunene River Basins. Hamutenya also discusses the issue of Angolan refugees in Namibia and their repatriation. He concludes that relations have generally been steady and cordial, trade ties have been growing, and the symbiotic connection has been very positive overall.

The chapter **"Namibia and China: Profile and appraisal of a relationship"** explores the genesis of the Afro-Sino relationship and the historic relations between Namibia (and the SWAPO Party) and the People's Republic of China (and its Communist Party). The author, André du Pisani, Professor of Politics at the University of Namibia, sheds light on the political contexts of and ideological rationale for the relationship from both points of view – especially until the end of the Cold War. The chapter informs the reader about the cornerstones of China's policy on Africa and the fora of cooperation between China and Africa (especially the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation/FOCAC, and the Africa–China Young Leaders Forum/ACYLF) as well as Chinese commitments regarding preferential loans, development aid, investment, and scholarships to different African countries, including Namibia. For the author, China appears to see globalisation as a way to establish more cooperative forms of state-based as well as non-state relations with a growing number of African countries. He sketches the political and diplomatic relations between Namibia and China and their key areas of cooperation: trade, investment, construction (especially of politically and symbolically important public buildings), education (including scholarships for children of Namibia's ruling elite), culture, development assistance, defence and security. The chapter elaborates that China's interest in Namibia is mainly based on its growing appetite for natural resources. It concludes with the critical comment that the perpetuation of the historic pattern of commodity extraction and the utilisation of Namibia as a 'dumping ground' for lower-quality consumer goods would neither be adequate nor – in the long run – acceptable to Namibians. Given China's global economic importance, with its new-mercantilist and developmental approach, its relationship with Namibia needs to be strategically managed in the long-term interest of both countries.

Peter Katjavivi, who served as Namibia's Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany (2006–2008), in his essay entitled **"Namibia's bilateral relations with Germany"**, describes what he calls "a crucial relationship" since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1990. The author emphasises that the genesis of Namibia's foreign policy was essentially influenced by the country's struggle to free itself from the bondage of apartheid and colonialism. He refers to the close cooperation between the SWAPO leadership in exile and politicians from the Federal Republic of Germany before Namibia's independence. The close bonds with the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), however, are not the subject of the chapter. Katjavivi appreciates the role of Federal Germany as a member of the Western Contact Group and of Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Federal Germany's Foreign Minister at the time, in paving the way for Namibia's independence. The author informs the reader about the Resolution in the German Bundestag (Parliament) in 1989 that acknowledged a "special responsibility" for Namibia and its citizens, leading to the use of the term *special relations* – as expressed by both Presidents Sam Nujoma and Roman Herzog during the Namibian premier's first state visit to Germany in 1996. The chapter offers a list of important reciprocal visits by government officials and parliamentarians, and comments that the high-level visits in evidence by Germany since Namibia's Independence have dwindled in recent years. For the author, the reasons appear to be the expected acknowledgement of atrocities committed during the German colonial era as *genocide*, and the quest for associated reparations. The chapter also lists profiles of German NGOs providing assistance to Namibia, informs the reader about the official development cooperation between the two countries as well as other non-official collaboration, and critiques the increasingly unbalanced ratio of loans vis-à-vis grants by the German Government in development aid to Namibia. The chapter then discusses the official apology by German Minister Wieczorek-Zeul during her visit to Namibia in 2004 and the subsequently introduced Special Initiative, which has caused several challenges. The author discusses a motion in Namibia's Parliament in 2005 and its unanimously adopted associated resolution in 2007 which Namibia's Prime Minister transmitted to the German Foreign Minister, reinforcing the demand for reparations from the German Government. The author also provides his views on the highly disputed repatriation of skulls in 2011 of Namibian ancestors who had been victims of German atrocities. Katjavivi expresses his hope that the Namibian–German Parliamentary Friendship Group formed in 2012 will promote well-structured dialogue in helping Germany to deal openly with the unresolved issues relating to its colonial past in Namibia.

In their chapter entitled **"Uneven but intertwined: Namibia's bilateral relationship with South Africa"**, the respectively Namibian and South African academics Tjiurimo Alfredo Hengari and Chris Saunders analyse the relations between their two countries since 1990. They identify two dominant facts, one being that Namibia's large neighbour had ruled it as a colonised territory for 75 years (1915–1990), and had left behind an extensive legacy in many respects. The second fact identified Namibia having remained intertwined with South Africa economically as well as in many other ways – leading to a sense of ambivalence in the relations between the two countries since Namibia's

independence in 1990. These relations are categorised into three distinct phases. The first (1990–1994) represents an interregnum: the transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa. For the authors, this first phase – subtitled "Engaging the former colonial oppressor", is characterised by an emancipatory foreign policy on Namibia's part, one that was based on the desire for territorial integrity and, hence, the reintegration of Walvis Bay and the Offshore Islands which South Africa had not relinquished when it loosed its colonial grip in 1990. Other characteristics of this first phase are the prevailing optimism as regards the prospects of a majority-ruled South Africa, and economic pragmatism resulting from decades of dependency. The first decade of South Africa's democratisation (1994–2005) is delineated as a second phase of Namibian-South African relations, described by the subheading "Fraternal engagement, economic dependence, differences on regional policy". A defining element of this phase was the unrest that erupted in the DRC (1998–2002): since South Africa preferred a diplomatic solution, Namibia's military intervention in the DRC led to tensions and sporadic acrimony in the neighbourly relations. A third phase, spanning from 2005 to the time of printing, is marked by the Pohamba presidency and closer relations with South Africa, especially since President Zuma took office in 2009. The authors argue that whilst South Africa's hegemonic attitude in the Southern African region and in Africa under the Mbeki Administration was not always welcomed by the Namibian Government, bilateral relations were strengthened after Zuma became president in 2009. More reciprocal visits by state officials – including by the heads of state; common positions on, for example, the suspension of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Tribunal; and increased cooperation in bi-national commissions are evidence of this closer bond. The chapter concludes with the future prospect of inequality in the bilateral ties, and a shift in both countries' geostrategic positions as Angola's importance in the region increases.

In his chapter, **"From confrontation to pragmatic cooperation: United States of America–Namibia relations"**, Bill Lindeke, an American academic with a long history in Namibia, provides a historic perspective of the relationship between the two unequal partners, and discusses their current cooperation. During the early stages of Namibia's diplomatic activity, the USA was not an important actor, considering the case of Namibia rather an international, not an American issue. Only Kennedy's presidency (1961–1963) turned the perception of Namibia's strive for independence. Later, in 1966 the USA supported the UN General Assembly Resolution (2145) to strip South Africa of the Mandate over Namibia. However, the Cold War with the Soviet Union and US hegemonic politics under the influence of Henry Kissinger dominated the US African policy, including a tilt towards Southern Africa's white regimes as a bulwark against Soviet expansion. Lindeke argues that the emergence of Afro-Marxist regimes and the deployment of Cuban troops to Angola and Ethiopia in the 1970s sharpened the US's security focus on regional conflict zones in Africa, and economic concerns took second place. Carter's presidency (1977–1981) created a short window of opportunity for negotiations, and the success of the Western Contact Group. Lindeke also elaborates on the US policy of "constructive engagement". He considers how the Reagan Administration (1981–1989) delayed the

Namibian solution by introducing a "linkage" with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, and explains the turning points of US politics towards Namibia on the road to independence. The author also informs the reader about the US's cooperation with Namibia after Independence, focusing on development assistance, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the security sector cooperation and the Millennium Challenge Account. Despite good official government relations, Lindeke notes that older Namibians still harbour some suspicion as regards the US's intentions, as America was perceived by them as an imperialist superpower that supported South Africa's apartheid system. In contrast to this pre-Independence and partly current attitude, recent surveys show a very positive attitude towards America, since a pragmatic convergence of cooperation has emerged as the dominant post-Independence interaction.

Section III: Namibia's multilateral relations

This Section discusses Namibia's participation in international fora and multilateral institutions since Independence, such as the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the UN – with all the respective repercussions of such participation evidenced in the country's foreign relations.

The chapter **"Namibia and the Southern African Customs Union"** by Gerhard Erasmus introduces SACU as a very specific regional organisation. The author – a Namibian citizen, Law Professor Emeritus at Stellenbosch University, and an internationally renowned specialist on SACU – explains the basic features of the world's oldest customs union (established 1910). He also sheds light on the 1910 and 1969 Agreements with their colonial origins and historic development, in-built economic asymmetry, and operational difficulties. Erasmus reflects the adoption of the 2002 SACU Agreement as a response to the regional political and economic changes during the 1990s and the unsuccessful attempt to limit the dominance of South Africa's institutions which characterised the functioning of SACU under the 1969 Agreement. The chapter provides an insight into SACU's technical and formal aspects as well as the problems it has experienced, and informs the reader about the establishment of a Summit of Heads of State and Government as a new and permanent SACU institution. The author also relates that SACU's new institutional framework provides for a Tariff Board and an Ad Hoc Tribunal, and explains their need for additional legal instruments in order to become operational. Whilst the new SACU Agreement provides for the development of common policies concerning industrial development, agriculture, competition and unfair trade practices for the five SACU member countries, the vague language in the Agreement does not offer essential guidelines and contents for enforcement. The chapter identifies the inconsistencies of the 2002 SACU Agreement and SACU architecture, and explains why, in many important aspects, SACU currently does not function as a common mechanism. Erasmus explains the Common Revenue Pool as a central aspect of SACU, and notes that Namibia's share amounted to 26.6% of the country's total

revenue in 2011/12. This indicates that trade diplomacy is a very important foreign policy dimension, especially for members of a customs union. Hence, Namibia's membership in SACU has also shaped its bilateral relationship with South Africa – an economically and politically dominant SACU member, whilst the fact that Namibia was integral part of South Africa for seven decades had lasting effects on Namibia's economy and currency. The chapter also mentions Namibia's economic diplomacy regarding the conclusion of the SADC Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU, the negotiations for which, for practical purposes, were conducted via SACU. The author also feels the SADC integration record is rather unimpressive, he points out that SACU still has to unlock its potential to establish effective and sound common governance. Instead, the SACU member states have demonstrated little preparedness to grant regional institutions more independent powers and jurisdiction for fear of losing sovereign policy space. For Erasmus, however, Namibia needs to reinforce its regional and multilateral efforts in order to develop further. As a smaller nation, Namibia benefits from strong regional bodies like SACU, which have already generated a high degree of stability in the region. To further this course of stability, Namibia should champion the cause of strengthening SACU and deepening regional integration.

Kaire Mbuende, former SADC Secretary General (1994–1999), understands the relationship between **"Namibia and the Southern African Development Community"**, on the basis not only of SADC's history and trajectories, but also of Namibia's developmental objectives. For Mbuende, Namibia's participation in SADC contributes positively to regional integration and shapes the country's policies, especially in foreign affairs, defence and security matters (e.g. the DRC and Zimbabwe). The author reasons that, besides hosting the SADC Parliamentary Forum in Windhoek since its establishment in 1997, Namibia was also instrumental in setting up the Forum as an inter-parliamentary body and autonomous SADC institution. Mbuende argues that, for small countries like Namibia, regional integration is not optional but crucial. He singles out eight sectors to underscore the importance of functional SADC cooperation to Namibia: fisheries and marine resources, legal affairs, transport, communication, agriculture, natural resources, shared watercourses, and energy. For Mbuende, regional integration needs strong institutions and drivers; nonetheless, SADC continues to be challenged by political instabilities in various countries.

In her chapter on **"Namibia and the African Union"**, Bience Gawanas, former Commissioner for Social Affairs at the AU (2003–2012), describes Namibia's relationship with the multilateral body OAU/AU as multifaceted. She first looks at the historic dimensions of Namibia's pre-Independence relationship with the OAU and the support that the country and its liberation movement SWAPO received before 1990. She then highlights Namibia's role in the founding and in the institutional outlook of the AU. Gawanas also informs the reader about the four pillars of the AU's Strategic Plan, namely peace and security; development, integration, cooperation; shared values; and institution- and capacity-building. The chapter mentions Namibia's participation in the AU Commission's Secretariat, the Pan-African Parliament, the Anti-Corruption

Advisory Board, the Peace and Security Council, the Committee of Intelligence Services in Africa, and the Committee on UN Reform. The author elaborates on the AU Peace and Security Council and its new principle of non-indifference, which supersedes the OAU principle of non-intervention and paves the way for AU-mandated peace support operations and Namibia's participation in them. Gawanas then addresses the AU's shared values – governance, gender, culture and civil society – and points out Namibia's low rate of signing and ratifying AU legal instruments. The chapter describes Namibia's lack of conviction as regards the effectiveness of the AU's development programme, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), but mentions NEPAD's contribution to strengthen the capacity of the AU to achieve regional integration on, and the economic independence of, the continent. By promoting the pan-African spirit through the adoption and display of AU symbols and celebrating Africa Day as a public holiday, Namibia sets an example for other AU member states to follow. The chapter concludes with a critical look at the future of the AU and the changing roles of its members – particularly Namibia's.

In his chapter, **"The European Union: Relations with Namibia"**, Raúl Fuentes Milani, currently serving as Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Namibia, describes the three complementary angles of the relationship between the EU and Namibia – political, trade and development cooperation – from an EU perspective. In his first part (political relations), the author informs the reader about the legal and institutional framework of the relationship: namely the Cotonou Agreement (2000) and the EU–ACP (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific) Partnership, the Treaty of Lisbon (2007), the establishment of the position of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (2009) and of the European External Action Service (2010). Whilst the EU delegations abroad assume the representation of the EU as supranational organisation, its 28 member states retain full capacity to run their bilateral affairs. For the EU, Namibia is a very important partner and a reference for good governance in the SADC region. In the second part, the author sketches trade relations between the two entities, and describes the ongoing negotiations on a comprehensive and mutually beneficial Economic Partnership Agreement. In the third part, the chapter sketches the extent of development cooperation with Namibia under the ACP–EU Partnership and its consecutive and multi-annual European Development Funds. The EU and its member states have provided around 70% of the total development assistance to Namibia to date, mainly in the areas of rural development and education, tourism, trade and investment, human resource development, and governance. The European Investment Bank has provided soft loans to Namibia, and has contributed to the Global Fund to fight HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. For the author, the relations between the EU and Namibia are deep and strong, and breathe the spirit of mutual respect. He also postulates that EU cooperation with Namibia as an upper-middle-income country may shift to new sectors linked to productivity, jobs and growth.

In her chapter headed **"The United Nations and Namibia since 1990"**, Kari Egge, who was the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Namibia (2009–2011) at the time of

its writing, reminds us of the sustained UN support during Namibia's fight for freedom, and calls the country "a child of the UN". Egge outlines Namibia's involvement in the three pillars of the UN system – peace and security, development, and human rights – by which the country demonstrates its commitment to international stability. Regarding the pillar of peace and security, the chapter gives an overview of Namibia's engagement in UN peacekeeping missions and informs the reader about its domestic policy decisions on peacekeeping and security. With respect to the development pillar, the author discusses mutual involvement, i.e. Namibia's contribution to the current UN Development Assistance Framework and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but also the UN's multifaceted engagement in Namibia. As regards the human rights pillar, the chapter informs the reader about Namibia having signed and ratified most of the core international human rights treaties, although it faces considerable challenges with respect to their domestic implementation and the reporting obligations associated with them. The author concludes with an outlook on the UN's future role, also in Namibia, in facilitating, advising and assisting governments to fill the three UN pillars with life worldwide. Since the author submitted her manuscript in 2011 when she left Namibia and the UN, the chapter does not cover the influential developments in 2013 around the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF) signed with Namibia for the period 2014–2018.

Section IV: Namibia's foreign relations in perspective

The last Section of the publication captures some of the interfaces of foreign relations and several other important policy areas, and their mutual influence. This section is rather inconclusive, but it portrays the legal, parliamentary, security and economic dimensions of foreign relations and discusses Namibia's pan-Africanism as well as its involvement in global governance matters.

Sacky Shanghala, Chairman of Namibia's Law Reform and Development Commission, in his chapter entitled **"The legal dimension of Namibia's foreign relations"**, argues that the interaction between and among states is defined by the rules of international law, and that the policies of state that drive the interests of one state as it relates to others is *foreign policy*. International law and foreign relations are inextricably intertwined, however. Since international law and agreements are binding on Namibia under Article 144 of its Constitution, and since the UN, AU and SADC continuously produce new or revised legal instruments, international law affects not only Namibia's domestic laws and their implementation, but also its foreign policy. For Shanghala, Namibia's interactions in the international sphere and the attainment of its political, trade and economic interests are inevitably linked. As a constitutional democracy, Namibia's international actions ought to be justifiable in law; state action is obliged to be sound in law, although it will always remain politics.

André du Pisani, Professor of Politics at the University of Namibia, in his chapter titled **"Namibia's foreign relations and security policy: Exploration of a critical nexus"**, explores the interface between the complex but crucial interface of Namibia's foreign relations and security policy since the country's Independence in 1990. Select case studies such as the reintegration of Walvis Bay and the offshore islands, participation in various peacekeeping operations in the SADC region and beyond, the peaceful resolution of disputes, Namibia's military engagement in the DRC (1998–2001), and accession to various international legal instruments on aspects of political life with security implications are evidence that Namibia values the primacy of different forms of security, both classic (state-based) and new forms of human security, and their relationship to foreign policy and national development. The chapter shows that Namibia's foreign policy has at times not been consistent where aspects of human rights and security have been threatened (e.g. in the conflicts in the DRC and Zimbabwe) and rather reflected older forms of solidarity politics, undermining the constitutional 'peace through law' approach. For Du Pisani, Namibia's positive record in Africa is enviable in respect of new forms of security such as the environment, inclusive of the marine environment; the safeguarding of biodiversity; measures taken to address global warming; and other forms of security, such as peacekeeping or maintaining Africa as a nuclear-free continent. Du Pisani pleads that Namibia should reignite its role as 'norm entrepreneur' in SADC and beyond, and for additional policy-focused research on the country's foreign relations, particularly since these are often poorly communicated to the public.

In his chapter, **"Beyond economic diplomacy: The interface of Namibia's foreign relations and economic cooperation"**, Lesley Blaauw, political scientist at the University of Namibia, argues that the end of the Cold War and its bipolar rivalry in globalisation processes reduced the importance of sovereign states in foreign policy formulation and, consequently, led to a growing importance of 'regions' and 'economic regionalism', besides opening up new space for the participation of non-state actors in international affairs. Blaauw's *new regionalism* acknowledges that engagement with the world economy is unavoidable, but makes a case for *developmental regionalism* in respect of building new regional economic capacity, focusing on national developmental needs and the engagement of the international community. Blaauw demands a developmental foreign policy for Namibia, articulating a clear developmental macroeconomic framework that aims to restore the economic sovereignty of Namibia and of the developing world.
Nora Schimming-Chase, a semi-retired Namibian diplomat and former Member of Namibia's National Assembly, in her chapter entitled **"The parliamentary role of Namibia's foreign relations"** discusses the roles defined for Parliament under the Namibian Constitution and the White Paper on Foreign Policy, Defence and Security. She informs the reader about Parliament's oversight function in respect of foreign relations by explaining the role of the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations, Defence and Security. The author also analyses Parliament's legislative role by illustrating how international agreements are ratified. The chapter outlines the role of Namibia's

Parliament and/or its members in regional (SADC Parliamentary Forum), continental (Pan-African Parliament) and international parliamentary bodies (Inter-parliamentary Union, ACP–EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly) and refers to some policy statements by Parliament on current issues and crises. The special role of former Foreign Minister Theo-Ben Gurirab as former President of the UN General Assembly (1999–2000) and as President of the Inter-parliamentary Union (2008–2010) is also elaborated. The author concludes with critical comments on the question of whether Namibia's Parliament indeed plays its designated role, or has, de facto, very little – if any – say on foreign policy in general or in particular.

"Namibia's attitudes towards pan-Africanism" is the title of an exploration of this theme by Joseph Diescho, a widely published intellectual and currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management. For Diescho, pan-Africanism is the intellectual preoccupation of individuals concerned about Africa and her inhabitants in the context of what was inflicted on them by other nations. Due to Namibia's disdain for intellectual thought, neither pan-Africanism nor the country's diplomatic services could thrive – although Namibia is a child of pan-Africanism and of internationalism. As the first success story born of the international community, Namibia has turned out to be more a member rather than an active participant of its fora, in Diescho's view, and Namibia's foreign policy towards the international community (and Africa) has been more reactive than proactive. Diescho also explores some areas of influence for Namibia in relation to pan-Africanism, namely human rights, national interest, regional integration, peaceful conflict resolution, national reconciliation, internationalism, race relations, corruption, and the land question. Diescho critiques that Namibia is a member of the – albeit questionable – Pan-African Parliament, and yet refuses to participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which is considered as the jewel of NEPAD. For Diescho, the Pan-Afrikan Centre of Namibia (PACON), despite the noble intentions evident at its establishment in 1999, has become a mini-cultural mouthpiece of the ruling party instead of a true pan-Africanist movement.

In his contribution titled **"Namibia: Global governance matters"**, Henning Melber, internationally published expert on African politics, argues that a country's international credibility relies on a trustworthy foreign policy that is in line with the global normative frameworks adopted by UN member states. Although civil society and NGOs play a critical role in the general understanding and conceptualisation of global governance, Melber deliberately homes in on the government as an actor through its state policy. The chapter elaborates on the decisive impact made by the UN as a multi-level broker in Namibia's decolonisation process, e.g. its Resolutions on Namibia, the creation of the UN Council for Namibia, the UN Institute for Namibia, and UNTAG. The author questions whether, in return, the country has consistently complied with the normative frameworks, the values and the principles relating to global and good governance as spearheaded by the UN. The chapter reminds the reader that Namibia has not only gained international respect with regard to combating climate change, its environmental policies, and its

protection of the common global good. Namibia is also a signatory to most international conventions and agreements, and Namibian presidents and top officials have on several occasions repeated their commitment to the principles of democracy and the rule of law. Against this background, Melber mentions official initiatives which seem to indicate a divergent thinking, such as Nujoma's state visit to Nigeria's former President Abacha in 1995, the state visit by Indonesia's former President Suharto to Namibia in 1997, the lasting friendship with Zimbabwe's incumbent President Robert Mugabe, Namibia's defence of the former Milošević regime, and Namibia's military intervention in the DRC (1998–2001). At the AU Summit in 2009, Namibia also endorsed the dismissal of the extradition order by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for Sudan's President Al-Bashir, despite having ratified the Treaty of Rome which established the ICC. In 2011, President Pohamba criticised NATO's intervention in Libya, which was sanctioned by the UN Security Council. Moreover, contrary to its constitutional commitment to the rule of law, Namibia played an active role in the suspension of the SADC Tribunal. In the case of the Caprivi treason trial, Melber argues that Namibia delays and, hence, denies justice to the accused, who have been waiting for a verdict for more than 12 years now. The chapter concludes that Namibia has squandered its chances to establish a lasting international reputation, and could have done better in upholding global governance matters.

Conclusion

The collective effort of this publication with its 20 chapters brings together academicians, diplomats and policymakers both from within and beyond Namibia, with the purpose of offering a systematic understanding of some of the most significant dimensions of the country's foreign relations. The book does not claim to be comprehensive, but intends to provide a systematic understanding of Namibia's international and foreign relations. If it deepens understanding, stimulates research and a broad public discourse, and guides the shaping of the country's foreign relations formulation and management, then the publication will have served its envisaged, noble purpose.

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