The Frontline States Alliance and the Management of Threat in Southern Africa

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ABSTRACT

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The Frontline States (FLS) was one of the most important security institutions in southern Africa. Formed in the 1970s against white-minority regimes in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, after the fall of apartheid the FLS was transformed into the Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation (OPDSC) and its committee for defense and security, the Inter-State Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC), was adopted by the OPDSC. This path of transformation, rather than pure extinction, reveals the significance of the FLS legacy to southern African regional security and concomitantly requires a new approach to the FLS that captures the processes of formation, expansion and transformation in a unifying way. I propose an explanation of the FLS from the perspective of threat management, applying Weitsman’s (2004) theory of alliances to examine the FLS and the dynamics of threat in the region.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC African National Congress
ASAS Association of Southern African States
ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations
FLS Frontline States
FNLA National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FRELIMO Liberation Front of Mozambique
ISDSC Inter-State Defense and Security Committee
ISPDC Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee
MDP Mutual Defense Pact
MPLA Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAU Organization of African Unity
OPDSC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation
RISDP Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
SADC Southern African Development Community
SADCC Southern Africa’s Development Coordination Conference
SIPO Strategic Indicative Plan
SWAPO South West African People’s Organization
UN United Nations
UNITA Union for the Total Independence of Angola
ZANU-PF Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
INTRODUCTION

The Frontline States (FLS) is the institution that most influenced the regional security environment in southern Africa. Formed as an alliance against minority rule, one would have expected it simply to be disbanded after the collapse of the last bastion of minority rule, apartheid South Africa. However, the states in the region opted to navigate between change and continuity, conserving the Inter-State Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC) and transforming the FLS into the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation (OPDSC). This endurance of the ISDSC, which survived the transformation of the FLS, invites us to revise previous explanations of the motivations for the formation, expansion and transformation of this alliance and to propose a new approach to the study of the FLS.

Heretofore, studies of the FLS have employed different theoretical perspectives which have enriched our understanding of this alliance. Nevertheless, three important questions deserve further explanation. First, in a context of the efforts of white-minority regimes to survive the regional wave of independence and, on the other hand, the need of the newly independent states to consolidate their independence and security, it is pertinent to revisit the question of whether the FLS, as an alliance, was formed to aggregate power or to face a threat. Second, the FLS expansion, with alignment of new members, raises the question of these states’ motivations to join the alliance in different circumstances. Third, the transformation of FLS into the OPDSC, through preservation of the ISDSC, also deserves an explanation coherent with the motivations of FLS formation and expansion.
Therefore, I propose to analyze FLS formation, expansion and transformation from a unifying perspective of management of threat, applying Weitsman’s (2004) theory of alliances under conditions of threat. Accordingly, my examination of the FLS focuses on the conditions of external and internal threats. I assert that the FLS was formed and expanded to balance the threat of minority rule, the end of which created a hedging environment – in which states seek to enclose in their orbit of security relations those who are not yet friends or enemies (Weitsman, 2004) – that encouraged the FLS transformation and preservation of the ISDSC. Weitsman’s theory permits me to explain not only the formation of the FLS, but also its expansion and transformation in a unifying way. For instance, while it is widely assumed that the FLS was transformed due to the change of the external level of threat, little attention is given to the level of internal threat which allowed the OPDSC to conserve the ISDSC.

I develop an explanation of FLS formation, expansion and transformation under conditions of threat in four chapters. In the Chapter 1, I review the literature on alliances and on the FLS, explore the contributions of Weitsman’s (2004) theory, present the argument and methodology of the study and offer a rationale for the case choice. In Chapter 2, I examine the motivation for FLS formation, through the definition of white-minority regimes as the external threat to the founding states and through the analysis of the FLS dynamics of internal threat. In Chapter 3, I explore expansion of the FLS by the alignment of Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. I employ the same analytical framework based on external and internal threat to determine the motivations of alignment. By examining the hedging environment created in the region at
the end of minority rule, I propose, in Chapter 4, to explain how the FLS became the OPDSC while maintaining the ISDSC. Finally, in the conclusion, I summarize the findings of this study and indicate the possibility of new investigations of the FLS and southern Africa security cooperation on the basis of Weitsman’s theory.
CHAPTER 1: ALLIANCES AND THE FLS: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The literature offers various definitions of alliances, emphasizing different aspects. However, there is consensus about the basic characteristics of an alliance. This consensus sees an alliance as a relationship among two or more states characterized by accords of security enterprise. This definition is informed by authors such as Holsti, Hopmann and Sullivan (1973), who define alliance as “a formal agreement between two or more nations to collaborate on national security issues” (p. 4; see also Walt, 1987; Weitsman, 2004). I develop in this chapter the theoretical bases for this study. I review the literature on alliances from the perspectives of realism, rationalism, liberalism and constructivism. This general examination introduces the development of theoretical and analytical approaches to the FLS. I then explore the main contributions of Weitsman’s (2004) theory to the explanation of the FLS. Finally, I assert my argument, method, indicators, and reasons for selecting the case of FLS.

Theoretical Traditions on Alliances

The literature about alliances can be explored through the issues of their origins, management and consequences, as in Maoz’s (2000) work. However, as in the case of Weitsman (2004), it can also be analyzed in a comprehensive way by exploring both the theoretical perspectives and the typology of alliances according to states’ motivation. I review the literature, focusing on the discussion of the different studies of alliances within different theoretical traditions.
Realism

Realism can be considered the foundational theoretical tradition of studies about alliances. Built upon the assumption that anarchy is the organizational paradigm of relationships among states, realism holds that states’ survival in the international system is a function of their capacity to manage the creation, distribution, and seeking of power. Thus, the need for survival in a competitive system can affect states both by the greed to dominate and the threat of being dominated. The realist approach to studying alliances has tended to emphasize the balance of capabilities and the balance of threat as major motivations for their formation.

One of the oldest realist accounts of alliances can be found in Thucydides’ (431 B.C.E) writings about the Peloponnesian War. He recognizes the complexity of motivations for alliances formation and management. For instance, he observes that while Sparta’s allies did not pay tribute, Athens received tribute from its allies, which increased its capabilities. This was later seen by Sparta as threatening, which substantially contributed to the beginning of the war. Thucydides’ discussion of the political, military and economic relations among city/states in times of conflict helps one understand how old the phenomenon of alliances actually is and to appreciate the complexity of their formation, composition, and management.

The perspective of alliance as a means of balancing power has been one of the main explanatory variables for the realist tradition. For instance, exploring the theory of equilibrium, Gulick (1955) examines alliances as a means for balancing power. He asserts that states tend to balance power and maintain the “status quo” (p. 298). In the
same vein, Wright (1965) sees alliances from the perspective of balance of power. Liska (1968) reinterprets the tradition by defining alliances as balance of power in economic terms. He writes that the objective of alliances is both the “[maximization] of gains and [the] sharing [of] liability” (p. 26). He clearly states that alliances are primarily formed to oppose adversaries. Morgenthau (1978) also explains alliance in terms of “balance of power” (p. 188). Through alliances states combine their capabilities with those of other states and simultaneously impede those new allies from aggregating with enemies of the original states.

Alliances occupy a central place in Waltz’s (1979) theory of balance of power. From his perspective, balance of power is less the seeking of power maximization than states’ efforts to survive in the international system by maintaining their position. Like Waltz, Walt (1987) asserts that in forming alliances states mainly seek security. However, he conceptualizes security from the imbalance of threat rather than from the imbalance of power perspective. Priess (1996) applies Walt’s theory to the Gulf Cooperation Council, affirming that security threats explain its formation.

Scheweller (1997) argues that neither Waltz’s nor Walt’s understanding of security as the main motivation for alliance formation takes into consideration the interest of ambitious states searching to augment their capabilities, even through the means of bandwagoning. He focuses on interests which can be either security or power. He asserts that when states ally, beyond conditions of threat, they bandwagon instead of balance, in order to maximize their interests. This argument, focusing on the concept of interest as the motivator of alignment, already manifests an articulation of rationalist and realist
explanations of alliances. Cha (1999) develops a “quasi-alliance model” (p. 5) to interpret the relationship between Japan and South Korea as one of “two states [which] remain unallied but share a third party [the United States] as a common ally” (p. 3).

Mearsheimer (2001), in his theory of “offensive realism,” argues that the survival of great states is sought through the possibility of hegemony. Maximization of power is an imperative of great powers’ security. The explanation of balancing alliances as the result of systemic conditions does not satisfy Schweller (2006), who thinks that states’ decision to balance can be better explained through examination of intra-state dynamics than through systemic approaches. Adding the concepts of offense and defense to the explanation of alliance behavior, Tierney (2008) reinterprets the realist concept of chain-ganging as “offensive chain-ganging” (p. 7). To this, he adds “defense chain-ganging” (p. 7) and “coordinated action” (p. 8), which can be either offensive or defensive. States belonging to the same alliance can influence each other in terms of preventing military action against a third. Concerning this issue, Pressman (2008) analyzes the phenomenon of “alliance restraint” as the capacity of a state to prevent its allies from implementing their military intents (p. 6). Alliance thus can also serve as a mechanism for diplomatic prevention or termination of war.

Realism has contributed considerably to the current knowledge about alliances. It has explored the contours of security management with regard to power and threat, peace and war. However, realist scholars have not paid enough attention to issues such as the institutionalization of alliances. This is extensively explored by the liberal theoretical tradition.
Liberalism

Liberalism has focused on understanding the reality of cooperation not as an issue marginal to the relationships among states, but rather as a core concept of international relations. For this theoretical tradition, cooperation does not just mitigate the effects of anarchy, it also changes the way states relate to each other. The institutionalization of this cooperation has also been emphasized, especially for its capacity to influence states’ behavior. Therefore, studies within the liberal tradition have generally emphasized the institutional aspect of alliances.

Gelpi’s (1999) combination of the realist and the liberal approaches allows him to study alliances not only as “mechanisms for exercising military power” but also as “security management institutions” (p. 139). To understand the significance of institutions within the liberal theoretical tradition, one can consider the definition of international institutions proposed by Wallander, Haftendorn and Keohane (1999) as “persistent and connected sets of rules, often affiliated with organizations that operate across international boundaries. Institutions range from conventions (such as sovereignty) to regimes (such as the non-proliferation regime) to formal organizations (such as NATO)” (pp. 1-2). In this sense, Kegley and Raymond (1990) analyze alliances from a normative perspective. Given the possibility of defection, the reliability of states regarding their commitment to the promises is linked to normative aspects which underpin alliances.

Duffield (1995) argues that alliances’ institutional aspects are important because they can define their members’ behavior on a regular basis. Thus, along with the
traditional perspective of balance-of-power and examination of individual characteristics of the members of an alliance, the institutional perspective should also be taken into consideration.

Discussing the influence of alliance in shaping domestic politics, Gibler and Sewell (2006) show that alliances create conditions for regimes’ transition to democracy. They find that the level of external threat defined the type of regimes adopted by the former Soviet states. Gibler and Sewell observe that NATO contributed to the lowering of this threat, permitting them to become democratic regimes. Conversely, those states which continued experiencing high levels of external threat adopted autocratic regimes.

Applied to the study of alliance, the difference of perspectives between realism and liberalism can be perceived in the way each tradition approaches the nature of alliances, but also in their existence and the prediction of their outcomes. Hellmann and Wolf (1993) offer a comparison of the neorealist and neoliberal contributions to the study of alliances, applying both perspectives to the prediction of NATO’s survival after the fall of the Soviet threat. The realist approach predicted the loosening of cohesion, if not dissolution, of the alliance, given the fact that the congregating-factor fell. Conversely, the neoliberals observed that the alliance could continue because, as an institution, it facilitates cooperation among member. Thus, NATO could serve as an optimal opportunity to test the predictor power of both realist and liberal perspectives.

While liberalism helps to explain the fact that the institutionalization of alliances shapes the behavior and preferences of the member states, it does not offer sufficient account of the nature of these preferences and choices. The rationalist
perspective has been interested in explaining the nature of those preferences and choices of alliances as formal and rational.

**Rationalism**

The study of alliances has progressed theoretically and empirically within and beyond the traditional issues of balancing of power, balance of threat, and alliances’ institutionalization (see Sprecher and Krause, 2006). Studies conducted within the rationalist theoretical tradition have been abundant. Based on the study of actors’ choices and preferences from a formal perspective, the rationalist tradition helps one understand states’ calculation of interests, utility, and how these calculations impact alliances formation and cohesion. Although it is a different theoretical tradition, rationalism has in several ways complemented other traditions’ findings, especially those of the realist tradition, as observed by Weitsman (2004). Applied to the research of alliances, rationalism has evidenced the conditions and consequences of balance of interests, deterrence, and signaling mechanisms.

One example of the formality of the rationalist perspective can be found in Snyder’s (1997) approach to alliances, which he defines as “formal associations of states for the use (or nonuse) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own membership” (p. 4, italics in the original). Researching on war and alliances, Singer and Small (1968) adopted a quantitative approach to their relationship. They demonstrate that alliance aggregation and the possibility of war can be studied in terms of correlation. The study of alliances has been one of the interests of the Correlates of War Project. Although “[t]he original and continuing goal of the project [founded in
1963 by Singer and Small] has been the systematic accumulation of scientific knowledge about war” (Correlates of War, para. 1), its investigations on the relationship between war and alliances has contributed to the study of alliances within the rationalist theoretical tradition.

Olson and Zeckhauser (1966) propose an economic-based model that studies alliances through the concept of public goods. One conclusion of their study is that large states “tend to bear disproportionate shares of the burdens of international organizations” (p. 278). With his theory of “expected utility” calculations, Bueno de Mesquita (1981) develops an explanation of war from a formal perspective and encourages comprehension of alliances within the framework of calculated choices of rational actors.

In his work about the expansion of interstate war, Sabrosky (1985) uses the number of alliances in the international system along with the distribution of power as independent variables which explain the spread of wars. In his view, alliances can augment the possibility of war expansion through the phenomenon of entrapment. Conybeare (1994) compares the military with the corporate enterprise and concludes that “countries in high-risk international military environments will find it more costly to raise debt-type capital and will seek more equity financing through allies” (p. 233).

Studying alliances’ credibility beyond the reputational, Morrow (1994) proposes a formal approach of alliance credibility, arguing that alliances indicate a commonality of interest which generates deterrence. On the other hand, Sorokin (1994) applies the perspective of game theory and emphasizes the importance of information and certainty for the success of alliance formation and deterrence. Opposing the signaling logic to that
of balance of power or interest and applying the possibility of immediate deterrence in a context of international crises, Fearon (1994) argues that “the key to understanding variations across cases in immediate deterrence outcomes is each side’s prior expectations about the importance to the other side of the issues at stake” (p. 265).

The relationship among allies is not always marked by a convergence of interests. When divergence exists, crises can emerge. Richardson (1996) explores two crises in the relationship between Britain and the United States: the Suez and the Falklands. He concludes that alliance management requires clarity with regard to the scope of cooperation and realism concerning the expectations from the friendship among allies.

Bennett, Lepgold and Unger (1997) focus their attention on examination of “alliance burden sharing” (p. 3). Applying this to Operation Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf War, they articulate certain hypotheses from the international relations literature to explain the contours of alliance burden sharing. First, collective action insights help affirm the tendency of weak states to take advantage of the more powerful members of the alliance. Second, Walt’s (1987) theory of balance of threat helps in the analysis of different factors which unevenly motivate states’ alignment. Third, alliance dependence helps to elaborate factors that influence the intra-alliance negotiations and determine the benefits of its preservation.

Aiming to explain the anomalies of alliances in the face of states’ passive or active disposition to ally, Christensen and Snyder (1997) explore the unit level variances instead of merely focusing on structural conditions. On the other hand, Schweller (1998) insists on the differentiation of states’ motivation towards alliance formation. According
to him, not all states are motivated to balance threat as the case for satisfied states. In fact, dissatisfied states seek opportunities to maximize their interests and make profit. More recently, Long and Leeds (2006) found that the rise of trade among allies is not completely explained by the realist argument that security concerns lead states to trade preferentially with allies. Long and Leeds demonstrate that most of the time an explanation can be found in the advantage of bargaining security and trade at the same time. Thus, the reduced cost in concomitantly processing trade and security bargains explains the tendency towards trade increase among allies.

The rationalist tradition has contributed to the understanding of alliances’ behavior by focusing on formal and rational aspects of decision-making. This has helped to enlighten the complexity of phenomena such as deterrence and signaling as essential roles of alliances. However, researchers in this tradition have not examined the cultural and social contexts in which those rational and formal decisions are made. The constructivist approach look at rationality as socially constructed (Adler, 2008). Therefore, it responds to the complexity of identity formation from shared social and cultural constructions.

**Constructivism**

The constructivist tradition has extended our understanding of alliance in different ways, bringing the debate into the sphere of the social and cultural construction of institutions, along with identity and other ideational aspects. In the constructivist tradition, the debate about alliances is questioned for its realist and liberal fundaments. In fact, these two perspectives conceptualize alliances as a means to maintain or manage the
international balance of power or a way of cooperation that facilitates transactions among member states in terms of security. Based on ideational aspects, the constructivist tradition proposes another way to approach and conceptualize security. This constructivist re-conceptualization considers elements such as “norms, identities and culture” (Jepperson, Wendt, and Kartzenstein, 1996, p. 33).

Exploring the contributions of the constructivist approach to the realm of international relations, specifically international security, Adler and Barnett (1998b) revisit the concept of security communities and propose it as an alternative way to think about sustainable peace beyond the realist and liberal perspectives. Applying the concept of security community to post-Cold War Europe, Adler (1992) previously affirmed that the realm of the security community should be situated as a middle ground between the realist and idealist approaches to peace and stability. In the same vein, Acharya (2001) distinguishes a security community from alliances. In his words, “an alliance is usually conceived and directed against a pre-recognised and commonly perceived external threat. Security communities, on the other hand, identify no such threat or may have no function of organizing a joint defence against them” (p. 18). The same distinction was also invoked by Weber (1992) when examining the future of NATO after the end of the Cold War.

Barnett (1996) suggests that the explanatory power of theories based on the concept of anarchy is limited concerning two important aspects of alliance formation: “construction of the threat and the choice of the alliance partner” (p. 401). Applying the constructivist approach to the reality of the Middle East, he asserts that “it is the politics
of identity rather than the logic of anarchy that often provides a better understanding of which states are viewed as a potential or immediate threat to the state’s security” (p. 401).

Similarly, Acharya (1998) applies the concept of security communities to interpret the relationship among Southeast Asian states, overcoming the restriction of this concept to politically and economically liberal countries. Examining the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), he emphasizes the idea of shared identity as the basis of security communities. On the other hand, Williams (1997) argues that alliances are underpinned by the “process of institutionalization,” articulating three aspects: “knowledge, trust, and symbolic power” (p. 289).

Mattern (2005) proposes identity as the source of international order. She criticizes the realist and liberal approach to international order, declaring that these perspectives wrongly take “factors that contribute to international order” as “sources of international order” (p. 4). These factors are balance of power, from the realist perspective, and institutionalization of shared interests, according to the liberal approach. Mattern asserts that these factors’ contribution to international order is underpinned by a shared international order, which, “at least during crises,” is imposed by “representational force,” manifested in language (p. 14).

Adding constructivist contributions to the arguments of other schools of thought, Hemmer and Katzenstein (2002) examine the weight of the United States’ identity in defining its foreign policy towards Europe (with NATO) and Southeast Asia. However, identity is not the sole explanatory variable. Aspects such as power are also taken into account: “U.S. decision makers’ ready identification with Europe and the perception of
Europe as belonging to the same political community as the United States helped, together with material and instrumental factors, move the United States to favor multilateralism in Europe” (p. 598). More recently, Adler (2008) explains the expansion of security communities in terms of “cooperative security practices that help diffuse peaceful change via self-restraint subjectivities” and cites NATO as an example (p. 14).

Constructivism has its own limitations. It does not aim at proposing a theoretically systematic work on alliances. However, it does help to explain the social and cultural face of alliances. It also considers threat and power as comprising ideational aspects which shape the choice of allies and counter-allies. Identity, as one of these ideational aspects, has “normative as well as instrumental dimensions” (Ruggie, 1998, p. 33). Therefore, the formation, cohesion and endurance of alliances have also to do with the generation of states’ identities in the structures of international relations, which, according to Wendt (1995), are fundamentally social. In this sense, the constructivist approach can also complement other perspectives to explain issues such as threat perception which are incompletely addressed by realist or rationalist perspectives.

This analysis of the literature has shown that the study of alliance has been diachronically and synchronically dynamic. The four perspectives are not necessarily incompatible, but rather are often complementary. With the contributions of those traditions, today we have a rich understanding of alliances. From this review,¹ I deduce that the ways authors conceptualize security have informed their approaches to alliances. Aspects, such as power, threat, formal calculations, cooperation, and identities, have

¹ In constructing this literature review, I based my research on the manuscript of Weitsman’s (2010) forthcoming work on alliances and war.
informed the literature from different theoretical traditions. While those perspectives’
contribute to the study of alliances and inform the present approach, my examination of
the FLS is guided by Weitsman’s (2004) theory of alliance under conditions of threat.
This explanation of alliance from the perspective of threat management has not always
informed systematically the literature on the FLS as can be confirmed in the following
review.

Theoretical and Analytical Approaches to the FLS

The literature on the FLS is characterized by diversity of theoretical and
analytical approaches. I explore in this section those different frameworks. While
analyses of the FLS are generally inserted into broad studies of both security and
economic issues in southern Africa, rare are the systematic studies of the FLS as an
alliance. Among those, I emphasize the studies by Thompson (1987), Omari (1991a) and
Khadiagala (1994) as comprehensive studies dedicated to the FLS alliance.

Most of the literature on FLS analyzes the southern African region as a
subsystem (Bowman, 1977; Shaw, 1977; Ali, 1987; Khadiagala, 1994). The adoption of a
sub-systemic approach provides room for examining commonalities among the countries
in the region and establishing aspects of differentiation from external actors’ intervention.
Thus, this approach helps analyze the region as a whole and how the action of each entity
in the subsystem affected other actors.

Articulating economic and security issues, the dependence approach illuminated
the relationships between South Africa and the FLS member states. For instance, Shaw
(1977) describes southern Africa in terms of economic dependence and political
independence. Similar to the dependence perspective is the sub-imperialist perspective, which concentrated on South Africa’s role in the region as a middle power, bridging the center and the periphery (Bush and Kibble, 1985). These two theories, dependence and sub-imperialism, are criticized by Libby (1987) who argues that a good theoretical approach to the region should take into account “the autonomous role of domestic national politics in evaluating the political significance of regional economic relationships” (pp. 326-327).

Thompson (1986) offers an extensive study on the FLS, focusing on its role in the liberation of Zimbabwe. Her analysis of southern Africa is built on the theory of relative autonomy. While recognizing the importance of dependence theory in understanding the “structural-constraints” (p. 7) of southern African states’ economies, Thompson observes that this theory underestimates the dynamic relationships between dominant and subordinate classes and the struggle for control of the states as political processes. She points out the relative autonomy of some states comprising the FLS as the conceptual key which justifies their relative success in the liberation of the region.

Omari’s (1991a) study proposes the articulation of approaches coming from regional studies with historical research to affirm the “rise and decline of the Frontline States alliance” (p. 1). Given the complexity of the institutional nature of the FLS, Omari thinks that “alternative studies approaches enable the analysis to cover a larger area of ground, thus overcoming some of the constraints imposed by each single approach” (p. 39). Therefore, one would argue, his work is theoretically eclectic.
Khadiagala’s (1994) work on the FLS is one of the most comprehensive. Based on the literature about small-states alliances, he stresses the FLS member states’ need for capabilities aggregation and attraction of extra-regional powers’ intervention to complement the alliance’s aggregated power. Thus, his definition of the FLS is coherent with the approach he takes; he presents the FLS as “an informal political alliance that has attempted to aggregate the power of its members for the pursuit of specific foreign policy objectives in southern Africa” (p. 10).

More recently, authors have included the FLS alliance in their broader study of regional security since the 1970s. This inclusion has followed different theoretical approaches. For instance, Ngoma (2005), from Adler’s and Barnett’s (1998a) perspective of a security community, introduces the examination of FLS in his study about security in southern Africa. On the other hand, based on the perspective of regionalism, encompassing realist and globalist contributions, Francis’ (2006) study refers to the FLS, with the ISDSC, as a key mechanism to understand the origins of current southern African cooperation on issues concerning peace and security.

Literature about the FLS has been characterized by different theoretical frameworks. However, when it is not limited to an historical approach to FLS functioning, achievements and failures, most of the literature is based on the consideration of the FLS as a balancing-of-power alliance. Even when research takes into account the manifestation of threat, this consideration is limited to the analysis of external threats. Therefore, although these perspectives explain relevant characteristics of the
alliance, they do not adequately account for the logic behind the management of threat as the basis of the FLS formation, expansion and transformation.

While these theoretical and analytical perspectives explain relevant characteristics of the alliance, they do not focus on management of threat as the basis of the FLS. Therefore, there is a need to examine the possibility of better understanding the FLS from the perspective of management of threat. In this regard, Weitsman’s (2004) theory is the appropriate theoretical framework that leads us to examination of the conditions of threat that motivated the FLS formation, expansion and transformation.

Contributions of Weitsman’s Theory

By developing a theory of alliance under conditions of both internal and external threat, Weitsman (2004) contributes to a different understanding of the FLS that highlights the management of threat behind the alliance. Therefore, in this section, I present the main features of Weitsman’s theory and explore its main contributions to the present study. The development of these two points focuses on the need to examine both internal and external threats, and the consideration of the levels of those threats to determine the motivations for alignment.

Weitsman’s (2004) “unifying theory” (p. 17) is an assumption of the findings of previous investigations on alliance in an integrative way. She had previously questioned the traditional explanations of alliance formation as being a result of a common interest in balancing. Weitsman (1997) affirms that a common interest in balancing is not the only motive of alliance formation. Even antagonistic relations may be a reason for allying. From observation of the complexity of states’ motivation to form alliances, Weitsman
suggests that the motivations of alignment determine the conditions of unity of the alliances.

Weitsman (2004) examines from two perspectives the richness of states’ behavior in the face of threat: the levels of threat and the source of threat. First, as to the levels of threat, states are not limited to balancing and bandwagoning. From low to high levels of threat, states will hedge, tether, balance, and bandwagon. They form hedging alliances when they face low levels of threat. This pattern of alliance constitutes management of the potential threat presented by states which are not yet actual adversaries or friends. This type of alliance is characterized by “a low commitment move toward a state that represents neither entirely friend nor foe” (Weitsman, 2004, p. 20). As the levels become moderate, states tether each other “to reduce conflicts and prevent the deployment of the enemy’s capability against them” (p. 19). Increasing levels of threat lead to a situation in which the tethering option is no longer possible and the potential threat is generally made actual. In these cases, “states will defect from these [tethering] alliances and seek to balance against the threatening state” (p. 19). However, high levels of threat can be overwhelming to the extent that balancing can be a suicidal option. States will then bandwagon, allying with the state that threatens their security. Furthermore, the source of threat is also an important variable in the explanation of alliance. In this regard, Weitsman (2004) clarifies that states ally not only when they face threats from a third party (external threat) but also when they strategically choose to manage the threat presented by the states with which they decide to ally (internal threat).
From Weitsman’s theory two central aspects guide the present study. First, the assertion of alliances “under conditions of threat” (p. 6) constitutes one important base for studying the FLS formation, expansion and transformation. The use of threat to explain the FLS makes sense not only because the balance of power fails to adequately demonstrate that the FLS aggregation of capabilities could balance the power of the minority-rulled countries, but also because threat entails the analysis of capability as well as intentions. As observed by Weitsman (2004), “A threatening state has both the capacity and the will to do harm to some important interest” (p. 33). Second, the proposition of the source and level of threat as important values of the independent variable in alliances’ behaviors illuminates my explanation of each state’s alignment with the FLS and the reason for its transformation. In fact, focusing only on external threats does not sufficiently account for the dynamics of change and continuity which characterized the security institutional arrangement in the region in the 1990s.

The adoption of Weitsman’s (2004) theory helps explain in a unifying way the formation, expansion and transformation of the FLS in terms of the management of threat. This implies the examination of threat from both internal and external perspectives and the respective levels. It is on these assumptions, from Weitsman’s theory, that I develop my argument and methodology.

Argument and Methodology

I argue in this work that the formation, expansion and transformation of the FLS are better explained by a unifying theory of security threats management. First, I assert that the formation of the FLS was a balancing response to white-minority rule in southern
Africa. Second, I affirm that while the expansion of the FLS was motivated overall by balancing intents, it was not incompatible with tethering and hedging motivation which characterized certain FLS states alignment, if one considers the conditions of internal threat. Finally, I suggest that the transformation of the FLS was a hedging response to the regional conditions of threat after the end of minority rule. While the formation of the FLS was characterized by high levels of external threat, its transformation was facilitated by low levels of external threat. However, in each process the levels of internal threat were not high.

The argument of alliance from a management of threat perspective expands our understanding of the FLS formation as a balancing alliance considering the following points. First, the geographical proximity of white-minority-ruled countries to FLS countries represented a threat to the national security of the latter. Second, the military and economic capabilities of South Africa and its regional allies (the Portuguese regime in Angola and Mozambique, and the Rhodesian regime of Ian Smith) constituted a threat to the national security of the FLS founding states and to regional security in general. Third, South Africa and its regional allies manifested a consistent will to undermine the interests of the majority-ruled countries. Furthermore, my perspective invites a look within the FLS to identify possible traits of threat that, along with external threats, motivated states alignment, in the process of formation and expansion of the alliance. Finally, from this perspective, the transformation of the FLS was a strategic response to the low levels of internal and external threats conserving the institutional structure of security cooperation that could allow states to hedge.
I have employed the longitudinal methodology in analysis of the FLS throughout its formation, expansion and transformation. Applying Weitsman’s (2004) theory, I have focused on the concept of threat as the explanatory variable for the three processes of the FLS existence. Therefore, I qualitatively look at the conditions of threat inside and outside the alliance to determine states’ motivations for first allying and second for transforming the resulting alliance. The qualitative approach gives me the flexibility to analyze and interpret the conditions of threat which involve perceiving an indicator such as intentions (see Weitsman, 2004).

I use two main indicators for determining the conditions of threat: capabilities and intentions. Capabilities are manifested by military and economic might and geographic proximity. Military and economic capabilities are illustrated in the Appendix through presentation of the military expenditure, military size, population, and GDP of each state. For geographic proximity, I consider the distances among states, focusing on the aspect of border sharing. Capabilities and geographic proximity alone represent only potential threat. They are crucial in assessing threat, but intentions are also important. As stated by Walt (1987) “even states with rather modest capabilities may prompt others to balance if they are perceived as especially aggressive” (p. 25). Therefore, I also examine the manifestation of aggressive intentions. For this indicator I relied on the literature to examine states’ ideology, and political and military actions which manifested a will to destabilize other states’ interests.

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2 For these indicators of threat, I follow Walt’s (1987) and Weitsman’s (2004) insights.
I consider these indicators as complementary and the high level of threat reflects not only a great difference of capabilities between the threatening and the threatened states but also the increase of the indicators (capabilities and intentions). From assessment of the conditions of threat, the motivations for allying are determined: balancing in the case of high levels of external threat and low levels of internal threat; tethering under conditions of moderate internal threat levels and low external threat levels; and hedging when both internal and external threat levels are low (see Weitsman, 2004).

This research is limited concerning the types of sources. It was not based on interviews with the main actors of the alliance nor did it rely on consultation of official archives of the concerned states. Therefore, evidence for my arguments is based on the literature, using both descriptive and analytical resources. I have attempted to compensate this limitation by comparing different sources of the descriptive literature and focusing more on the analytical aspects.

I selected the case of FLS for two reasons: first, because, being a southern African alliance, it confirms the applicability of Weitsman’s (2004) theory, beyond alliances before and during the World War I and beyond the European and Asian geographic contexts. Second, the explanation of the FLS from Weitsman’s perspective of threat management captures three important processes of the FLS not yet explored by the literature from a unifying perspective of management of threat, formation, expansion and transformation.
Conclusion

I launched in this chapter the theoretical bases for the present work. I explored the contributions of realism, liberalism, rationalism and constructivism to the study of alliances and reviewed the main theoretical and analytical approaches to the FLS. I also discussed the contributions of Weitsman’s theory to the study of alliances in general and the FLS in particular. I introduced my argument affirming the explanation of the FLS formation, expansion and transformation as strategies to manage the conditions of threat experienced by southern African states. Exploring the indicators of capabilities and intentions, the next two chapters examine the motivations for southern African states’ alignment, first by forming the alliance and second by expanding it.
CHAPTER 2: FLS FORMATION UNDER CONDITIONS OF THREAT

This chapter analyzes the conditions of threat that motivated formation of the FLS. I argue that this formation was motivated to balance the high levels of external threat perceived by the founding states of the alliance. I develop this argument by first exploring the factors that facilitated FLS formation, though they do not define the motivations for allying. Second, I examine in a holistic way the conditions of external threat that motivated FLS formation. Third, I focus on each FLS founding state’s conditions of external threat. Finally, I analyze the conditions of internal threat confirming the balancing motivations of the FLS formation.

Formation of the FLS

In this section, I explore two historical factors that contributed to the formation of the FLS and present the politics of détente as an occasion for the FLS to define the liberation of Zimbabwe as the first target. I argue that whereas those factors facilitated formation of the FLS and its first appearance, the motivations for Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia to form the alliance are to be found in the conditions of external threat perceived by these states.

The commitment of Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia to southern Africa’s liberation did not start with the formation of the FLS. Within the context of southern, central and eastern Africa some groupings and organizations emerged, with the particular engagement of Tanzania and Zambia, to promote the liberation of southern Africa (Omari, 1992; Cilliers, 1999; Ngoma, 2005; Omari and Macaringue, 2007). Among these
organizations, the immediate forerunner of the FLS alliance was the *Mulungushi Club*, a sort of informal consultative forum to discuss the southern Africa situation.

The formation of the FLS was facilitated by the preexisting cooperation between the Tanzanian and Zambian presidents within the Mulungushi Club. They were joined by Botswana’s President Khama and later by Machel, leader of the Liberation Front of Mozambique (Frelimo). Angola joined the alliance months after its independence, in 1976, followed by Zimbabwe and Namibia, following their respective independence. Cilliers (1999) describes the history of states’ accession to FLS membership in the following terms: “Angola joined in 1976, Zimbabwe in 1980 and Namibia in 1990. South Africa briefly joined in 1994 before the demise of the FLS later that same year” (para. 6).

The strategy of struggle against minority rule in southern Africa had diplomatic and military dimensions. This reflects the assumption of a broader African position about southern Africa (see *Manifesto on Southern Africa*, 1969). Shamuyarira (1978) observes that the strategy of the FLS was based on the Lusaka Declaration which was “[d]rafted by Tanzania and Zambia and approved by 15 Central and East African states on April 16, 1969” (p. 18). Nevertheless, the FLS approach to the liberation process evolved from the 1969 Lusaka Declaration to the 1971 Mogadishu Declaration which indicated a preference for armed struggle. Since then, “Dialogue and peaceful settlement of Southern African conflicts were only to be revived by the Harare Declaration (1989) in a very different, post-Cold War context and at a time that both Namibia and Zimbabwe had joined the ranks of the FLS” (Cilliers, 1999, para. 4). The FLS military strategy was based on support of the guerrilla warfare carried out by the liberation movements in
minority-ruled countries. As “a form of political and military warfare involving tactical and strategic dimensions” (Grundy, 1971, italics in the original), guerrilla warfare enjoyed popular support in the concerned countries and UN legitimization (Shamuyarira, 1978).

FLS strategy defined the liberation of Rhodesia as the first target, given that country’s geographical situation of sharing borders with both majority- and minority-ruled countries, and the positive effects its liberation would have on regional and international relations of security and trade (Sesay, 1985). The independence of the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, and South Africa’s politics of détente further rendered Rhodesia the most strategic and urgent target for the alliance. However, the FLS pre-dated the politics of détente, as observed by Nyerere (1984). Therefore, motivated to ally against the external threat represented by minority regimes, the politics of détente was only an occasion that facilitated the FLS focus on Zimbabwe, after the independence of Angola and Mozambique.

In this section, I explored the factors that facilitated formation of the FLS, particularly the pre-existing cooperation among the founding states, and I approached the politics of détente as an opportunity for the FLS to target Zimbabwe liberation as a

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3 The politics of détente was adopted by South Africa as an approach to Rhodesian liberation, loosening the regional environment of conflict following Portugal’s withdrawal (Legum, 1975; Sesay, 1985; Khadiagala, 1994; Omari & Macaringue, 2007). Zambia at first received South Africa’s politics of détente with enthusiasm viewing it as a gesture of openness to a negotiated resolution of southern African liberation (Hirschmann, 1976; Shamuyarira 1978; Khadiagala, 1994). Consequently, President Kaunda encouraged President Khama of Botswana and President Nyerere of Tanzania to work with him in a negotiated solution for Rhodesian liberation (Thompson, 1986). These efforts resulted in the unsuccessful 1974 Lusaka negotiations raising OAU criticism, which only dissipated in April, 1975, at the Ninth Extraordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers in Dar es Salaam, where the FLS received formal recognition and endorsement to represent African interests in the region (Jaster, 1983; Thomposon, 1985, Omari, 1991, Khadiagala, 1994).
priority. However, these factors do not explain the motivation for alignment. In fact, perception of high levels of external threat from the regional minority regimes and the low level of threat among the founding states of the alliance defined the balance motivations for the FLS formation.

**FLS Conditions of External Threat**

The FLS alliance emerged from a context of conflict and a period (1970s) marked by the contestation of colonialism and white settlement in southern Africa. This degenerated into a situation of insecurity characterized on one hand by white-minority regimes’ efforts to consolidate their control of the region, and on the other by the majority-ruled states’ endeavor to guarantee their survival from the threat presented by minority regimes. I analyze in this section the FLS founding states’ perception of threat in the region and argue that the FLS was formed to balance the external threat faced by Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia.

The formation of the FLS as an alliance was essentially in response to the threat of white-minority rule in the region. As recognized by Khadiagala (1994), “opposition to minority regimes provided the most powerful rationale for the FLS” (p. 11). These minority regimes were informally allied against domestic and regional movements for majority rule in a sort of informal alliance. The pivot of the regional minority regimes

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4 The concept of southern Africa in the literature about security has gone beyond its geographic meaning (see Shaw, 1973; Ali, 1987; Poku, 2001; Bauer and Taylor, 2005). Following this tradition, the present work considers the concept ‘southern Africa’ in terms of regional security and includes Tanzania (see Maundi, 2007). By minority-rule I mean the southern African territories under colonial rule and white-minority settlement, namely Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa.

5 This received various designations in the literature. For instance, Shaw (1977) terms it “white entente” (p. 84). Sesay (1985) describes it as “the triple and unholy entente between Portugal, Rhodesia and South Africa” (p. 21). Khadiagala (1994) refers to an “informal tripartite alliance of Portugal, Rhodesia, and South Africa” (p. 19). Ngoma (2005) writes in terms of a “Pretoria-Lisbon-Salisbury axis” (p. 88).
was apartheid South Africa, ruling South Africa, occupying Namibia, backing the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia, and supporting Portugal’s colonialism in Angola and Mozambique.

South Africa was far more militarily endowed than Botswana, Tanzania or Zambia (see Appendix A, Table 3). Its nuclear capability added a further dimension to its military might (see Spence, 1977; Ali, 1987; Fischer, 1993; Fig, 1998). The other minority regimes (colonial Portugal, and Ian Smith’s Rhodesian regime) were also militarily more advanced than the founding states of the FLS (Botswana, Tanzania, and Zambia). Furthermore, Portugal’s membership in NATO reinforced its military power (Gifford, 1973; Shaw, 1973; Cervenka, 1977).

Similar to the matter of military power, the regional distribution of wealth was unbalanced. South Africa was the most economically powerful country, supporting other minority regimes and keeping most of the majority-ruled states relatively dependent upon it. Shaw (1973) commented on some economic indices, such as the GDP, in the following terms, “The GDP of Southern Africa [minority-ruled countries], excluding that of metropolitan Portugal, is over four times that of the Liberation States while its military expenditure is more than eleven times greater” (p. 46).

Apart from the military and economic elements, the geographical situation was also a contributor to FLS formation. As Mazrui (1981) commented, “contiguity to southern Africa helped to define the front-line states” (pp. 16-17; see also Sesay, 1985; Khadiagala, 1994). In fact, Botswana, Tanzania, and Zambia were independent states sharing borders with minority-ruled countries.
The superiority of the minority regimes’ capabilities in the region can be considered even more threatening if one associates it with the ideological affirmation of white superiority by the minority regimes. As argued by Ali (1987), “South Africa [based] its politicomilitary and economic strategy at home and abroad on the premise that white skin is good and black skin is bad” (p. 97). South Africa’s political ideology can be understood from the perspective of the South African imagery of superiority and regional domination. As stated by Poku (2001), “South Africa’s regional thinking after the second World War was on a rather grand scale. Its policies invoked a deeply colonial utopia: the dream of a white republic where black neighboring states existed only to minister to the white man’s needs” (p. 24). Consequently, FLS formation was also a response to threatening ideological manifestations from minority regimes (Shamuyaria, 1978; Jaster, 1983). The threat perceived from the white-minority regimes is evident, for instance, in Sesay’s (1985) observation about Zambia:

Zambian leaders … believed that their country was the main target of the triple alliance of Portugal, Rhodesia and South Africa. In particular, they feared that their state might be the prime pawn of South African apartheid, whose objective is ‘either the incorporation of this landlocked but strategic state into South Africa’s orbit, or its destruction.’ Consequently, they believe that Zambia’s safety will not be assured until apartheid in South Africa is brought to an end and independence secured for other minority white-governed areas (pp. 26-27).

Proximity to minority-ruled countries, the assessment of threat from superior military and economic capabilities, and the expectation of better security conditions through the establishment of majority regimes in the region led Tanzania and Zambia (followed by Botswana) to ally against minority regimes.6 As recognized by Spanger and

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6 For a discussion of other states’ less active engagement with southern Africa’s liberation see Mazrui’s (1981) analysis on physical, geocultural and ideological distances (pp. 16-18).
Vale (1995) “In the 1970s and 1980s, the frontline states were compelled to join forces against an external threat” (p. 169). Therefore, conditions of threat determined the motivations of Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia alignment.

From the present analysis, I conclude that alignment of Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia resulted from the need for coordinated action against minority-ruled countries given the conditions of high levels of external threat perceived by the FLS founding states. While this section offered a holistic examination of the threat presented by minority-rule countries to the FLS founding states, it is important to analyze each country’s alignment in order to define its motivations to form the FLS.

Zambia’s Conditions of External Threat

This section analyzes Zambia’s perception of threat from the minority-ruled countries. I argue that Zambia’s alignment was motivated to balance the threat of minority rule. To support this argument, I analyze Zambia’s capabilities in comparison to minority-ruled countries and their intentions to destabilize and harm Zambia’s interests.

Zambia shares borders with four minority-ruled countries: Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. As a landlocked country, Zambia had an economy considerably dependent on its minority-ruled neighboring countries. As affirmed by Kamana (1978), Zambia “had her entire economy and infrastructure completely bound up with Portuguese Mozambique and Angola, as well as Rhodesia and South Africa” (p. 37).

Zambia’s perception of threat in the 1970s is confirmed by the fact that both dominant parties in the country agreed that minority regimes posed the most danger to the country’s national security (Phiri, 2007). In fact, regional security problems had a direct
effect on Zambia. In 1974 it had already experienced some aggressions from its neighboring minority-ruled countries under the pretext of Zambia’s hosting these countries rebels.\(^7\) Hence, Zambia’s fear of its neighbors was based not on a potential but rather built on actual threat confirmed by acts of aggression by Portuguese-ruled countries and by the Rhodesian regime supported by apartheid South Africa (see Shaw, 1973; Jaster, 1983). Zambia was also concerned with the possibility of its white population receiving support from minority-ruled countries to overthrow the Zambian majority-rule government (Jaster, 1983).

Economic concerns were another component of Zambia’s perception of threat. In fact, the country needed the transport infrastructure situated in its neighboring minority-ruled countries. For instance, because it needed to import and export goods through Rhodesia, Zambia was disturbed in 1973 when Rhodesia closed their mutual border. This had huge political economic significance for Zambia’s government (Shaw and Anglin, 1979). Furthermore, the sustainability of the Zambian economy was dependent on the Rhodesian economy. As noted by Jaster (1983), “at the independence Zambia relied on Rhodesia for all the coke needed in her vital copper refining industry. The great bulk of Zambian trade was carried on Rhodesian railways and Zambia was therefore highly vulnerable to Rhodesian economic pressure” (p. 3).

With the conflict in Angola, Zambia was also concerned about the sustainability of transporting its copper through Rhodesia to the Mozambican port of Beira. Kamana (1978) observes that, given its geographical position and the status of its economy,

\(^7\) For detailed information on the climate of tension among Rhodesia, South Africa and Zambia see Legum, 1975, p. B330.
Zambia had two possibilities. First, it could ally with the minority regimes to guarantee access to the sea. Second, it could ally with its most trustworthy neighbors against minority rule to bolster the liberation movements for the independence of Angola and Mozambique. Zambia chose the second option. Considering this scenario and the choice presented by Kamana, one can see that Zambia’s choice of balancing instead of bandwagoning was based on the perception of threat rather than interest in the maximization of power. This can be confirmed by Zambia’s consequent insistence on the need to ensure the existence of reliable regimes.

Analysis of Zambia’s proximity to the minority-ruled countries, assessment of its military and economic capabilities in comparison with those of its minority-ruled neighbors, and the experience of aggression from the Portuguese and Rhodesian regimes constituted sufficient elements to suggest external threat as the motivation for Zambia’s allying with Tanzania.

Tanzania’s Conditions of External Threat

Tanzanian alignment is depicted by authors such as Jaster (1983, p. 2), Thompson (1985, p. 19), and Shamuyarira (1978, p. 15) as representing a case of moral and politico-ideological engagement in the liberation of southern Africa. I argue in this section that recognition of this moral and ideological dimension should not obscure Tanzania’s perception of threat as the motivation for its alignment. Therefore, I propose to examine the indicators of external threat behind Tanzania’s alignment.

Tanzania’s involvement in southern Africa liberation, its alignment, and forming the FLS, cannot be completely explained in terms of moral and ideological commitment.
As claimed by Chikeka (1998), minority rule in Africa represented a political threat to Tanzania and other African countries. He states that Tanzania’s engagement in southern Africa’s liberation should not be separated from “its geographical location, [which] made it increasingly conscious of national security problems. Situated immediately north of former Portuguese Mozambique and close to the white minority governments of Rhodesia and South Africa, Tanzania was fully aware of the inherent dangers” (p. 101).

Compared to other FLS founding states, Tanzania had an advantageous geographical location. It has access to the Indian Ocean, and in 1974 it shared borders with only one minority-ruled country to the south, Mozambique. Tanzania’s geographical situation contributed to its perception of threat. Despite the fact that it was not landlocked and was relatively independent of minority-ruled countries’ economies, its frontier with Portugal-ruled Mozambique could not be underestimated as a threatening factor (see Legum, 1974, pp. B 269-B 270). Furthermore, the military and economic capabilities of Portugal and other minority-ruled countries, compared to those of Tanzania, reinforced the idea of high levels of external threat (see Appendix A, Table 3).

Tanzania’s military and economic capabilities were inferior to each minority-ruled country. This threat was aggravated by Tanzania’s previous activism as an OAU member for the liberation of southern Africa which had already yielded some aggression such as air-space violations and bombing incidents attributed to Portugal and South Africa (Chikeka, 1998). These aggressive retaliatory actions continued with more or less intensity during the 1960s and the 1970s, the period of FLS formation.
The analysis of Tanzania’s security dynamics in the 1960s and the 1970s reinforces the argument of its perception of threat. In this regard, Maundi’s (2007) work helps to explain the contours of the country’s national security before the formation of the FLS. He builds his considerations on Baregu’s (1993) studies to show that before 1963 Tanzania’s security policies divided the country’s authorities between the members of the government, led by President Nyerere, who perceived internal threat as the most important issue of national security (internalists) and members of the parliament who contended that Tanzania’s security was a function of outside elements (externalists).

The link of Tanzania’s national security with regional security dates back to 1963 when other African countries experienced externally supported instability. These events, associated with the worsening of the southern African situation, warned and motivated Tanzania to adopt an approach of national security that took into account external/regional interests (Maundi, 2007). Consequently, it found motivations for allying with southern African states and liberation movements of minority-ruled countries which reinforced its previous activism against minority rule in southern Africa under the aegis of OAU (Maundi, 2007).

I developed in this section the main reasons to sustain the argument that minority-ruled countries represented a threat to Tanzania. In fact, though it was already committed to the OAU project of total liberation of Africa, Tanzania’s alignment as one of the founding states of the FLS was in response to the threat it perceived from its proximity to minority regimes.
Botswana’s Conditions of External Threat

This section on Botswana analyzes the conditions of external threat that motivated its alignment. To examine these conditions, I focus on Botswana’s capabilities as a landlocked country, surrounded by minority-ruled countries. In this regard, I emphasize Botswana’s weak military capabilities and its economic dependence on minority-ruled countries.

Among the FLS founding states, Botswana has the most complicated geopolitical situation, as a landlocked country surrounded by minority regimes. It shares frontiers with South Africa, Namibia, and Rhodesia. This geographical situation limited Botswana’s economic possibilities as well as its political options. Molomo et al. (2007) comment that, “As a landlocked country, it places high priority on security in a bid to safeguard its territorial integrity, sovereignty, order, and peace, as well as good relations with neighbours to prevent spillage of problems” (p. 75). Moreover, surrounded by minority-ruled countries in conflict with their Black majority population, Botswana’s security concerns were concentrated in what Bauer and Taylor (2005) call the “spillover effects of armed liberation struggles” in the surrounding countries (Rhodesia, South Africa and Namibia) and later in the “South African-sponsored regional destabilization” (p. 90). For instance, in early 1974, Botswana security was especially threatened by

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8 Botswana is considered one of the founding states of the FLS (Jaster, 1983; Sesay, 1985), given the fact that it joined the alliance in the process of formation initiated by Zambia and Tanzania. Its integration was followed by that of the Liberation Front of Mozambique (Frelimo), leading the transitional government in Mozambique. However, Mozambique gained independence only in 1975 which transformed Frelimo’s participation in Mozambique’s alignment with the FLS (see Thompson, 1986; Ngoma 2005).

9 For landlocked Botswana’s limitations and potentials, see Thompson, 1986.
Rhodesia which “declared the north-eastern border with Botswana a ‘war zone’ making the area uninhabitable (Molomo & Tsie, 1994, p. 111).

Botswana’s fragility also resulted from the domestic organization of its national security. In fact, until 1977 Botswana had no army and relied on the paramilitary unit of its police force and could not afford direct military support for the liberation movements, as observed by Saunders (2008). Nevertheless, Botswana looked at alignment as a way to diversify its political and economic security options in the region, standing unequivocally for the liberation of the region and concomitantly avoiding direct military confrontation with neighboring minority-ruled countries.

Botswana’s decision to join Zambia and Tanzania in FLS can be considered a policy of ‘risk-taking.’ This attitude was part of a shift in Botswana’s foreign policy given the consolidation of its internal political and economic organization. As pointed out by Morgan (1979), “During the 1970s it can be said that Botswana has been moving consistently from a posture of risk avoidance to one of more calculated risk-taking. This is no doubt the result of both external circumstance and improved domestic prospects” (p. 248). One of the domestic circumstances was the development of mineral exploration. This contributed to Botswana’s growing political affirmation against its neighboring minority–ruled countries, despite its economic ties with them (Barratt, 1977). Furthermore, allying with Zambia and Tanzania, Botswana could broaden its economic alternatives northward through Zambia. However, Botswana’s efforts to lower its dependence on minority-ruled countries, especially South Africa, are reported by Legum
(1974) as one of the factors resulting in increasing tension between Botswana and South Africa.

As with other FLS founders, Botswana’s military and economic situation was inferior to minority-ruled countries in the region (see Appendix A, Table 3). Its small population and lack of a conventional army also contributed to Botswana’s fragility. This situation was aggravated by its geographical position of being nearly encircled by minority-ruled states which exceeded Botswana’s capabilities. To these conditions can be added the growing political tension between Botswana and minority-ruled countries (especially Rhodesia and South Africa), despite Botswana’s efforts to avoid direct military confrontations. All these conditions contributed to the assessment of external threat and motivated Botswana’s alignment with Tanzania and Zambia.

Internal Threat among the FLS Founding States

This section examines the levels of threat among the FLS founding states. I argue that, despite some relative differences in terms of the FLS capabilities, there was no evidence of intentions to harm each other’s interests. Furthermore, the founding states’ previous commitment to southern Africa’s liberation, the similarities of their processes of decolonization and solidarity against a common enemy also contributed for decreasing the levels of internal threat.

Among the three founding states, Zambia enjoyed a certain superiority in terms of GDP, military expenditure, military size, and number of military planes (Table 3, Appendix A). Tanzania surpassed Zambia only in total population, while Tanzania followed Zambia in its GDP and military capabilities in general. Botswana was the least-
endowed FLS member in terms of military and economic capabilities. It was also characterized by its small population and the lack of a conventional army. In terms of proximity, Botswana and Tanzania did not share borders but are bridged by Zambia. The shared border between Botswana and Zambia was limited to a small corridor via the Caprivi Strip. Furthermore, Botswana’s proximity to Zambia was perceived as an escape from dependence on minority-ruled countries rather than a threat. In the same way, in 1974, Zambia did not perceive Botswana’s border as threatening. It was more worried about the borders with Rhodesia and Portuguese-dominated Angola and Mozambique. For Tanzania, which had experienced no success in security cooperation with its neighbors in eastern Africa, Zambia was one of its most reliable neighbors.

The founding states diverged in some principles. For instance, while Zambia was enthusiastic about the opportunity of détente to dialogue with minority regimes, Tanzania (and later, Mozambique) was less confident of South Africa. Another issue of divergence concerned support of the liberation movements. For example, Zambia was inclined to support the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), whereas Tanzania leaned more toward support of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) (Khadiagala, 1994).

While these divergences do not permit a conclusion of the existence of antagonism, they indicate that the formation of the alliance helped not only to fight against minority rule in the region but, secondarily, to establish a forum to manage divergence concerning policies of liberation and regional security, creating an entente among the founding states of the alliance. Furthermore, the potential threat deriving from
the difference of FLS capabilities was deadened by the fact that this difference was small and by the absence of threatening intentions. On the other hand, the shared commitment to the liberation of southern Africa from the minority regimes strengthened the cooperation and complicity among the FLS founding states. Finally, these founding states were newly independent countries whose regimes were experiencing domestic difficulties in consolidating their political and economic power and their political elite maintained good relationships deriving from a shared process of decolonization and independence.

To summarize, the relationship among Botswana, Zambia and Tanzania was one of low internal threat even though there was some divergence within the FLS, especially concerning support of the liberation movements. In this sense, the formation of the alliance helped the discussion and management of these divergences. Nevertheless, the absence of harmful intentions was essential for the low levels of internal threat. Moreover, the FLS founding states’ previous relation of cooperation for the liberation of southern Africa within the scope of the OAU contributed to the inhibition of threat among these new independent states. Table 1 illustrates the dynamics of internal and external threat in the formation of the FLS. This analysis of the dynamics of threat showed that high levels of external threat and low levels of internal threat motivated the formation of the FLS as a balancing alliance.

Conclusion

This chapter’s analysis leads to the conclusion that, as an alliance, the FLS was formed to face the threat of minority rule in the region. This conclusion results from examination of the minority-ruled countries’ capabilities, and their political and military
threatening actions individually and as a bloc against majority rule. The perception of threat from minority rule has been studied from the perspective of each FLS founding state. This study used indices of military and economic capabilities to discuss the level of external threat, along with geographical aspects and minority regimes’ manifested will to undermine the military and economic interests of the FLS’ members. The chapter also examined the levels of internal threat among the founding states. This threat was considered low. The previous experience of cooperation and the lack of harmful intention contributed to this assessment. From this study, it was deduced that the FLS faced high levels of external threat and low levels of internal threat. Therefore, the motivation for allying has been interpreted as balancing of threat.
CHAPTER 3: THE FLS EXPANSION: BALANCING, TETHERING AND HEDGING

In this chapter, I analyze the conditions of threat and the motivations behind the alignment of the remaining members of the FLS: Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. In the examination of each state’s alignment, I look first at the conditions of external and internal threat faced by each state, guided by the indicators of capabilities and intentions. Second, from the identification of those threats, I interpret each state’s motivations for allying. Therefore, I argue although balancing of external threat occurred in the alignment of Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, with respect to internal threats different patterns of compatible motivations emerged. Hence, in the case of Angola balancing coexisted with tethering, while in South Africa’s alignment hedging motivations were paramount.

Mozambique’s Alignment

With its independence in 1975, Mozambique became a member state of the FLS.\footnote{Before Mozambique’s independence, the transitional government adopted a policy of non-alignment with the FLS, assuring South Africa’s interest in the region (Hodges, 1979). However, Frelimo continued to be represented in the FLS by President Machel which contributed to Mozambique’s seamless alignment as a state. In view of the support it received from the FLS before independence, one can argue that Mozambique’s integration into the alliance was a political recognition of its experience of liberation which was supported by the FLS member states (Sesay, 1985). While this approach partially explains Machel’s personal engagement with the FLS, it does not consider the levels of external threat Mozambique faced.} In this section, I argue that Mozambique’s alignment was motivated by a wish to balance high levels of external threat from South Africa and Rhodesia. Therefore, I analyze Mozambique’s perception of external threat from these countries and examine the conditions of internal threat, focusing on Mozambique’s relationship with the founding states of the FLS: Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia.
Mozambique’s alignment, as a state, resulted from assessment of threat from Rhodesia and South Africa. With its own independence and that of Angola, the white-ruling bloc was geopolitically confined to South Africa, which also ruled South West Africa, and to Rhodesia. Mozambique was geographically contiguous to these two regimes, sharing a long frontier with South Africa and one with Rhodesia. This proximity to the minority regimes was threatening, aggravated by South Africa’s and Rhodesia’s military and economic capabilities and their interest in undermining the Frelimo-formed government in Mozambique.

Militarily, South Africa and Rhodesia had not only the capabilities but also the intention to destabilize an independent Mozambique. In fact, with the independence of Mozambique and Angola, South Africa lost two important buffer territories, and so it needed to revise its regional strategy. According to Davies (1991), this strategy was not confined to the diplomatic dimension of the regional détente; it also had a military dimension. South Africa’s increased military capabilities continued to support the Rhodesian regime, which by then had become more directly involved in conflict with Mozambique. On the other hand, Mozambique did not have the military capabilities held by South Africa and Rhodesia, as illustrated in Table 4 (Appendix A). In Davies’ (1991) view, one of the consequences of South Africa’s reformulated regional policy after the demise of the détente was its defense authorities’ interest in supporting dissident movements within Mozambique. The same tactic was applied by Rhodesia which attempted to devise ways to support right-wing white settlers against Frelimo’s government (Hodges, 1979; Egero, 1978).
In terms of economic capabilities, Mozambique was weak and tied to South Africa (Egero, 1978; Hodges, 1979; Hanlon, 1990). Even before independence, Mozambique’s main importer was South Africa which had strategic investments in Mozambique (Legum, 1975; Egero, 1978; Hodges, 1979). These economic connections with South Africa and its own inferior military capabilities reduced Mozambique’s expectations of successful direct confrontation with South Africa. However, it was interested in bringing to power a South Africa majority regime with which it could have good relations, in order to escape from apartheid South Africa’s interest in destabilizing Mozambique. It also wanted to contribute to a rapid liberation of Zimbabwe, avoiding the escalation of instability to its own territory (see Hodges, 1979; Thompson, 1986). Thus, given its geographic, economic, military and political relations with both South Africa and Rhodesia, Mozambique’s alignment with the FLS was motivated by the need to manage perceived external threats from these countries.

In terms of internal threat, Frelimo’s political and military collaboration with the FLS before Mozambique’s independence contributed to good relations with Tanzania and Zambia and favored an approximation with Botswana. Although these countries (except Botswana, which had no conventional army) had more experience in terms of state military organization, the relationship created during the liberation process lowered the prospect of confrontation or harm of each other’s interests.

Mozambique’s shared border with Tanzania allowed Tanzania to host Frelimo’s forces during Mozambique’s liberation struggle (Newitt, 1995, p. 541). This historical background reinforced the friendship ties among the political elite of both countries,
decreasing the possibility of intentional conflict. This explains why, after independence, the bilateral relationship between Mozambique and Tanzania increased with different agreements in terms of economy and diplomacy (Hodges, 1979). The same pattern of relationship was soon extended to Zambia with nearly similar agreements concerning defense and economy (Khadiagala, 1994). Furthermore, the two countries were direct FLS supporters of the Rhodesia liberation movements. Regarding Botswana, it shared no borders with Mozambique and had no conventional army until 1977 which reduced the threat of its capabilities. The good political relationships accumulated by Frelimo with the FLS before Mozambique’s independence contributed to the low levels of internal threat, despite the fragility of its capabilities as a newly independent state. Furthermore, high levels of external threat from South Africa and Rhodesia obscured any potential threats from FLS.

I argued in this section that Mozambique’s alignment was motivated to balance South Africa and Rhodesia. In fact, after the independence of the Portuguese colonies, Mozambique became the country most exposed to regional minority regimes. It shared borders with both South Africa and Rhodesia which had superior economic and military capabilities and were determined to undermine Mozambique’s interests.

Angola’s Alignment

Angola’s alignment was not without controversy given the disagreement among its domestic actors, the attraction of external actors, and the divergence installed within the FLS concerning recognition of MPLA. I argue in this section that Angola’s joining the alliance was motivated to balance South Africa and tether Zambia. Although the
Angolan ruling party, MPLA, had good relations with Tanzania and Mozambique, Zambia’s and Botswana’s dissatisfaction with MPLA’s Marxists tendencies should not be underestimated.

Although Angola and Mozambique gained independence in the same year, 1975, was Angola integrated into the FLS only in 1976. One reason for the delay was the existence of three different Angolan liberation movements – FNLA, MPLA, and UNITA – each enjoying different domestic and external support and irreconcilably claiming its right to rule the country. This raised the problem of unifying them for the sake of independence. Their very existence provided an opportunity for external intervention in the Angolan process of independence and, to some extent, in southern Africa’s conflict in general (see Marcum, 1979; Khadiagala, 1994).

In 1975, with the prospect of losing one of the buffer states to the northwest, and threatened by the possibility of MPLA’s accession to power, South Africa’s military forces intervened in Angola to support the UNITA / FNLA coalition from southern Angola (Thompson, 1986; Khadiagala, 1994). On the other hand, preoccupied with guaranteeing its interests in Angola, especially access to the Atlantic through Angola’s ports, Zambia welcomed the involvement of the USA, South Africa and other western countries in Angola on the side of FNLA and UNITA (Khadiagala, 1994).

Nonetheless, with the support of Cuban military forces and Soviet armament, MPLA eventually bolstered the proclamation of independence, and guaranteed its accession to power, defeat of the FNLA and UNITA coalition and South Africa’s withdrawal (Khadiagala, 1994; Marsh, 1981; Holness, 1988). Having control of Angola’s
main cities, MPLA was eventually recognized by the OAU as the country’s ruling party in February, 1976, despite Zambia’s attempts to prevent this recognition (Cervenka, 1977; Khadiagala, 1994). Two months after OAU recognition, President Kaunda of Zambia recognized the MPLA, allowing integration of Angola into the FLS (Thompson, 1986; Khadiagala, 1994). This integration was controversial, particularly in view of Zambia’s overt disagreement with MPLA and Botswana’s skepticism about MPLA’s Marxist inclinations (Legum, 1988). From Jaster’s (1983) perspective this problem stemmed from the fact that Botswana and Zambia each had a different ideological inclination, capitalism.

The involvement of external powers in the Angolan conflict had three serious consequences for the region. First, FNLA-UNITA’s acceptance of South Africa’s support considerably damaged their reputation as movements for liberation (Cervenka, 1977); second, Zambia’s welcoming of involvement of South Africa, the United States and other powers against MPLA offended Tanzania and Mozambique which were more open to recognizing MPLA (Khadiagala, 1994); third, South Africa’s military intervention contradicted its own politics of détente. South Africa’s intervention demonstrated that it would use any means to prevent MPLA from ruling Angola. Thus, in terms of security, Angola was sure about South Africa’s intention to harm its interests. These conditions of threat were aggravated by the fact that Angola shared a border with South West Africa, under South Africa’s domination.

In terms of economy, Angola was less endowed than South Africa and was suffering negative effects from the internal conflict (Marcum, 1979). Moreover, despite
Cuban and Soviet support, Angola’s military was still fragmented among the three liberation movements. Assessment of these conditions of threat influenced not only Angola’s alignment, but also its concentration on the liberation of South West Africa.

The consideration of internal threat in the case of Angola’s alignment is particularly interesting because of the opposition of Botswana and Zambia. MPLA’s Marxist-Leninist links contributed to Botswana’s skepticism, though the fact that Botswana did not share a border with Angola and had no conventional army lowered the intensity of this opposition and reduced Angola’s perception of threat. Therefore, within the FLS the greatest threat came from Zambia, which was recalcitrant in regard to a MPLA-ruled Angolan government, supporting UNITA as an alternative (Sesay, 1985). Therefore, while allying, Angola was also motivated to tether Zambia. It can be argued, however, that this second motivation for tethering was obscured by the fact that the external threat levels were higher than the internal ones. Moreover, the overall low levels of threat within the alliance may have diluted the potential for strained relations between Angola and Zambia.

Angola did not experience high levels of threat from Mozambique and Tanzania for three main reasons. First their capabilities and geographic proximity were not highly threatening. Second, Angola had good relationships with them, especially because of the Tanzanian ruling class’s sympathy to socialism and Mozambique’s inclination to Marxism. As observed by Legum (1988), “Nyerere and Machel had both supported Neto, and the Mozambique leader is one of the MPLA’s closest allies; both believe in Marxist-Leninism” (p. 28; see also Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 1976;
Thompson, 1986). Third, the effectiveness of the FLS in supporting South West Africa’s independence also depended on Angola which shared a border with South West Africa and was interested in having it as a shield-state against South Africa. Thus, it was in the interest of the FLS to have Angola as an ally.

In this section, I argued that Angola’s alignment was in response to external as well as internal threats: to balance South Africa and tether Zambia. The levels of external threat were higher which determined the leverage of the balancing motivation compared to the tethering one. Moreover, Angola’s alignment was strategic for both the alliance and for Angola, each of which was interested in the independence of South West Africa.

Zimbabwe’s Alignment

This section argues that the alignment of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) with the FLS was motivated by the need to balance the perceived threat from South Africa, a close ally of the Ian Smith regime. The definition of Zimbabwe’s balancing motivations is justified by the high levels of external threat from South Africa and low internal threat from the FLS, which contributed to Zimbabwe’s smooth integration into the alliance.

After several years of diplomatic efforts and liberation struggle, Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, following the 1979 Lancaster House conference. Among several conditions, this conference defined a transition period marked by multiracial elections. South Africa was concerned with the outcome of Zimbabwean elections and the possibility of losing the country as a buffer state in the region. In agreement with Ian Smith, South Africa invested trying to bring to power, through elections, a Black leader who could be manipulated according to the interests of the white minority (Johnson and
Martin, 1988, p. 58), However, the elections were won by Robert Mugabe, leading ZANU-PF (Manungo, 2007).

Geographically, Zimbabwe’s most immediate threat came from South Africa with which it shares a border. In terms of military capabilities, Table 4 (Appendix A) shows that in 1980 South Africa was far superior to Zimbabwe. Furthermore, South Africa had cooperated with the Rhodesian Ian Smith regime and had a fair knowledge of Zimbabwe’s military conditions through some officials who fled to South Africa, taking with them important intelligence and security information (see Johnson and Martin, 1988).

Concerning the economic aspect, in 1980 Zimbabwe adhered to the project of Southern Africa’s Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) as a regional cooperation mechanism to overcome economic dependence on South Africa. However, the SADCC had no immediate effect on the economic situation of its member states. Thus, at the moment of its independence Zimbabwe experienced the negative economic effects of the war against the liberation movements.

Zimbabwe’s alignment occurred under conditions of a low-level internal threat. One contributing factor to these conditions was the creation of the SADCC. In fact, this institution had the effect of rallying southern African countries to a shared cause, economic independence from South Africa. Although it shares a border with Zimbabwe, Botswana did not represent a threat either of capabilities or intentions. As illustrated in

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11 The SADCC resulted from a political experience of cooperation among southern African countries in the FLS alliance. Southern African states, led by the FLS members, assumed the need of economic liberation from South Africa in order to realize their political objectives (see: Grundy, 1982, Clough & Ravenhill, 1982, Thompson, 1986, Libby, 1987, Davies and O’Meara, 1987; Davies, 1991; Khadiagala, 1994).
Table 4 (Appendix A), Botswana’s military as well as its economic capabilities were inferior to Zimbabwe’s. Thus, even if Botswana intended to damage Zimbabwe it was limited by inferior capabilities. Moreover, President Khama, interested in economically developing his country, needed to maintain good relations with Zimbabwe to have access to Mozambique’s sea ports and to reduce its dependence on South Africa’s transportation network.

With respect to Mozambique, though it shared a border with Zimbabwe, its capabilities were not threatening. The relationships between the countries were good, built on collaboration between Frelimo and ZANU during the liberation struggle and shared Marxist orientations. Zimbabwe and Zambia had almost balanced capabilities except for military size in which Zimbabwe had an advantage. Moreover, Zambia had invested in Zimbabwe liberation and wanted good relations with this country. Therefore, from the balance of capabilities, and above all from the low degree of harmful intentions, it could be assumed that the level of threat between the two countries was low.

The military capabilities of Angola, Tanzania and Zimbabwe were not much different in global terms, despite some important differences in specific services. Among those services, given the geographical distance between Zimbabwe and the other two countries the air force capabilities are relevant. According to The Military Balance (1981), while Angola was better prepared than Zimbabwe in terms of military aircraft, the difference between the two countries is not high. Zimbabwe had a small advantage over Tanzania. Thus, considering the geographical distance, and the perception of intentions, the small difference of capabilities offered low threat.
Three factors help to explain the low levels of harmful intentions between the two countries. First, within the FLS forum, Angola and Tanzania recognized ZANU’s legitimacy. Second, the ruling parties of Angola and Zimbabwe (MPLA and ZANU, respectively) shared public recognition of Marxist inspiration, which was also to some extent the case of Tanzania. Third, Angola was facing South Africa’s politics of destabilization through South West Africa and was more concerned with its domestic affairs and South West Africa’s independence.

From this section’s analysis I conclude that Zimbabwe’s alignment with the FLS was facilitated by low levels of internal threat. However, it was also fundamentally characterized by Zimbabwe’s assessment of high levels of external threat from South Africa which supported the Ian Smith regime. Thus, Zimbabwe’s perception of South Africa threatening capabilities determined the balancing orientation of its alignment.

Namibia’s Alignment

In this section, I argue that South West Africa’s (Namibia) alignment, as the seventh member of the FLS, was marked by consideration of high levels of external threat from the last bastion of minority rule in the region, South Africa. This alignment was also facilitated by low levels of internal threat which contributed to the good relationships between the members of the alliance and Namibia, despite differences in economic and military capabilities. Therefore, I conclude that balancing motivations were behind Namibia’s alignment.

Following the lessons from Angola and Zimbabwe, the FLS was more proactive in recognizing the South West African People’s Organization (SWAPO) as the
representative of the Namibian people’s interests even before Namibia’s independence (Khadiagala, 1994). Supported by the FLS, particularly Tanzania, Zambia and Angola, SWAPO opted for guerrilla warfare as a strategy of liberation. However, despite this military investment, settlement of the Namibian problem was more dependent on diplomatic efforts. The connection established between the Cuban presence in Angola and the South African occupation of Namibia, perceived in terms of linkage policy (Freeman Jr., 1989; Baregu, 1994), constituted the main impasse for Namibia’s independence. It also reduced FLS leverage on Namibia’s liberation (Khadiagala, 1994). Nevertheless, regional factors continued to be crucial for Namibia’s independence (see Wood, 1991; Baregu, 1994).

In terms of external threat, the newly independent state of Namibia had sufficient reason to be concerned about South Africa’s threatening capabilities and intentions. Namibia shares a border with South Africa and its Atlantic coastline continues to South Africa’s. This exposed Namibia to South Africa’s intervention in terms of infantry, air force, and navy. One particular issue that tied this geographical proximity to security concerns was South Africa’s reluctance to relinquish Walvis Bay, geographically part of Namibia. The strategic situation of this bay was crucial for the security and economic interests of both countries (Evans, 1990).

South Africa’s possession of the bay constituted a military advantage in terms of navy and gave economic control of the southwest African region. Similarly, Namibia’s control of the bay would enhance its economic independence from South Africa and other states of the region, while militarily it would constitute the basis to create and
consolidate a naval defense (see Evans, 1990; Ncube, 1991). In 1990, the bay was not only an issue of dispute,¹² but also one that threatened Namibia’s security and economic interests. Analysis of Namibia’s economic and military capabilities shows that it did not have the military preparation and logistic organization possessed by South Africa. Moreover, its army was still in its formative phase (Table 4, Appendix A). Furthermore, as a former occupying power, South Africa had fair knowledge of Namibia.

Concerning the internal threat, the first element to be explored is the effect of the international environment of the FLS. Namibia gained independence in a period when the demise of communism was an international reality, which had immediate repercussions in the FLS alliance. In fact, by 1990 Angola and Mozambique were making their way in the capitalist international system. This obliged SWAPO to reformulate its ideology, compromising with capitalism (Sidaway and Simon, 1993). This reformulation contributed to Namibia’s overall good relationships with other FLS members, so its integration did not face ideological discontent from capitalist-oriented states, such as Botswana.

Among the FLS member states, the situation between Namibia and Angola in 1990 is of special interest. Namibia has a long frontier with Angola to the north which allowed South Africa’s involvement in Angola and Angola’s support of SWAPO. This support and the good relationships between the political elite of both countries were in both countries’ interest. However, Namibia was also concerned about UNITA, which was supported by South Africa (Dzinesa and Rupiya, 2005). It was in Namibia’s interests to

¹² South Africa finally recognized Namibia’s right of ownership in 1994. Concerning the dispute over the bay, see Dreyer, 1984; Evans, 1990; Simon, 1994.
keep a good relationship with Angola because of the South Africa and UNITA threats. On the other hand, Namibia also shares a border with Zambia, which actively contributed to the liberation of Namibia and was interested in maintaining good mutual relations. A similar partnership with Botswana, with which Namibia shares a border, can be argued. As for Zimbabwe, its need to consolidate its internal political organization and its interest in the Mozambican conflict reduced its concerns with the west coast of the continent. Furthermore, concerning Botswana and Zimbabwe, one should consider Omari’s (1991b) argument that those countries were historically and economically less linked with Namibia and Angola.

Regarding the two other countries of the alliance, Mozambique and Tanzania, the first aspect to be explored is their geographical distance. In fact, they are situated on the east coast and neither neighbors Namibia. Thus, despite their relative military advantage, Mozambique was more concerned with the settlement of its own civil war, which also affected Tanzania. This analysis permits the conclusion that Namibia faced a low overall level of internal threat.

To sum up, I argue that Namibia’s alignment with the FLS was motivated by high levels of threat from South Africa, and low levels of threat from the members of the alliance. Namibia’s threat from South Africa are evident in South Africa’s superior capabilities, its support of UNITA crossing Namibia’s borders, its link with domestic movements against SWAPO-led liberation, and its intransigence over Walvis Bay which revealed intentions to harm Namibia’s interests. Conversely, among the FLS, Namibia had no reason for deep security concerns due to its overall good relationships with other
FLS member’s political elite and also to a certain degree of marginalization of Namibia as a source of economic or military threat to the southeastern states. Therefore, balancing motivations characterized Namibia’s alignment.

South Africa’s Alignment

South Africa’s alignment with the FLS was marked by the complexity of its assessment of threat and its motivations for allying with the FLS, though the alliance was later transformed. This section analyzes the factors that contributed to the lowering of external threat to South Africa and to the FLS and argues that South Africa’s alignment can be better understood in terms of hedging motivations of both South Africa and the FLS.

South Africa shares borders with four FLS members: Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. FLS diplomatic support of the cause of South African liberation can be understood at both the international and the domestic levels. Internationally, the FLS cooperated with the OAU and other international institutions which worked with the UN to marginalize South Africa. Domestically, the FLS supported ANC’s work, representing South African movements for change and backed its armed organization. With the ANC in power, South Africa was integrated into the FLS and other regional organizations such as the SADC, though this integration was not simple. It happened in a moment when one could affirm that the FLS’s objective was realized. Moreover, South Africa was the best-endowed country in terms of military and economic might.
South Africa’s integration into the FLS resulted from the lowering of the level of external threat between the FLS and South Africa. Two aspects contributed to this. First, the end of the Cold War removed from the southern African security the chess piece of communist threat (see Batchelor, 1998; Swart & du Plessis, 2004). Furthermore, Angola agreed with Cuba and South Africa to withdrawal of the Cuban forces from the country in exchange for South Africa’s withdrawal from Namibia. Second, the end of apartheid and the establishment of majority rule lowered South Africa threat to its FLS neighbors. Thus, the 1994 ANC democratic victory affected the FLS perception of lowered threat.

After the end of apartheid, South Africa’s military organization was transformed to meet the challenges of a new democratic and multiracial society (see Le Roux, 2005). Moreover, during this period South Africa renounced its nuclear projects and, in 1991, embraced the Non-Proliferation Treaty (Fig, 1998). Despite this trend towards demilitarization, South Africa’s military capabilities remained superior in the region and this continued to be an issue with which other states in the region had to deal (see Ohlson and Stedman, 1993).

Post-apartheid South Africa’s integration into the FLS can be characterized by hedging motivations. The official end of apartheid and the formation of a new government did not substantially change South African military and economic superiority (Cawthra, 1998), but, they at least altered the level by lowering the aggressive intentions. The new government, led by the ANC, brought to power a new political elite which had received the support of the FLS and was expected to help lower the level of threat in the region. However, despite the prospects of a new pattern of relationship, other countries
still needed to gain confidence in this new South Africa. As stated by Schoeman (2007), “The end of apartheid did not translate into an immediate sense of trust and confidence” between South Africa and its neighbors (p. 157). This shows that, though the end of apartheid decreased the levels of threat to the FLS, members of the alliance perceived South Africa only as a potential friend. Although South Africa did not have to fear its neighbors’ capabilities, it, too, considered them only as potential friends, and its alignment can be considered a hedging strategy. This is confirmed by the type of relationship installed in the region after South Africa’s integration into the FLS and the SADC.

Although they did not use the same theoretical category of hedging and did not write about alliances, authors such as Baregu (2003) and Miti (2002) captured this sense of hedging. Baregu (2003) observes that the SADC, as an institution based on the FLS’s history of liberation and defense against South Africa, “continuously vacillated between being defensive towards South Africa and seeking closer cooperation with it” (p. 20). In the same vein, Miti (2002) notes that, “There is general agreement that in the first two years of democratic governance, from 1994 to 1996, the South African leadership was not at all clear on how to deal with the region or the continent as a whole” (p. 145). These assessments reveal that South Africa’s leaders allied with their neighbors to hedge, with the expectation that their presence in the alliance could with time create an environment of greater cooperation. The same motivations may be attributed to the FLS towards the new South Africa. In fact, it can be argued that for the FLS, South Africa was a former enemy, but not yet a friend. The present work’s interpretation of these motivations in
terms of hedging is based on Weitsman’s (2004) argument according to which, “At low levels of threat, states will mix their strategies by seeking low-level commitment agreements with potential friends and enemies” (p. 29).

However despite the climate of hedging, there were expectations of both parties that friendship and cohesion would increase within the alliance and efforts to realize this. For instance, Vale (2003) reports that, “At a meeting of the Frontline States organization in Harare in June 1994, South Africa’s new president, Nelson Mandela, declared that the country would play a role in helping to solve the region’s problems” (p. 119; see also Swatuk & Omari, 1997). Making these declarations, within the forum of the FLS alliance was a move to build trust of South Africa as a partner and a member that could agree and act, not unilaterally, but in the name of the alliance.

In this section, I argued that the end of apartheid, in a post-Cold War context, lowered the fear of the FLS undergoing aggression and destabilization from South Africa, while it also marked the end of minority rule in the region. However, South Africa kept its superior might in terms of military and economies. Thus, while South Africa’s alignment occurred in conditions characterized by low internal threat, uncertainty and expectations still dominated. Although, the relationship between South Africa and the other members of the FLS could not be characterized by enmity, amity was not yet a reality. Thus, hedging by all parties was the strategy to manage prospective friends.

13 For uncertainty and its implication on states’ security, see Mitzen (2006).
Conclusion

This section’s examination of the FLS expansion showed that the newly independent southern African states allied with different motivations. While Mozambique was motivated to balance Rhodesia and South Africa, Angola was focused on a South African threat. Similarly, Zimbabwe and Namibia perceived South Africa as highly threatening. Conversely, South Africa’s alignment occurred under conditions of low levels of internal and external threat. Therefore, its alignment had hedging motivations. With respect to internal threat, the southern African states had different experiences, too. While Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia experienced low levels of internal threat, Angola perceived Zambia as a threat to tether, though the motivation to balance South Africa was more crucial. This chapter confirmed that though the FLS formation was essentially characterized by balancing motivations, other patterns of motivation emerged. Among them, hedging is important for the next chapter’s approach to the transformation of the FLS.
Table 1.

*FLS Expansion*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
<th>Source of External Threat</th>
<th>DET*</th>
<th>Source of Internal Threat</th>
<th>DIT*</th>
<th>Motivation for Allying</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Rhodesia and South Africa</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>Balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angola (1976)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Balance South Africa and Tether Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>Balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1980)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Namibia (1990)</td>
<td>South Africa and UNITA (supported by South Africa)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>Other members of the FLS</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Hedge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1994)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*DET = Degree of External Threat
*DIT = Degree of Internal Threat*
This chapter examines the FLS in the post-apartheid era, after South Africa’s integration into the alliance. Having discussed South Africa’s alignment in the previous chapter, I now focus on the transformation of the FLS into the OPDSC. The chapter argues that, despite the change in the form and formulation of the regional security cooperation, the transformation of the FLS was essentially marked by OPDSC adopting the ISDSC to fulfill the same role it had in the FLS. Preservation of this effective organizational structure of the FLS is explained by the continuity of low levels of internal threat, associated with the decrease of external threat. I develop my argument by first exploring the main aspects of the process of transformation of the FLS into the OPDSC. I then discuss the elements of change and continuity entailed in this process before I analyze the preservation of the ISDSC in the OPDSC. Finally, I propose an explanation of the FLS, based on the analysis of the conditions of threat.

From the FLS to the OPDSC: A Lengthy Process of Transformation

The demise of apartheid represented the end of minority rule in southern Africa. For the FLS it meant not only fulfillment of its balancing objective, but also the lowering of the levels of external threat. This section analyzes the FLS response to the post-apartheid conditions of threat by exploring the history of the FLS transformation into the OPDSC.

Primarily formed as an alliance against minority rule in the region, the FLS needed to redefine its identity and objectives in response to the demise of apartheid and South Africa’s integration into the alliance. Thus, the member states decided to transform
the FLS into an institution for regional security cooperation, encompassing all the states of the region. Although this implied change, it was also characterized by continuity. These two dimensions can be better revealed by consideration of the process of FLS transformation into the OPDSC. Starting in 1994, the region began devising a security institution that reflected the post-apartheid conditions of threat. The OPDSC was established in 1996, its protocol was signed in 2001, and the SADC Mutual Defense Pact (MDP) and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) were approved in 2003.

The July 1994 Ministerial Workshop on Democracy, Peace and Security, held in Windhoek (Namibia) under the aegis of the SADC, is generally cited as the first step towards discussion of regional security in consideration of the challenges of the post-apartheid era (see Malan, 1998; Cilliers, 1999; Nathan, 2004, Ngoma, 2005). Following the experience of the FLS, this workshop proposed the creation of a sector of conflict resolution and political cooperation and the establishment of a protocol on security, peace and conflict resolution (Cilliers, 1999). The main idea retained from this workshop was the need to strengthen and formalize security cooperation among southern African countries.

The second approach to regional security structure was manifested in 1995, following a meeting of the SADC foreign affairs ministers in Harare (Cillliers, 1999; Swart & du Plessis, 2004). This meeting proposed formation of the Association of Southern African States (ASAS) to represent the transformation of the FLS into a new security institution, keeping the aspects of informality and flexibility which characterized the FLS (Cilliers, 1999, Swart & du Plessis, 2004; Francis, 2006). Efforts to conciliate
and refine these two proposals resulted in the recommendation in January, 1996, to form the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security (OPDS) (Omari & Macaringue, 2007). Consequently, the June, 1996, SADC Extraordinary Summit launched the SADC OPDS as the new institutional organization for regional security and stipulated that the institutional framework of the OPDS should include the ISDSC.

Nonetheless, new discussion arose concerning the independence of the OPDS chairperson with regard to the SADC chairperson. In fact, though the 1996 summit established the OPDS as part of the SADC, it also determined that the OPDS would operate independently (see Solomon and Cilliers, 1997; Landsberg & Baregu, 2003; Swart & du Plessis, 2004; Nathan, 2004). The long-lasting debate about the functional independence of the OPDS began to move toward resolution in 1999 when Swaziland, holding the rotating chair of the ISDSC, convened an extraordinary meeting which recommended that the OPDS be integrated into the SADC structure (Nathan, 2004; Swart & du Plessis, 2004; Omari & Macaringue, 2007). Following this recommendation, the 2001 SADC summit signed the protocol of the OPDS, which was renamed the Organ of Politics Defense and Security Cooperation (OPDSC), and defined as part of the SADC structure, reporting to the summit (Nathan, 2004). Finally, in August, 2003, the SADC summit approved two important instruments to reinforce the security system: First, the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO), which defines specific actions and strategies for the OPDS, was adopted. Second, the SADC Mutual Defense Pact was signed, following the objectives of the Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security
Cooperation which encouraged adoption of a mutual defense pact as a mechanism against external threats.

In this section, I present the most important steps by which the FLS was transformed into the OPDSC, emphasizing the efforts to devise an institution that would best respond to the new security environment. This transformation implied both change and continuity of the FLS. This double approach is manifested by the fact that while the FLS was disbanded as an alliance against minority rule, the southern African states conserved one segment, the ISDSC, as an important element of the OPDSC. Therefore, the following section analyzes the scope of both change and continuity in the southern Africa security cooperation in the post-apartheid era.

Change and Continuity in the Regional Security Institution

I explore in this section the aspects of change and continuity that characterized the transformation of the FLS into the OPDSC. I first discuss forming the OPDSC as a change in the institutional framework for security cooperation on three main points: The formality of the OPDSC; the membership of the OPDSC, and incorporation of OPDSC into SADC. Second, I argue that, despite these changes, there is institutional proof of the southern African states’ interest in preserving the important features of the FLS in a logic of continuity.

The dimension of change can first be approached from the standpoint of OPDSC formality. In fact, while the FLS emphasized informality, flexibility and an absence of legal instruments, the OPDSC tends to be more concerned with the establishment of formal and legal instruments on which to base the cooperation among southern African
states. Additionally, the OPDSC has a more complex organizational structure, in which the ISDSC is not the only committee.

OPDSC membership is also an element of change and is, in fact, extended to all members of the SADC (Cilliers, 1999). While all members of the FLS were members of the SADC, not all SADC members belonged to the FLS. This membership was reserved to countries active in the process of liberating the region.\footnote{Exception was made for Lesotho which, though not a member of the FLS, was permitted to participate in the ISDSC given the engagement of Chief Leabua Jonathan’s government in the struggle against apartheid. However, this right was only temporary because Lesotho lost it after the coup that overthrew Chief Leabua Jonathan (Omari, 1991a; Swart & du Plessis, 2004).} This issue of membership links the issue of status of the OPDSC in the regional cooperation framework which is the third aspect of change.

Until the creation of the OPDSC the southern African region had two separate institutions of cooperation: the SADC and the FLS. Although the SADC evolved from the SADCC, created by the FLS, it was dedicated to dealing with issues of economy and development. As observed by Omari and Macaringue (2007), “Instead of empowering a committee of foreign ministers to manage the affairs of SADC, the treaty identified the ministers of economic planning and finance to form the Council of Ministers, thus inherently marginalising issues of politics, defence, and security” (p. 58). Therefore, the FLS remained a separate institution responsible for defense and security.

Despite these aspects of change, the OPDSC preserved important characteristics of the FLS. The institutional aspect that best shows this logic of continuity is the incorporation of the ISDSC as a committee of the OPDSC. In this sense, it is fair to state that the OPDSC “[drew] from the extensive memory of the frontline states” and was built
“on the existing structure of the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC)” (Venter, 2000, p. 284; see also Swatuk & Omari, 1997; Cilliers, 1999; Nathan, 2004; Fisher and Ngoma, 2005; Ngoma, 2005; Francis, 2006; Omari & Macaringue, 2007). While it is important to recognize that the OPDSC represents a different approach to regional security, it inherited and incorporated the main features of the FLS. In this sense, two aspects can be explored. First, the OPDSC inherited the FLS tendency to separate political, defense and security issues from economic and developmental ones. Second, the OPDSC incorporated the ISDSC as an important institutional structure of regional security.

With regard to the distinction between security and economic/developmental issues, despite the incorporation of the OPDSC into the SADC, the FLS legacy concerning the institutional difference between security and economic development persists. The best example of this distinction is the adoption of two different strategic indicative plans: the Strategic Indicative Plan for the OPDSC (SIPO) and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP). Though these two documents are presented as complementary, they reveal that states in the region continue to separate development strategies from those of security.

The most significant aspect that reveals the southern African states’ interest in continuity is the incorporation of ISDSC into the OPDSC. It is important to analyze this absorption by considering the role of the ISDSC in the FLS. Having been the structure which analyzed the security conditions of the region, recommended strategies and executed the decisions taken by the FLS summit, the ISDSC adoption manifests interest
by southern African states in keeping the FLS ministerial and technical modus operandi and conserving the experience of cooperation accumulated during the existence of the alliance. This aspect of continuity is also mentioned by Nathan (2004), when commenting on the independence of the Organ with regard to other SADC structures, referring to the OPDSC as “a revamped version of the Frontline States” (p. 7). However, the continuity that the ISDSC represents is not limited to its incorporation into the OPDSC.

Continuity can also be approached through the fact that, during the discussion about transformation of the FLS, the ISDSC continued to serve the FLS member states in the sectors of defense, policing and intelligence. As Hammerstad (2004) commented, “Created under the FLS and operational even when the Organ was locked in controversy in the late 1990s, the defence committee (ISDSC) is a well-established and well-functioning body with long history of practical cooperation” (p. 223). ISDSC’s continuity despite the end of minority rule and the crisis of reformulation of the FLS shows its importance in the region. Thus, adoption of this important structure into the OPDSC reveals the states’ interest in guaranteeing the continuity of the FLS features. Using Vale’s (2003) words, “there has been more continuity than change in Southern Africa” (p. 3). This has to do not only with the way the elite thinks about security but also with the way they devise institutions to manage that security.

The present section examined the process of transforming the FLS into the OPDSC by focusing on elements of change brought by the OPDSC and elements of continuity assumed from the FLS. What can be retained for the next section is that the OPDSC did not constitute a break with the FLS. It was rather a process of transformation
which changed the form and formulation of the institution. However, preservation of the ISDSC signals a stronger pattern of continuity.

The ISDSC as a Committee of the OPDSC

The SADC Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation, approved in 2001, defined the place of the ISDSC in the new regional security framework and determined its composition within the structure of the OPDSC. This section examines ISDSC’s place in the OPDSC, underscoring the composition of the committee as part of the FLS heritage and its centrality in the field of regional security cooperation, first with the FLS and now with the OPDSC.

The ISDSC and the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC) are the two committees of the OPDSC. The ISPDC includes the foreign affairs ministers of the member states and deals with matters such as political cooperation, international relations, and democracy. The Inter-State Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC) includes the ministers of defense, public security and state security of the member states. It coordinates regional cooperation and collective action in terms of military, policy and intelligence. Although it can establish ad hoc subcommittees when necessary, the ISDSC has three main subcommittees: Defense, Public Security, and State Security. The Defense Subcommittee coordinates military security cooperation and recommends instruments for dealing with conflicts. The Public Security Subcommittee is tasked with cooperation in policing issues with regional effects, including drug trafficking, counterfeit currency, illegal immigration, and firearms smuggling. The State Security Subcommittee deals with
intelligence, coordinating the actions of the member states towards identification of potential threats to regional stability (see Cilliers, 1999; Chimanikire, 2002).

These subcommittees predate the OPDSC, essentially dating back to the FLS organization. As previously noted by Omari (1991a), “The committee [ISDSC] breaks into three sub-committees for defence, state security, and public security” (p. 124). The justification for this overall intact assumption of the ISDSC can be found in the terms of the protocol which determined that the committee “shall assume the objectives and functions of the existing Inter-State Defence and Security Committee” (SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-Operation, Article 7(2)). That is why an author such as Ngoma (2005) comments that,

The ISDSC has, however, hardly shifted from its earlier mission of providing defence and security, and conflict prevention as well as management and resolution, including a multiplicity of such tasks at technical level as joint military operations, training and development functions. Its longer history than that of the ISPDC will probably continue to give it an edge, notwithstanding the interwoven nature of the two structures (p. 192).

Ngoma’s assertion leads us to the second aspect to be explored in this section, which is the undeclared centrality of the ISDSC in the OPDSC and its primacy over the ISPDC. As was emphasized in the previous section in the discussion of the transformation of the FLS, the ISDSC continued to guarantee the functional services of regional security cooperation. For instance, it was under this committee that the impasse about the OPDSC chair’s relationship with the SADC chair was overcome. In this sense, the efficiency of the ISDSC in facilitating cooperation among the regional states pertaining to security is something that neither the states nor the literature denies. Hence, Chimanikire (2002)
declares that, “To some extent the weaknesses of the OPDS are countered by the ISDSC, which functions effectively on a technical level” (p. 9).

The ISDSC’s effectiveness in the region rendered it de facto central to the security cooperation, though it is not so declared by the protocol and other official documents. In this respect, Ngoma (2005) comments that in OPDSC primacy is given to the ISDSC over the ISPDC, which indicates that among the southern African states there is a tendency to emphasize military security. However, it also points out how the new regional security structure remains attached to the patterns of cooperation and organization developed by the FLS. In this sense, though the regional security structure changed, there is essentially a continuity characterized by the assumption of the important features of the FLS.

To sum up, under the OPDSC the ISDSC continues to fulfill the important role it had in the FLS. Two important aspects emphasize this continuity. First the organization of the ISDSC is mainly a mirror of the FLS. Second, the importance given to this committee following its performance confirms the centrality of the ISDSC in the OPDSC and its implicit primacy over the ISPDC. This interest in continuity, despite the change of regional security conditions, needs to be explained. Based on Weitsman’s (2004) theory, the next section provides an explanation of the conditions of security threat that allowed states to invest in continuity of the previous patterns of cooperation, while adjusting objectives to the new context.
Explaining the Transformation of the FLS and the Continuity of the ISDSC

This section offers an explanation of the FLS transformation, looking at the regional conditions of threat in the post-apartheid era. My argument is based on the observation that whereas the demise of apartheid decreased the levels of external threat to the FLS, the internal threat remained low. This situation, characteristic of hedging alliances, allowed the member states to transform the FLS into the OPDSC while preserving the ISDSC. Therefore, the low levels of internal threat and the internal interest in managing it in a hedging environment explain the FLS transformation and the endurance of the ISDSC.

The demise of apartheid and the end of the Cold War changed the security threat conditions in the region, as observed in the previous chapter. Therefore, tensions between South Africa and some FLS members (perceived as communists) decreased, undermining South Africa’s justification of aggression against neighboring countries. On the other hand, the institutional collapse of apartheid meant the end of minority rule in the region and consequently decreased the level of external threat perceived by the FLS. The low levels of both external and internal threat created a scenario of hedging. It was in this environment that the FLS was transformed and the ISDSC conserved. Therefore, understanding post-apartheid southern Africa in terms of hedging illuminates the regional inter-state security in the aftermath of apartheid and helps to explain the continuity of the ISDSC.

Weitsman’s (2004) theory permits affirmation that transformation of the FLS and preservation the ISDSC was possible because southern African states did not feel
seriously threatened by each other. This lowered external threat and conservation of low levels of internal threat, which generates hedging motivations, allowed states to continue the cooperation institutionalized by the FLS instead of simply dissolving the alliance. This hedging environment, transforming the FLS while preserving the ISDSC, allowed southern African states to manage low internal and external threats in a context in which confidence was still an issue. States needed to manage the risk of losing significant gains of the end of minority rule, while hoping that regular consultations and sharing of experiences would bolster cohesion in the region. The ISDSC was the institution upon which to build that cohesion.

The long discussion to transform the FLS and the controversies around that transformation show that states could agree on important objectives such as those declared in the Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation. They also agreed on important strategies, such those announced in the SIPO. Nevertheless, they still had diverging political values and practices and experienced different potential security threats (Cilliers, 1999, Chimanikire, 2002; Nathan, 2004). Some states were still dealing with intra-state conflicts, while others faced cross-border organized crime and drug trafficking or were concerned with the spread of HIV/AIDS. This confirms the hedging environment in which, despite differences of strategy, states still experience low internal threat (Weitsman, 2004). This dynamic of agreement and disagreement keeps cohesion modest but does not impede cooperation.

This dynamic also shows that the environment of hedging persisted even after the FLS transformed into OPSDC. In fact, though the FLS, as an alliance against minority
rule, was disbanded, the region adopted not only the organizational structure of the ISDSC, but also the climate that defines the region in the post-apartheid era. The levels of internal threat are low, there is no evidence of enmity among the southern African states, and the prospect for interstate conflict is low. Although cohesion within the OPDSC is not yet high, it is at least modest and may improve and the ISDSC, subsumed into the OPDSC, is an appropriate institution to promote this improvement.

While the region is still working to improve confidence, hedging can be helpful as the low levels of internal threat permit the ISDSC to work in rendering states’ capabilities and intentions explicit through sharing security information and military experiences, and with the creation of a regional policing network. This lowers the possibility of unexpected increases of threatening intentions. In this sense, the hedging environment also allows the ISDSC to inject an “element of predictability into regional military affairs and removing, or at least help diminish, the atmosphere of menace which South Africa’s military power might otherwise engender” (Hamill, 2001, p. 31). Therefore, it can be argued that the embracing of the ISDSC is motivated by the southern African states’ interest in having the committee as a body through which they can not only manage any potential threat they represent to each other, but can also promote the institutional ties of friendship on the basis of confidence in the post-apartheid era.

This section has proposed to explain the FLS transformation by exploring the conditions of threat that contributed to the preservation of the ISDSC. While the decrease of the external threat could have led to the collapse of the alliance, as the fulfillment of its objectives, consideration of low levels of internal threat, generating hedging motivation,
was the logical key to continuity that characterized adoption of the ISDSC in the process of transforming of the FLS into the OPDSC.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the process of transforming the FLS in the post-apartheid era. It identified the main changes brought by this process which created the OPDSC. However, I argued that despite these changes, the southern African states were interested in preserving the ISDSC as an essential structure of the new regional security framework of cooperation in order to manage their relationships in a hedging environment.

The conditions of threat that rendered viable the transformation of the FLS and ISDSC’s endurance are low levels of both internal and external threats, which generate hedging motivations. This means that after the demise of apartheid, a climate of hedging in the region prevailed over the extinction of balancing motivations. In fact, states continued to be interested in hedging each other, even when a balancing third party was no longer necessary.
CONCLUSION

The study of the FLS from the perspective of the management of threat offers a coherent explanation of its formation, expansion and transformation. Examination of both internal and external threat levels revealed each state’s motivation for allying and the overall interest in preserving the institutional framework for defense and security cooperation developed by the FLS. In this sense, perception of high levels of threat from apartheid South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal motivated Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia to form the FLS as a balance-of-threat rather than a balance-of-power alliance.

The balance-of-power perspective presents some limitations to understanding the motivations for the FLS formation. In fact, sole consideration of aggregation capabilities to balance the regional relations of power does not hold in regard to the great disparity of capabilities between the minority- and the majority-ruled countries. The regional imbalance of power clearly shows that the aggregated capabilities of the majority-ruled countries could not effectively balance the capabilities held by the minority regimes. Additionally, the balance-of-power perspective misses elements of aggressive intentions that characterized the relationship between the minority regimes and the FLS member states.

Nevertheless, while the balance-of-threat perspective introduces the importance of intentions, along with the capabilities of states, its analysis of threat is not satisfactory if it is limited to the exploration of external threat. Although the examination of external threats explains the FLS formation to balance the minority regimes, it fails to approach
the dynamic of internal threat management that characterized Angola’s alignment and South Africa’s interest in joining before the alliance was transformed into the OPDSC.

Examination of FLS expansion with the alignment of new southern African states offers important insights if one considers the internal as well as external conditions of threat behind each state’s motivation to ally. This analysis reveals different types of motivations that encouraged southern African states’ alignment. Although balancing motivations were predominant, the FLS member states allied with additional and different motivations as well. In addition to their primary motivation to ally to balance external threat, each state may have a variety of other motivations internally or in relation to other alliance members. For instance, the case of Angola shows that balancing and tethering motivations can coexist. However, this case also confirmed that one motivation may prevail, given the origin of the higher threat. In this sense, Zambia’s threat stemmed more from its relatively aggressive intentions towards Angolan regime and its geographical closeness to Angola than from its capabilities. Therefore, for Angola, balancing South Africa was more important than tethering Zambia.

On the other hand, the predominance of balancing over tethering motivations also resulted from the fact that, except for the moderate internal threat perceived by Angola, the overall internal threat environment in the FLS was low so the external threat was paramount. This reveals that when states join an alliance which has a predominant motivation, such balancing, the other motivations tend to be less perceptible than the strongest motivations of the majority or most influential members of the alliance. This
may explain why an alliance such as NATO, entailing different motivations,\textsuperscript{15} is generally viewed as a balancing alliance. Expansion of the FLS was motivated by different sources and perceptions of threat. Mozambique allied to balance high threat levels from both Rhodesia and South Africa. Angola joined to balance South Africa and tether Zambia, while alignments of Zimbabwe and Namibia were motivated to balance South Africa. Finally, South Africa allied to hedge the other member states of the FLS, which were, in turn, interested in hedging South Africa.

The lowering of external threat, coupled with the continuation of low levels of internal threat, which characterized the conditions of South Africa’s alignment, launched the transition from the FLS to the OPDSC. In fact, dissolution of the FLS did not mean separation or dispersion of its members. Based on the FLS structure, the original members, joined by other states of the region, continued to enhance their security under a different environment of threat. This environment of both low internal and external threats sustained the preservation of the ISDSC during and after transformation of the FLS into the OPDSC, managing low levels of internal threat, instead of high levels of external threat. This managing of low levels of security threat among southern African states, rather than an externally oriented task, supported adoption of the ISDSC in the aftermath of the minority regimes’ demise. Moreover, modest cohesiveness within the ISDSC as a center of regional security and defense management would be extremely limited had the states experienced high levels of internal threat after the lowering of external threat.

\textsuperscript{15} See Weitsman (2004)
The FLS legacy to the OPDSC is not only institutional, though this aspect is one important indicator of regional continuity, the OPDSC also inherited the threat environment introduced by South Africa’s hedging-motivated alignment. In fact, these motivations are characterized by the intent to manage the security relationships of prospective friends or enemies. In the case of southern Africa, the present work allows us to see it as a strategy to manage prospective friends. As in human relationships, conditions must be created so that prospective friends do not escape from one’s orbit of contact. Hence, confidence-building meetings are required. It can be argued that assumption of the ISDSC was motivated by southern African states’ interest in having a body through which they could not only manage any potential threat they still represented to each other, but, in a positive way, could also promote institutional ties of friendship on the basis of confidence in the post-apartheid era.

The realist, rationalist, liberalist and constructivist approaches all help to explain the two poles of FLS existence: balancing and hedging. The balancing motivations, which characterized FLS formation and expansion until South Africa’s integration, can be captured by realist and rationalist approaches. In fact, both these approaches help us look external threat as the central concern for alliance formation. Alliances are driven by the need to collectively face a threat which thus becomes the congregating factor of the member states. In this sense, the balancing character of the FLS formation and most of its expansion can be better captured by both perspectives. However, the transformation model (encompassing change and continuity) adopted by the southern African states,
following termination of the external threat that motivated the FLS formation and the fulfillment of its balancing objectives, challenges those perspectives.

On the other hand, the hedging environment in which the OPDSC grew out of the FLS can be approached from both liberal and constructivist perspectives. The liberal perspective can look at southern African states’ experience of security cooperation within the FLS and how this experience shaped their behavior in the post-apartheid era. Thus, the tendency of continuity, the institutionalization and integration of the ISDSC into the OPDSC and the preservation of its institutional importance are not startling from a liberal perspective.

The constructivist approach can argue that the social dimension of security cooperation is not fixed, but constructed, and therefore can change while conserving some elements of identity. For instance, Adler’s (2008) insights into the concept of cooperative security can illuminate the current security situation in southern Africa. Moreover, it makes sense to interpret the transformation of the FLS as a change from defense alliance to cooperative security. However, the work of confidence-building and construction of identities suggests an environment in which states have the minimum expectations that their interests do not seriously threaten each other. Even Adler’s and Barnett’s (1998a) previous conceptualization of security communities requires an assessment of the conditions of threat as a point of departure. They present a framework of security communities starting with the identification of an external threat, which contributes for the coordination of actions to enhance states’ security, evolving to exploration of aspects that contribute to trust, confidence and collective identity. Applied
to the case of southern Africa, Weitsman’s (2004) theory is not incompatible with a constructivist approach; the two perspectives may be mutually reinforcing. What Weitsman’s theory brings to the table is the explicitness of these conditions of threat in a framework that looks simultaneously at the origins of these threats, their degree and the consequent motivations for their management.

Moreover, while the four perspectives help to understand the balancing and hedging poles of the FLS existence they do not communicate. In this regard, the present work on the dynamics of internal and external threat in the FLS can contribute to future examinations of the FLS legacy and the OPDSC creation, applying realist, rationalist, liberal and constructivist arguments in a unifying way. The model of change and continuity adopted by southern African states, here developed in terms of transformation, requires the contribution of those different theoretical approaches. Therefore, the realist and rationalist approaches can contribute to the explanations of the logic of change of the FLS and the termination of its activities as an alliance against minority rule after the demise of this external threat. On the other hand, the liberal argument can account for the continuity dynamic represented in the adoption of the ISDSC and in the fact of that members did not disperse but continued to act as a unit following the permanence of low-level internal threat. Finally, constructivism approaches can contribute to the explanation of how conditions of both low internal and low external threat presented a possibility for southern African states to build their security cooperation on shared values and identity.

Therefore, the present work’s explanation of the conditions transforming the FLS into the OPDSC is limited to offering a possible approach to the security threat
motivations that allowed continuity within change, transformation. Evidently, other perspectives can go further in explaining the type of institutional cooperation in the region after the OPDSC was constituted from the debris of the FLS. Whether to consider the OPDSC as an alliance or another sort of institution depends on the theoretical approach adopted. However, one cannot underestimate it as an institution for fostering defense and security of its member states, or that its mutual defense pact indicates an accord of collective action against threats to member states.

To summarize, the theoretical perspective adopted in this work conciliates the four theoretical traditions, taking into consideration the dynamic of external and internal threats as the main factor explaining the motivations for FLS formation, expansion and transformation. While FLS formation was characterized by balancing motivations, expansion brought tethering and balancing motivations, though the last was paramount. Finally, integration of South Africa was motivated by hedging, the environment that allowed FLS transformation into the OPDSC. Therefore, from the perspective of threat management, consistent low levels of internal threat, even after the lowering of external threat, is the basis for preservation of the ISDSC by the OPDSC to fulfill an internal task of management of low levels of internal threat.
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**MONOGRAPHS**


UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS


INTERNET RESOURCES


OTHERS


APPENDIX A: SOUTHERN AFRICAN STATES’ CAPABILITIES

Table 2.

The Military and Other Resources of Southern African States (1973)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State and Region</th>
<th>GDP $ million</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Military Expend. $</th>
<th>As % of Government Expenditure</th>
<th>As % of GDP</th>
<th>Men in Security Forces &amp; Reserves</th>
<th>Number of Military Planes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa (including South West Africa)</td>
<td>11,488</td>
<td>17,500,000</td>
<td>322,000,000</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>171,500</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal (Angola and Mozambique)</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>5,293,000(A) 7,124,000(M)</td>
<td>200,000,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>93,000</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhodesia</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>4,285,000</td>
<td>16,900,000</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>39,500</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>593,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
<td>7,225,000</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>7,200</td>
<td>10</td>
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Table 3.


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<th>GDP ($m)</th>
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<th>ATAF</th>
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YR = Year of Publication
CC = Country Code
POP = Population
DEFEX = Defense Expenditure
DEBUD = Defense Budget
ATAF = Active Total Armed Forces
PMF = Para – Military Forces
AO = Angola
BW = Botswana
MZ = Mozambique
NA = Namibia (former South West Africa)
SA = South Africa
TZ = Tanzania
ZM = Zambia
ZW = Zimbabwe (former Rhodesia)