

South Africa vs. Nigeria: competing countries for leadership position in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract:

Our paper aims to analyze the position of the two leading countries within Sub-Saharan Africa (South Africa and Nigeria) and look at whether which one of them can be considered to be a regional hegemon. We build upon Nolte's (2010) and Habib's (2009) paper for the conceptualization of regional hegemony and find that in order for a country to be able to fulfill the role of a regional hegemon, it must also provide certain services to its region. These services are connected to representation and advocacy in international organizations, maintaining peace within their regions, being a trading partner and investment partner, and providing development assistance for less wealthy countries. We find, that although in terms of cumulated GDP, Nigeria may have already passed South Africa as the continent's largest economy (BBC 2014), it does not yet provide those services which are needed for being a regional hegemon. Thus if Nigeria wishes to become the leading country within Africa, it must work on its foreign policy to achieve these tasks.

Keywords: Sub-Saharan Africa, regional hegemony, African development, foreign policy

1. Introduction

When I was writing the abstract of this article in the Fall of 2013, I was intrigued to read some predictions (such as Moss 2013) about when and how would Nigeria overtake South Africa as Sub-Saharan Africa's largest economy. The consensus was between 2025 and 2030, thus leaving South Africa at least ten years to prepare itself for this challenge. It turned out eventually that South Africa only had six months to prepare itself... In early April 2014 Nigeria has announced that its GDP has been rebased and previously uncounted items are from now on being counted as part of their GDP. According to the BBC (2014) the Nigerian GDP was being previously calculated with components set in 1990. Thus for instance industries such as the telecom industry, ICT sector, online sales, new airlines and film production were not factored in. The result of the rebasing was that Nigeria overtook South Africa as the continent's largest economy, with a GDP estimated to be around 488 billion USD for 2013, compared to the 384 billion USD GDP for South Africa for 2012.

Since Nigeria's population is more than three times as high as South Africa's, rebasing the GDP did not make the per capita GDP come anything closer to the South African one.

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² This paper will be presented at the ISA/FLACSO conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina on the 24th of July, 2014. The travel to the conference was supported by ISC Foundation.

Nevertheless the rebasing clarified that the oil sector led Nigerian economic boom has had some major results, which in the forthcoming years may reshape the foreign political and economic arena of the African continent.

The aim of this article is to compare and contrast the two major powers of the Sub-Saharan African region and try to analyze which one of them can be considered to be a regional hegemon. Is the new economic power of Nigeria enough? Or does hegemony require something additional? The main finding is that even though Nigeria may have already surpassed South Africa in terms of cumulated GDP in 2014, it is not only economic might which makes a country a regional hegemon, but also the services they are providing for their fellow countries. These services are: playing an advocacy role in international governmental organizations; engaging in peacekeeping in Africa; being active in international trade and services and providing development assistance to the region. These services shall be explained later on in detail in section 2. The paper contributes to the literature of regional hegemony outlined in the papers of Nolte (2010), Flemes (2007, 2009), Geldenhuys (2010), Habib (2009), Kappel (2010) and Prys (2008).

The following section provides an overview of the literature of regional hegemony and what kind of services do hegemon provide for their peers. Section 3 analyzes the Republic of South Africa and Nigeria respectively, and details the various services they provide for African countries. Section 4 concludes the paper.

2. The meaning of leadership position in a given region

In the last ten years Brazil, India, China and South Africa have started to wield more and more influence in their given region and slowly but steadily they became regional powers. In the case of India and China, their influence can also be witnessed in the global arena, whereas Brazil and South Africa affects decisions more on their own continent. In IR there has been much discussion about which countries are the leading countries of a given era which countries can be considered to be hegemon. Interestingly enough there has been much less discussion about regional hegemony and what it actually means. In the following section we wish to reflect upon what the international scientific community thinks about regional hegemon.

An interesting definition by Mearsheimer states that a „hegemon is a state that is so powerful that it dominates all the other states in the system. No other state has the military wherewithal to put up a serious fight against it. In essence, a hegemon is the only great power in the system. A state that is substantially more powerful than the other great powers in the system is not a hegemon, because it faces, by definition, other great powers.” (Mearsheimer 2001:47) Mearsheimer believes that it is not possible for any country in the present to achieve a hegemonic position, the best they can hope for is a regional hegemonic position. If a country is a regional hegemon, than according to his definition no one can threaten them in their own backyard. According to him there is only one regional hegemon in the present, and that is the USA in the Western hemisphere. Kappel (2010: 25) also analyses the prerequisites for a country to achieve regional hegemonic position and names eight fundamentals for it: the country has a large population, covers a relatively large geographical area, has above the regional average growth, plays a dominant part in trade, R&D expenditure is almost as high as in OECD countries, has businesses which are regionally active and provides competition for OECD companies who come to the region, provides a stable currency and sound monetary policy in the region, plays an active role in international governmental cooperation. Kindleberger (1973) and Gilpin (2001) argue that hegemon do have to provide services to the world. Whereas Kindleberger mainly focuses on economic services such as stable

currency, providing capital for less developed countries, coordination in macroeconomic policies, and in the case of crises market supply and demand and lender of last resort; Gilpin focuses on the political agenda stating that hegemonies are in that position because they want to maintain their own political and security agenda, and that is the reason why they are providing services to the world.

Nolte takes the discussion further and makes a differentiation between regional powers and middle powers. According to Nolte (2010: 890) “traditional middle powers are, first and foremost, defined by their role in international politics, the new middle powers are, first of all, regional powers (or regional leaders) and, in addition, middle powers (with regard to their power resources) on a global scale”. It is also interesting to note that Nolte argues that most authors do not necessarily refer to specific criteria (GDP, armies etc.) but take a constructivist point of view stating that being a middle power or regional power depends on the status and corresponding power hierarchy by other states. Thus he defines regional powers as countries which have a leading position in a region that is geographically, economically and politically delimited; which has the material, organizational, and ideological resources for power projection; and which truly has influence in regional affairs. He also states that an additional prerequisite for regional hegemony is that it should have on the one hand regional followers and endeavor to create regional governance structures.

Prys (2008) makes a distinction between a hegemonic relationship and other forms of hierarchical power relations such as domination or imperialism. He argues that in order to understand the relationship of hegemonies and other countries we should analyze three dimensions: “perception”, “projection” and “provision”. The dimension of perception includes both the self perception of the regional power or hegemon and the perceptions of other powers in the region, a.k.a. whether they would accept one country as their leader. Projection refers to “the specific activities of the hegemon that promote its own vision and values for the region, such as the establishment of institutions and agenda setting within those institutions; mediation of conflicts; and financial assistance and, if relevant, the conditions attached to it.” (Prys 2008:10) Last but not least provision refers to providing public goods to the countries which are in the hegemon’s general sphere of influence as mentioned by for instance Kindleberger. During this article we shall be mainly dealing with the projection and the provision part of dimensions of regional hegemonies.

Habib (2009: 150) argues that “every hegemon is a pivotal state. But it has to be more. Hegemonies not only aspire to leadership, and are not only endowed with military, economic, and other resources. They also have - necessarily - a political and socio-economic vision of their transnational environments, and a political willingness to implement such a vision. If that vision is one of security, stability, and development, as is often the case, then the hegemon undertakes to underwrite the implementation of these goals.” There are two key messages in this statement: one is of being a pivotal state, the other one is underwriting the implementation of security, stability and development. Pivotal state is similar to what Nolte (2010) refers to as traditional middle powers. But a regional hegemon is so much more than a traditional middle power as argued by Habib (2009) since its aggregate and relative capabilities in terms of economic, diplomatic and military means vis á vis other African nations create for it a set of privileges, obligations and responsibilities. These responsibilities have to be underwritten by the state to function as a regional hegemon.

Geldenhuis (2010) offers a different mindset as to the previous authors, as he details three different forms of leadership in his paper. Intellectual leadership refers to offering fresh ideas and new perspectives. Entrepreneurial leadership is about convincing others to follow the

ideas and norms which have been put forth in intellectual leadership. This is the time when countries form alliances and make deals to support each other's positions. Implementation leadership is about providing the resources to translate policy into action, fulfilling the international commitments and helping other countries to achieve the same goals.

In the forthcoming pages thus we shall be building upon Nolte's (2010), Habib's (2009), Geldenhuys's (2010) and Prys's (2008) concept of regional hegemony. All four authors are arguing that South Africa is the regional hegemon in Africa, but since we have seen that Nigeria has overtaken it in economic terms we should look at whether that is enough to be a regional hegemon in Africa or not? For both countries we shall be looking at four different sets of services (projection and provision according to Prys (2008); implementing security, stability and development Habib (2009), providing leadership Geldenhuys (2010), and influence in regional affairs and regional and global governance importance (Nolte (2010)). Thus we shall be looking at whether Nigeria and South Africa are providing for the region four different sets of services:

- influence in regional and global governance;
- peacekeeping;
- trade and investment partner;
- providing development assistance.

2.1. Research methods

Data were collected in two steps. The first step involved analyzing the respective foreign policies of the two countries, by focusing on the annual reports and White Papers of the foreign ministries (where available); databases for trade and foreign direct investment; and databases of peacekeeping by the UN. Unfortunately on some occasions the data available in official reports seemed to be unsubstantiated, therefore in the second step individual contact persons were contacted to provide further information, either by granting access to non-public documents or by providing a possibility for an interview. These officials included members of the diplomatic corps of the respective countries and members of the academia. All in all, 12 experts at ministries, embassies, research institutes and enterprises provided access to documents or were interviewed. The interviews were carried out between May and July 2014 and mainly focused on verifying the issues behind the numbers for the raw data.

3. South African foreign policy vs. Nigerian foreign policy

3.1. Influence in regional and global governance

After 1994, Mandela's newly elected government sought to reform the foreign policy of South Africa. Thus previously neglected pursuits officially became a part South Africa's foreign policy. The government realized that in order to develop and prosper, South Africa should not isolate itself from their neighbors, since South Africa cannot develop with the rest of the continent living in hardship and poverty. By making sure that neighboring countries would have the opportunities to prosper, South Africa can also avoid a flood of immigrants from these areas which would provide both an economic and both a security concern. Therefore SADC (South African Development Community) and SACU (South African Customs Union) cooperation was prioritized as well as South-South connections (Henwood 1997). Barber (2005) agrees with this statement and adds that among the South African priorities of the post-apartheid era were the issues of strengthening relations with the UN, non-aligned countries, as well as the (O)AU (Organisation of African Unity; later replaced by the African Union). We are going to see in section 3.2 which areas did South Africa send peacekeeping missions to, however South Africa was also active in mediating conflicts as was

the case in Angola, Burundi, Lesotho, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Zimbabwe. With the help of Nigeria it rebuilt the African governance structure establishing the African Union, and the Pan-African Parliament, and creating the African Peer Group Review Mechanism for NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) which was based upon OECD's body peer review function Habib (2009).

The current South African foreign policy is based upon the White Paper of 2011 (Department of International Relations and Cooperation 2011) and also on various ANC (African National Congress) policy discussion document (ANC 2011). The priorities did not change significantly since 1994, thus the focus is still on human rights, democracy, fight against poverty and reconciliation in post-conflict areas. However in the afore mentioned ANC document we can read various unachievable goals, such as the dissolution of NATO and closure of all foreign military bases. As an interviewee pointed out, sometimes parallel communications exist: one for internal consumption, to satisfy the needs of the party, and some for external consumption to satisfy the needs of foreign officials and TNCs. South-South cooperation is very much a priority area in the present as is the relationship with international organizations such as SADC, AU, Commonwealth, UN as well as G77+China. Indeed it is through the BRICS partnership that South Africa wishes to achieve the reform of the UN Security Council and its permanent seat therein. Challenges for South Africa were also mentioned in the White Paper which were: changing demographic conditions and stress on the sustainability of the welfare state; immigration from neighboring countries; the lingering effects of the financial crisis; the growing power of social media in both internal and foreign affairs, which enables the spread of radical ideas; climate change; the race for natural resources.

However these aims and goals also manifest themselves in concrete foreign political action. In the remainder of the section we are going to detail some of the foreign political achievements of South Africa where on the one hand it managed to prioritize the African agenda in a global setting and/or was able to act for the whole of the continent. Major events for South Africa included hosting the Pan-African Parliament in May and October 2011; hosting the Global African Diaspora in May 2012, being a member between 2010 and 2012 of the AU's Peace and Security Council, and drafting a strategy which led to the improved cooperation between AU/UN, led to the establishment of the African Standby Force and which was accepted by the UN Security Council resolution 2033 (2012). An agreement was also made to provide capacity building support for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Grand Inga hydro power plant project which will be ready by 2020-2025 and provide 39 000 MW of electricity.³ BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) countries also agreed to support through NEPAD Africa's infrastructural development; South Africa initiated and led a resolution adopted at the 17th session of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2011 which called for the first ever discussion to promote and protect the human rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals. In addition South Africa hosted the 17th UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) summit in Durban and was a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council between 2011 and 2012. South Africa hosted the first BRICS Leaders-Africa forum in Durban in 2013, where the leaders of BRICS countries promised to provide support for Africa's development; led the discussions on making SADC into a customs union and consolidating its free trade area agreement and took part in the establishment of a BRICS development bank; where the initial funding and endowment should be sufficient enough to finance infrastructure building. The leaders participating at the

³ This project stalled according to UNCTAD (2014) and was revised as a 4800 MW project with the cooperation of Eskom (South Africa) and Société Nationale d'Electricité (DRC).

BRICS summit also agreed upon the establishment of a Contingency Reserve Arrangement with an initial size of a 100 billion US to counter short term liquidity shocks⁴ (Department of International Relations and Cooperation 2012 and 2013). One of the most important foreign political accomplishments of South Africa in recent years was to manage to appoint Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma as chairperson of the AU Commission in 2012 and this clearly showed that even if there is antagonism towards the “Big Brother” in Africa they managed to whip the votes for the needed two thirds majority.

From these points we can see that South Africa is really active both in global and regional governance. The major achievements in terms of foreign policy have been at the UN where they have successfully pushed through a UNSC (United Nations Security Council) resolution, and with the BRICS countries, where they have repeatedly drawn attention to the problems in Africa. With the establishment of a BRICS development bank and quasi “BRICS-IMF-World Bank” South Africa is taking advantage of China’s maneuvering to partially create its own global governmental structure as opposed to the present Bretton Woods system. In the future these deals may actually increase the influence of South Africa in Africa by being able to directly influence these meetings and act as an intermediary for smaller or less wealthy states.

Nigeria’s foreign policy is much more difficult to elaborate upon as opposed to South Africa’s. At the time of the research for instance Nigeria’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs webpage contained no detailed strategy which the country wishes to achieve. Luckily the Nigerian Government’s webpage does contain information about its foreign policy, however even these are more a list of achievements than a real strategy document. Repeated efforts have been made for a personal interview with Nigerian senior foreign policy staff, however at the time of the conclusion for the paper they have not yet been available, thus the following is mainly based on the account of the international literature. According to Ezirim (2010) the following five major foreign policy principals have been an integral part of Nigeria’s foreign policy since its independence: non-alignment; equality of all states; non interference; multilateral diplomacy; afrocentrism. Non-alignment has not been true in all situations, mainly because Nigeria during the Cold War was more Western centric as opposed belonging to the Soviet bloc. An example of this was limiting the amount of personnel of the newly opened Soviet embassy to 10 whereas no such restrictions were based upon other missions. This anti-Soviet stance was toned down during the Biafra conflict. Modern Nigeria’s foreign policy can be traced back to Abacha’s death in 1998, which started with the successful transition to democracy and re-admission to the Commonwealth as well as reestablishment of diplomatic connections with the EU, Canada and the US. After 2007 the foreign policy seemed to center around citizens diplomacy which seems more as a part of normal consular service than actual foreign policy tool. In 2009 Abba quoted by Ezirim (2010) went as far as stating that in the two preceding years Nigeria has done nothing spectacular and its participation in regional organizations have been minimal. Unaji (2007) discusses the various concentric circles that Nigerian foreign policy operates in: the innermost is Western Africa; the second area is the whole of Africa; and the third area is the rest of the world. Despite critical views Nigeria was instrumental in establishing ECOWAS which does provide a platform for interregional cooperation and maybe the future introduction of customs union similar to the EU or WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union). The ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development also does provides financial interventions for member states, which between 2004 and 2009 amounted to almost 1 billion USD (EBID 2014).

⁴ There has been some confusion regarding the goal of the BRICS Bank, both between official documentation and people interviewed. Some said it would function in a way similar to the IMF, whereas other senior sources quoted that the goal would be establishing a World Bank type of institution.

Unfortunately for the future of ECOWAS, there seems to be a low amount of cooperation opportunities in economic matters between members, which is down mainly to the fact of their dependence on trade with the Global North, non-tariff barriers to trade and low manufacturing capacity within the region. We shall see later on, that Nigerian trade is minimal within ECOWAS. On the other hand in 2009 it was Nigeria who provided more than half of the financing for ECOWAS, which definitely shows at least commitment towards that regional organization. According to (Jega - Farris 2010) Nigeria also played a pivotal role in the democratization process of Liberia, Sierra Leone, Togo and Equatorial Guinea where they provided leadership support in the peacekeeping operations but this we shall detail in the following section.

Comparing and contrasting the two country's influence in regional and global governance we can draw the conclusion that South Africa has a much more visible and quantifiable foreign policy as opposed to Nigeria. This can be witnessed in both the UNSC resolution and with hosting major events such as UNFCCC or BRICS summits as well as organizing for instance the Football World Cup in 2010. If Nigeria seriously wishes to challenge South Africa in its leadership position on the African continent, first it must create and adopt a foreign political strategy and then make sure that it can implement it.

3.2. Peacekeeping

After apartheid the South African defense strategy was based upon two strategic papers: the White Paper on Defence from 1996 and the 1998 Defence Review and since then a general overview has been issued in 2012. The White Paper on Defence does not yet mention actively taking part in peacekeeping, the goal at that time was more to create a strategy on how and where to take part in peacekeeping operations. It also advises that defence cooperation between the SADC countries must be something that the countries should be working to achieve (Department of Defence: Republic of South Africa 1996). The 1998 Defence Review however does allow for peacekeeping operations to occur with South African troops, even though it states that troops can only deploy if the South African population and parliament give it a go ahead, and the peacekeeping operation gets a mandate by SADC, OAU and the UN (Department of Defence: Republic of South Africa 1998). South Africa's engagement in international peace missions was accepted by the South African Parliament in October 1999, the official document detailing the specificities was the White Paper On South African Participation in International Peace Missions. The 2012 South African Defence Review is far more detailed than either previously mentioned document. The third pillar of the 2012 defence strategy is promoting peace and security and as part of this goal the document focuses on how to achieve regional peace. One of the tools the strategy envisages is to place South African personnel into organizations which have a direct bearing on security policy in the region. These organizations are the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations; AU Peace and Security Department; and SADC organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. The second tool of the strategy is to provide support for multilateral peacekeeping operations should these occur on the continent. An interesting point in the strategy that it mentions that if a multilateral peacekeeping mission were to occur, in that case the person leading the peacekeeping mission should be a South African (Department of Defence 2012).

In Table 1 we can see the military expenditures of selected Sub-Saharan African countries. Those countries were selected who contribute 2000 or more troops for peacekeeping duties annually. From this we can see that even though in international comparison the South African defence spending is relatively low, it is still twice as high as that of Nigeria its challenger for regional hegemon position. The composition of the South African army is quite

mixed: it uses relatively new Valour class frigates or SAAB JAS 39 Gripen jet fighters as well as Douglas DC-3 Dacotas, which saw active service in World War 2. According to Nibishaka (2011) despite the spending, the SANDF (South African National Defence Force) is in dire straits: medically half of the soldiers are unfit for service, reservists have not been on maneuvers, and only 20 tanks are operational.

Table 1.: Military expenditure in selected Sub-Saharan African countries

Country	2013 military expenditure (USD, billion)	2013 military expenditure (as % of GDP)
Ethiopia	0,3	0,7
Ghana	0,2	0,6
Kenya	0,7	1,9
Nigeria	1,9	1
Rwanda	0,07	1,1
South Africa	4,9	1,2
Tanzania	0,3	1,2

Source: SIPRI 2014

In Table 2 we detail the South African contributions to peacekeeping operations. While these contributions may seem relatively small, the SANDF has been pushed to the limit both in personnel and funding to maintain these operations (Heinecken – Ferreira 2012a). The South African peacekeeping corpse had to meet the following challenges during their various missions: the troops did not have the capabilities to service their equipment, and the equipment they had was for war and not for peacekeeping. The APCs (Armoured Personnel Carrier) used were too heavy for the terrain in Burundi, so they frequently sunk on the roads. The troops also were not trained for peacekeeping duties, and they came from a variety of companies not helping unit cohesion (Accord 2007). Additional challenges as detailed by (Heinecken – Ferreira 2012a and 2012b) were the following. The mandates they had to operate under were usually weak causing constraint and confusion among the ranks. Resources were insufficient and infrastructure virtually absent. As mentioned previously the peacekeepers were soldiers trained for war, but were not trained for negotiating or applying force skillfully. In Sudan the equipment was not usable in the desert, placing further stress on the troops. An easy to grasp example of unsatisfactory training for soldiers was that drivers did not receive training for the DRC on how to drive in the jungle. An interviewee also mentioned that the reason for relatively lower involvement in numbers as opposed to other African countries was, that supply lines for South Africa were far longer, thereby creating a logistical nightmare for the SANDF. Additionally South African diplomats are taking a very active role in mediation which is difficult to quantify nevertheless it occurred frequently for instance between the Russians and Ukrainians in 2014; the Israelis and Palestinians on numerous occasions, and also South Africa was trying to convince Saddam Hussein until the last moment in 2003 to let in international inspectors and inspect the alleged WMDs.

Despite Nigeria spending far less money on its military as we can see from Table 1 the country nevertheless has provided far more troops for peacekeeping operations than South Africa (see Table 3). The reasons for Nigeria taking part in peacekeeping as detailed by (Jega - Farris 2010) are the following: stability in the region and the promotion of greater regional cooperation; prevention of refugee exodus; keeping foreign troops out of the region; developing markets for investment, goods, services and labor. However according to Alli

(2012) Nigeria is more of a statistical hegemon, with its influence deriving from the favorable statistics relative to other ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) countries. Also in providing leadership its efforts are seriously undermined by the widespread corruption and misappropriation of resources within the country. West Africa has not been experiencing wide spread peace in the last decade with crises occurring in Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Guinea, Niger, Mali and Guinea Bissau. In the latter situation assistance from Nigeria could have been used, and with these countries being in close proximity to Nigerian borders, the Nigerian Army should have been able to organize an intervention in order to restore peace. Eventually this task fell to the UNSC with the ECOWAS security architecture (ECOMOG) not being able to fulfill its role. Regardless of criticism Nigeria did provide much needed assistance to ECOMOG on a number of occasions and did provide much needed assistance in resolving to conflict in Liberia. We could argue that the reason why Nigeria is so active in peacekeeping in Western Africa is that it does not wish to be surrounded by failed states, because that could act detrimental to investment which is needed to realize the oil riches of Nigeria (Firsing 2014). Firsing adds that providing contracts to the Defence Industry Corporation (they are building APCs and naval ships) in Nigeria might also play a part in why Nigeria has been so active in participating in peace missions, however the equipment they are using is in serious need of repair and not meeting the 20% contingent-owned equipment criteria mandatory by UN legislation. In general we have to observe that an additional reason why Nigeria will find it difficult to impose a regional hegemonic position in addition to the previously mentioned factors is, that France, the UK, and the US all have vested interests and influence in the region and sometimes counteract the wishes of the Nigerian government (Jega - Farris 2010). Even though the information may be outdated, during UNAMSIL Nigeria kept more than half of the UN allowance for troops thus benefiting the Nigerian treasury from the peacekeeping operation. Additional challenges faced by peacekeepers were inadequate amount of training and preparation of troops; Anglophone oriented troops serving with Francophone oriented troops making communication difficult; lack of sufficient quantity of vehicles, lack of adequate medical facilities and insufficient communication equipment (Sule 2013).

An interesting conclusion which we can draw from Table 3 containing the Nigerian peacekeeping contributions is, that even though in numbers they are providing more than twice the amount the SANDF is, they have played a pivotal role in only three mission, the same number as South Africa. Nigeria is also using its forces somewhat inefficiently because it has sent peacekeeping personnel since 2003 to more than 20 missions, though average commitments were well below 100 people per mission. Despite the afore mentioned problems South African troops were able to contribute to the creation and maintenance of peace where they were deployed, even though their training and equipment made it an especially daunting task. Taking all considerations into perspective probably South African and Nigerian achievements have been more or less on a par level, where Nigeria was providing more troops in numbers; however South Africa was taking a larger role in mediation.

Table 2.: troop contributions to selected multilateral peacekeeping operations by South Africa (2003-2014)⁵

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
MONUC⁶ experts								16				
contingent troop	784	1408	1290	1128	1171	1164	1206	1163				
military observer	2	2	7	26	15	15	16					
MONUSCO⁷ experts									14	17	7	5
contingent troop									1215	1218	1180	1299
ONUB⁸ contingent troop		1081	906	882								
military observer		4	5	4								
UNAMID⁹ police					67	108	160	145	117	57	11	44
experts								13	10	12	13	14
contingent troop						596	664	781	773	797	807	807
military observer						13	12					
Altogether	796	2506	2216	2046	1269	1903	2059	2118	2129	2115	2036	2186

Source: UN peacekeeping (2014)

⁵ Only those mission were selected where troop contributions were higher than 500. In addition to those contributions seen in Table 2 South African personnel took place in BINUB, UNMEE, UNMIL, UNMIN, UNMIS and UNMISS.

⁶ MONUC: United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

⁷ MONUSCO: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo

⁸ ONUB: United Nations Operation in Burundi

⁹ UNAMID: The African Union – United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Table 3.: troop contributions to selected multilateral peacekeeping operations by Nigeria (2003-2014)¹⁰

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
UNAMID												
individual police								240	149	107	92	74
formed police units						220	498	280	280	279	290	211
experts on mission								14	14	14	14	12
contingent troop						2 910	3 331	3 323	3 317	3 320	2 813	2 535
military observer						13	11					
UNMIL¹¹												
individual police								21	24	10	13	16
formed police units		86	161	160	158	157	153	120	120	120	120	120
experts on mission								12	14	12	13	14
contingent troop	1 597 ¹²	1 629	1 926	1 957	1 960	1 737	1 651	1 560	1 553	1 567	1 464	1 416
military observer	1	16	19	17	19	19	14					
UNAMSIL¹³												
troop	2 587	1 619	755									
military observer	9	8	6									
civilian police	4	7	5	2 437	2 480	5 361	5 919	5 825	5 744	5 675	5 114	4 614
Altogether	3 086	3 487	3 027	2 437	2 480	5 361	5 919	5 825	5 744	5 675	5 114	4 614

Source: UN peacekeeping (2014)

¹⁰ Only those mission were selected where troop contributions were higher than 500. In addition to those contributions seen in Table 3 Nigerian personnel took place in MINURSO, MINUSMA, MINUSTAH, MONUSCO, UNAMID, UNISFA, UNMIL, UNMISS, UNOCI, UNIFIL, UNMIT, UNSMIS, MINURCAT, UNMIN, MONUC, BINUB, UNIOSIL, UNMEE, UNAMA, UNOMIG.

¹¹ United Nations Mission in Liberia

¹² Troops only started arriving in the Fall of 2003.

¹³ United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

3.3. Trade and investment partner

In terms of trade and investment South Africa shows a mixed picture. For instance among its largest export partners are the usual suspects of China, Japan, US, Germany and the UK (12,6%; 5,8%; 7,2%; 4%; 3,4% respectively for 2013) whereas partners from Africa also factor in quite significantly with Botswana and Namibia at 4,8% and 4,4% for 2013. In terms of imports however we have China, Germany, Saudi Arabia, US and India in the top 5 (15,4%, 10,3%, 7,7%, 6,3%, 5,1% respectively for 2013) with significant partners from Africa are Nigeria and Angola who stand at 3,4% and 1,8% of imports. For a collection of trade statistics of regional trading partners see Table. It is interesting to see that trade with Africa have almost tripled since 2009, whereas trade with other regions, have nowhere near expanded at this rate. However this trade with Africa does not include the whole of it, in terms of exports, about 86% of exports goes to SADC countries, whereas in terms of imports 60% of African imports come from SADC countries. Also we should note that Africa and SADC countries (and the US, although that is almost on an even level) are the area where South Africa is running a trade surplus, whereas both with BRIC countries and the EU it is running a major deficit. In terms of goods exported, natural resource based goods amount to 56% of exports (albeit some of it is processed), whereas in terms of imports they only amount to roughly 22%. Interestingly enough in terms of processed products South Africa's export to Africa is much higher than for either BRIC countries or EU-28 (International Trade Centre 2014).

Table 4.: Selected trade partners for South Africa (2009-2013), data given in thousands of USD

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Import from Africa	4 751 266	6 281 630	7 676 802	9 677 048	12 252 167
Export to Africa	10 529 131	12 324 677	14 769 186	16 056 600	27 399 743
Trade Balance	5 777 865	6 043 047	7 092 384	6 379 552	15 147 576
Import from BRIC	11 803 935	15 797 804	20 067 312	21 110 419	23 372 814
Export to BRIC	8 271 857	12 114 259	16 924 608	15 016 788	16 117 499
Trade Balance	-3 532 078	-3 683 545	-3 142 704	-6 093 631	-7 255 315
Import from EU	20 561 979	25 728 189	30 579 221	29 201 075	29 382 978
Export to EU	14 292 962	18 680 569	20 714 686	17 399 999	16 879 663
Trade Balance	-6 269 017	-7 047 620	-9 864 535	-11 801 076	-12 503 315
Import from SADC	2 513 334	3 756 131	4 283 465	5 395 371	7 391 469
Export to SADC	7 239 417	8 950 433	10 790 926	12 110 887	23 630 528
Trade Balance	4 726 083	5 194 302	6 507 461	6 715 516	16 239 059
Import from US	4 949 372	5 837 631	7 954 994	7 496 815	6 565 986
Export to US	4 859 695	7 060 761	8 356 639	7 586 125	6 894 762
Trade Balance	-89 677	1 223 130	401 645	89 310	328 776
Total imports	63 766 058	80 139 282	99 726 016	101 610 607	103 461 277
Total exports	53 863 892	71 484 309	92 975 613	86 711 971	95 224 783
Total Trade Balance	-9 902 166	-8 654 973	-6 750 403	-14 898 636	-8 236 494

Source: International Trade Centre (2014)

In the case of trade relations of Nigeria the picture is far more complex than for South Africa. The results of trade relations can be seen in Table 5. Nigeria had an immense trade surplus in 2012: 107 billion USD. All areas or regions, that it trades with is showing a surplus. The trade balance with the EU is the highest with 42 billion USD, than BRIC countries and the US. In

terms of import their largest partner is the BRIC countries (China) and the US. It imports mainly electrical equipment and machinery from China, and vehicles and cereals from the United States. In terms of Nigerian export it was 84% based on export of mineral fuels, the second largest item on the export portfolio being rubber at 7%. In terms of top 10 export products they amount to 97% of export portfolio (in the case of South Africa ~76%) and apart from one item (1,2% of total export, and mainly small ships and drilling platforms) it is all natural resource based. This shows a picture of a country totally dependent on natural resources, with practically minimal industry of its own, that can produce for the world market. It also shows a country which cannot absorb either ECOWAS or African export (half of African import is coming from South Africa), thus not providing an export market for countries in need, despite the huge amount of oil revenues (International Trade Centre 2014). Thus in essence when comparing and contrasting South African and Nigerian trade relations with the continent we can say that the former's trade is growing in volume with African countries both in terms of exports and imports and both in type of goods traded, whereas in the case of Nigeria trade with Africa has essentially stagnated since 2009 and it does not fulfill the role of an export market for other African countries.

Table 5: Selected trade partners for Nigeria (2009-2012), data given in thousands of USD¹⁴

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Import from Africa	2 416 245	2 911 749	2 920 450	1 566 375
Export to Africa	8 510 888	10 494 748	13 092 447	14 164 371
Trade Balance	6 094 643	7 582 999	10 171 997	12 597 996
Import from BRIC	8 457 577	11 223 687	15 658 082	13 707 612
Export to BRIC	9 474 605	16 551 444	25 873 387	34 729 613
Trade Balance	1 017 028	5 327 757	10 215 305	21 022 001
Import from EU	7 799 669	9 658 924	15 642 145	8 356 760
Export to EU	11 203 780	19 406 833	35 759 834	50 998 444
Trade Balance	3 404 111	9 747 909	20 117 689	42 641 684
Import from ECOWAS	71 631	182 836	753 499	151 833
Export to ECOWAS	2 151 288	2 044 825	3 579 659	5 545 051
Trade Balance	2 079 657	1 861 989	2 826 160	5 393 218
Import from US	2 041 594	7 936 544	11 517 283	4 886 971
Export to US	13 618 240	29 755 938	28 326 598	24 139 338
Trade Balance	11 576 646	21 819 394	16 809 315	19 252 367
Total imports	33 906 282	44 235 269	63 971 529	35 872 509
Total exports	49 937 460	86 567 913	125 641 031	143 151 183
Total Trade Balance	16 031 178	42 332 644	61 669 502	107 278 674

Source: International Trade Centre (2014)

In terms of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) South Africa is the leading country both in incoming investment and also outgoing to other African countries. Between 2007 and 2013 24% of FDI projects chose South Africa as opposed to for instance Nigeria to which 9% of FDI projects went. In terms of urban appeal and city attractiveness South African cities were far more favoured as opposed to Lagos. 34% of respondents placed Johannesburg at the first

¹⁴ Data was not available yet on Nigeria's 2013 trade figures at the time of the research.

spot, and 15% of respondents Cape Town, whereas only 5% favored Lagos. In 2013 FDI inflows rose in South Africa by 126% putting it at 10 billion USD from a total amount of 56,3 for Africa and 5,6 billion USD for Nigeria. In terms of top investors in Africa South Africa is ranked at third position, behind the UK and the US. On a country by country basis South Africa was in the top 5 investors by number of projects in the following African countries between 2003 and 2011: Angola, DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. In terms of capital they are “only” in the top 5 investors in Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia (Ernst and Young 2013, 2014). UNCTAD (2014) draws very much the same picture when comparing and contrasting Nigeria and South Africa in terms of FDI. South African outflow of FDI was as high as 5,6 billion USD with companies such as Bidvest, Anglo Gold Ashanti, MTN, Shoprite, Pick’n’Pay, Aspen Pharmacare and Naspers leading the charge. South Africa also beats Nigeria in terms of FDI stock investment in 2013 with 140,47 billion USD as opposed to 81,9 billion USD. According to UNCTAD (2014) the largest FDI investments of South Africa are to be found in Nigeria, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Despite the impressive figures of investment one interviewee pointed out that even though foreign investors have “gotten used to” corruption, the strike of workers and thus the unpredictability of income may make them to reconsider reinvesting in South Africa.

FDI to Nigeria stood at 5,5 billion USD for 2013 and invested abroad about 1,2 billion USD which is clearly lagging behind South Africa. About 80% of incoming Nigerian FDI is going into the oil sector. Nigerian outflowing FDI was mainly concentrated in building materials, cement and concrete products (with groups such as the Dangote Group) and financial services. From a project based approach there were 58 new investments in Nigeria which placed it in the third position as opposed to South Africa which was once again ranked first with 142 projects (Ernst and Young 2014). Nigeria is on the list of a top 5 investor only in Rwanda. Nevertheless Nigeria is perceived to be the second most attractive destination to do business in Africa, and it definitely has potential with its 170 million large consumer market. Nigeria has established a Sovereign Wealth Fund recently and endowed it with 1 billion USD (UNCTAD 2013, 2014). Nevertheless according to Enweremadu (2013) the attractiveness of Nigeria as a business partner has grown in the last decade, however persistence of poor governance, corruption, violence and political instability and the activity of Boko Haram all play a part in the country not seriously challenging South Africa yet as the Sub-Saharan African business partner.

From the above mentioned figures we can draw the conclusion that not only does the majority of projects and value of FDI go to South Africa, it is very much the prime destination for conducting business for enterprises in Africa. In addition South Africa is the largest investor within Africa as an African country and only in the third position behind the UK and the US. This shows us the picture that Nigeria may have become wealthy however in terms of trade and investment it does not yet have the influence of South Africa.

3.4. Providing development assistance

Despite the fact that South Africa is an aid recipient country it also provides development assistance of its own to countries in need. South Africa was never a country dependant on foreign aid which can be witnessed in the ODA/governmental expenditure data which never was higher than 1%. In 2012 the most important donors for South Africa were the US, EU, Germany, UK and France and the total amount of assistance received was about one billion USD which is definitely an impressive figure for a medium income country. Most of this assistance was used in the healthcare sector and for developing new ways and mechanisms for

providing development assistance effectively (Besharati 2013). According to UNDP (2011) they provided capacity development in a number of areas for South Africa which included: all inclusive growth, making the South African economy greener, gender transformation, aid coordination, and capacity building in peace building. The challenge in providing capacity building programmes is that it is very difficult to measure the effectiveness of it. Szent-Iványi – Tétényi (2013) encountered the same problem, when they endeavored to analyze the effects of capacity building programmes Central and Eastern European reemerging donors received for becoming more mature donors.

South Africa aid programmes can be traced back to 1968 when the Economic Cooperation Promotion Loan Fund was established with the thinly veiled goal of aiding impoverished neighboring countries in return for their support in the UN (Braude et al 2008). After 1994 it became one of the cornerstones of the Mandela government to rebuild the image of South Africa, thus debts of Swaziland, Mozambique and Namibia were written off. In 2000 the African Renaissance Fund (ARF) was established to replace the Economic Cooperation Promotion Loan Fund, and for 2012/2013 it had expenditures totaling around a 100 million USD. The problem with South African aid is that it is totally fragmented: it provides for instance assistance for the NEPAS secretariat for 3,5 million USD annually, the Development Bank of South Africa is heavily involved in concessional infrastructural loans with a net loan outlay of approximately 1 billion USD, provides 15% of the budget of the AU amounting to 15-20 million USD and which repeatedly replenishes the International Development Association's (IDA) fund (Besharati 2013). Estimating the gross amount of development assistance is challenging Vickers (2012) puts it somewhere between 0,7% and 1% of GNI. Thus it would be imperative that the newly formed but not yet functioning South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA) would try and coordinate the provision and effective use of development assistance.

The goal of SADPA would be to eventually replace the ARF and act as a development partner for African countries in need. Unfortunately for South Africa within the continent there is continued opposition to South African aid, some African countries perceiving it to be little more than an attempt at South Africa gaining influence or trying to achieve imperialistic aims. Lucey – O'Riordan (2013) detail some of the results South African aid has achieved: in the DRC, Burundi and South Sudan it has been involved in peacebuilding with an emphasis on governance-related assistance, capacity building, implementation support for electoral issues and infrastructure development. Challenges were in general that engagements have been one-off with limited follow up, civil society engagement was limited, staff turnover was high and monitoring and evaluation tools were not used as widely as could have. On the plus side for instance the capacity building programmes for diplomats were well received, and in general the interventions have been demand driven. South Africa also has more access to African countries as opposed to established donors, which may have been one of the reasons for trilateral programming. Future work should be conducted on South Africa finding its comparative strengths and streamlining its efforts to that area.

Nigeria is also a major recipient of development assistance and with the country's infrastructure less developed as South Africa's very much in need of it. Assessing Nigeria's development assistance is challenging, mainly because of the fact that it has not been institutionalized. Jega – Farris (2010) however endeavor to collect some of the projects the country has participated in. In 1988 Nigeria granted funds of roughly 76000 USD for the building of a polytechnic in Cape Verde and also provided scholarships for Cape Verdian students to study at Nigerian universities. A figure is quoted by (ibid.) that up until 2007 Nigeria is estimated to have provided 60 billion USD in financial assistance to African and

Caribbean countries. Even if we take a yearly average since Nigerian independence, this figure seems to be a bit farfetched with annual assistance being higher than 1 billion USD. Other figures quoted by the same authors are 5 million USD to the Caribbean Development Bank, 1 million USD to Jamaica for humanitarian assistance in 1988, 5 million USD to Equatorial Guinea between 1988-1990 to finance the building of a hospital and other agricultural projects. Some long term programmes provided by Nigeria were the Technical Aid Corps Scheme, where the goal was to share Nigeria's know-how and expertise with other developing countries and in the framework of this program between 1987 and 2008 almost 2000 volunteers have participated in development related projects in 33 countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Unfortunately no data is available on resources spent or monitored results achieved. In the African Development Bank (AfDB) Nigeria was the largest shareholder in 2014 with 9% of the vote (AfDB 2014). Two other initiatives stand out which has to be mentioned: the Nigeria Trust Fund which is a special AfDB fund created in 1976 and endowed until 1981 with 151 million USD. The trust fund aims at providing loans at 2-4 percent interest rate for 25 years. By 2009 the trust fund disbursed roughly 266 million USD. The other initiative worthy of recognition is the Nigerian Technical Cooperation Fund which was developed as a grant element to complement the trust fund. It aimed at rebuilding war torn countries and the initial funds for disbursement in 2004 were at 25 million USD.

In conclusion we can see that both countries have provided development and economic assistance to countries of the region, however neither one has yet the opportunity to fully institutionalize the provision of development assistance. South Africa is making the necessary steps with the creation of SADPA, which will hopefully in time act as a coordinator and facilitator of South African assistance. Unfortunately in the case of Nigeria we cannot see any signs that similar initiatives are in place, thus once again it is South Africa who is acting in a more processed way.

4. Conclusions

In the previous sections we have seen what kind of power structures do the two most important countries in Sub-Saharan Africa take part in and what are the various services they are providing for the continent. In the remainder of this section we are going to review what the international community has said about being a regional power means and which country of our two analyzed fulfills this role. According to Nolte (2010: 890) "traditional middle powers are, first and foremost, defined by their role in international politics, the new middle powers are, first of all, regional powers (or regional leaders) and, in addition, middle powers (with regard to their power resources) on a global scale". He also states that an additional prerequisite for regional hegemony is that it should have on the one hand regional followers and endeavor to create regional governance structures. Looking at our two countries, South Africa definitely fills the role of middle power not only by being member of prestigious groups as the BRICS or the G20, but also by hosting important summits as BRICS summit and UNFCCC summit, and by pushing through UNSC resolutions. In the case of Nigeria this kind of activity is yet missing. In terms of creating regional governmental structures both countries have been active, however South Africa's involvement in SADC is at the moment at a deeper form of cooperation as for Nigeria with ECOWAS. Prys (2008) mentions three dimensions of regional power: "perception", "projection" and "provision". In terms of perception both countries are accepted as leaders of their close geographical region, but once again South Africa's claim is somewhat stronger which can be underlined by the fact that it managed to push through Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma's successful nomination to be the incumbent chairperson of the AU. Also it is noteworthy to mention that it is South Africa which acts as the "voice" of Africa in international fora as opposed to Nigeria. In terms of

projection it is once again South Africa who promotes its own vision of democratic governance in the region; nevertheless in the case of peacekeeping Nigeria plays probably the more statistically significant role. In terms of provision, South Africa's lead is hard to question, not only by its more institutionalized development assistance structure, but by being an ever increasing trading partner for SADC countries, as well as being an important source of FDI. Habib (2009) mentions that hegemony has to be prepared to underwrite the cost of obligations and responsibilities which come from the hegemonic position, which both countries do for instance in the case of peacekeeping or the upkeep of regional organizations, however to put it simply South Africa can show more in terms of visible achievements as opposed to Nigeria. And last but not least taking into account Geldenhuys's (2010) vision of leadership South Africa as a legacy of Mandela provided both intellectual, entrepreneurial and implementation leadership for the continent; whereas in the case of Nigeria they were mainly focusing only on the latter, implementation.

Thus we can draw the conclusion that despite the fact that Nigeria may have overtaken South Africa in terms of economic output, there are still a number of tasks to achieve before it can act and be perceived as a regional hegemon. Both looking at the various services detailed in section three and both looking at the international literature and its definition of regional hegemony tell us the story that as of now it is South Africa which we can call the leading power in Sub-Saharan Africa and Nigeria is still only a challenger.

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