

## Exploring Regional Economic Communities as key institutions in addressing emerging threats to peace and human security in Southern Africa: A Hermeneutical Phenomenological Approach

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### **Abstract**

*Southern Africa faces evolving security threats that pose significant challenges to peace and human security in the region. While traditional security threats like inter-state conflicts, border disputes, and military coups have been prevalent in the region for many years, emerging threats such as violent extremist groups, transnational organized crime, irregular migration, electoral violence, global pandemics, and climate change are now widespread. To address these challenges, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and its Member States need to take a comprehensive and integrated approach, focusing on prevention, early warning, and response. This study utilized a philosophical approach – Hermeneutical phenomenology to gain insight into the subjective experiences of individuals and communities affected by these emerging security threats. The approach emphasizes the importance of context and culture in shaping our understanding of reality and highlights the need for constantly re-evaluating and updating our understanding of these realities as new information becomes available. To achieve sustainable peace and human security in the region, SADC and its Member States must focus on addressing the root causes of these threats. These include socio-economic inequality, governance challenges, environmental degradation, poverty, unequal distribution of resources, marginalization, social exclusion and food insecurity. Policies and programs aimed at promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, improved access to education and healthcare, reducing poverty and unemployment, strengthening democratic institutions, promoting transparency and accountability, addressing corruption, promoting sustainable land use practices, conserving biodiversity, and addressing climate change are necessary to achieve this goal. Cooperation and collaboration among various stakeholders, including governments, civil society organisations (CSOs), private sector, and international organizations, is crucial in addressing these challenges. These stakeholders must work together to develop and implement policies and programs that take a long-term view, recognizing that addressing the root causes of these threats requires sustained effort.*

**Keywords:** Human Security; Emerging Threats, Hermeneutical Phenomenology

### **Introduction**

Southern Africa has a tumultuous history regarding peace and human security, as evidenced by civil wars, political instability, and economic hardship. This can be traced back to the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, which led to social and economic inequality and fuelled conflicts<sup>1</sup>.

Despite this, there have been various initiatives by governments, international organizations, and CSOs to promote peace and security in the region. One such organization is the SADC, which aims to promote economic development, political stability, and regional integration. The SADC structure includes a Summit of Heads of State and Government, a Council of Ministers, a

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<sup>1</sup> Southern Africa Development Community, SADC (2019). Status of Integration in the Southern African Community

Secretariat, and various organs and institutions responsible for specific areas of work. SADC embraces the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s definition of human security, which recognizes that people's safety and well-being depend on the protection of their rights and freedoms. Human security involves protecting people from various threats and promoting their rights and freedoms, including peace and security, health, education, food security, human rights, and environmental protection. The concept of human security is an alternative to traditional state-centric views of security that focus on territorial interests and foreign aggression. The human security approach highlights the importance of addressing a wide range of factors, including economic, social, and environmental conditions, to promote security at the individual and community level<sup>2</sup>.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Africa, there is a high incidence of the twin phenomena of weak states and weak civil society alongside weak institutions which have been witnessed over time<sup>3</sup>. Africa is facing a twin challenge of weak institutions and civil society, leading to security threats. The Southern African region, in particular, is dealing with not only existing threats but also emerging ones such as pandemics and weak institutions. Despite the efforts of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and SADC, there is still a lack of coverage of all the challenges. In implementing the Regional Early Warning Systems (REWS), SADC lacks staffing, funding, and aptitude to efficiently analyze data. External actors have often influenced the limits of security in Africa, and there is no synchronization between immediate and long-term capacity building programs. This lack of coverage and effectiveness in addressing emerging security threats could potentially destabilize efforts aimed at maintaining stability in the region and beyond. Therefore, exploring how RECs and SADC can serve as key institutions in addressing these emerging threats becomes crucial.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore how the SADC addresses emerging threats to peace and human security in Southern Africa. The study aimed to identify the new and emerging threats to peace and security in the region and how SADC is addressing them through consensus building and a people-centered approach. The study also sought to identify the challenges faced by SADC in addressing these threats and propose solutions that can be adopted to manage them. The study aimed at providing policymakers and stakeholders with valuable insights to develop targeted interventions that address the root causes of conflict and insecurity. It is also hoped that the study will highlight the interrelationships between peace and security, economic development, social justice, and human rights, and inform the development of more effective policies and programs to promote stable and secure societies in the region.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Cooperation theory, rational choice theory, and constructivist theory were the three theoretical frameworks employed in this study. Cooperation theory proposes that cooperation is a phenomenon that provides a benefit to another individual or is beneficial to both the actor and the recipient<sup>4</sup>. Rational choice theory challenges the perfect rationality of the individual and proposes that actors act to maximize their utility while institutions play a crucial role in solving

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations Development Programme, UNDP (1994). Human Development Report. Oxford: Oxford University Press

<sup>3</sup> Chekol, Y. G. (2019). Major Successes and Challenges of African Peace and human security Architecture (APSA). International Journal of Political Science (IJPS),

<sup>4</sup> Gurr, T. (1970). Why men rebel. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

collective interests<sup>5</sup>. Finally, constructivist theory emphasizes the socially constructed character of actors' interests and identities and argues that individual identities are governed by the normative and ideological structures they inhabit. Ideas, values, and beliefs can also influence social and political action, according to constructivist theory. Actors must work pragmatically and realistically while following a set of rules, but still acting freely to maximize their utility<sup>6</sup>.

### Research Design: Methodology

This study used a qualitative research approach as it was concerned with gaining an in-depth understanding of how RECs address emerging threats to peace and human security in Southern Africa. Qualitative research aims to gather rich, descriptive data related to the phenomenon in question in efforts to get an enhanced understanding of the phenomenon. The approach permitted the use of various data sources for the investigation of a particular phenomenon within a given setting. This allowed for a broader outlook and an assortment of lenses through which the researcher explored the numerous facets of the phenomenon. Triangulating data from a variety of sources ensured the credibility and reliability of the study. Qualitative research necessitated spending a lot of time in the field, collecting data to ensuring wide-ranging viewpoints from relevant participants<sup>7</sup>. In this study, participants who had intimate knowledge of the emerging security threats in Southern Africa were targeted for investigation.

### Study Sample

A total of 34 participants were interviewed, with 16 representing the SADC, 10 from the African Union (AU), and 8 from institutions: Funding organizations, CSOs, the Zambia Police and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Zambia. The selection of these participants was based on recommendations from the SADC interviewees, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

### Sampling Procedure

The selection of participants was influenced by the extent to which they could provide comprehensive, relevant, and expressive contributions and explanations related to the research questions. Rather than relying on random selection, the researcher employed purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, to choose information-rich participants who possessed the ability and willingness to communicate their experiences and opinions effectively. The selection of interview respondents was based on their knowledge of the topic and included individuals from African Union CEWS, SADC REWS, SADC Desk Officers, Liaison APSA Officers, and SADC Programs/Operations officers. Additionally, the snowballing technique, a referral technique where participants suggest other individuals who could provide valuable insights, was also used. As a result, all interviewees were directly relevant to the study, ensuring that the research gained a broad range of data and perspectives on the phenomenon under investigation.

### Instruments of Data Collection

The study used a combination of face-to-face interview, WhatsApp, and email to collect primary data using semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The purpose of this method was to gain an in-depth understanding of emerging threats to peace and human security and how SADC was addressing them. All participants read and signed the Informed Consent form prior

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<sup>5</sup> Opp, K. (2020). Rational Choice Theory, the Model of Frame Selection and Other Dual-Process Theories. A Critical Comparison. 10.1515/9783110647495-003.

<sup>6</sup> Philip, R., & Nicholls, J. (2007). Theatre Online: The design and drama of e-learning. *Distance Education*, 28(3), 261-279

<sup>7</sup> Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The qualitative report*, 13(4), 544-559

to taking part in the interviews. To ensure that no valuable information was missed during the interviews, an electronic voice recorder was used to record the participants. The researcher also took notes during the interview.

### **Research Findings: Emerging Threats to Peace and Human Security in Southern Africa**

The study identified six (6) main threats to peace and human security in the region. These are: violent extremism, irregular migration, election-related violence, transnational organized crime (TOC), climate change, and global pandemics.

#### **1. Violent Extremism**

*“Let’s take for example the current ongoing violent extremism in Cabo Delgado in the oil-rich Northern part of Mozambique and the DRC which threatens the whole region. It’s complex in that, not only does it have an ethno-religious aspect to it, but it also brings into the picture the socio-economic dynamics. Over and above that, it entangles the whole region, and it poses problems in terms of what the region should do.” – SADC Participant*

The study noted that violent extremism can take many forms, including terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict, and can be motivated by a variety of factors<sup>8</sup>. The region has experienced a rise in violent extremism, as evidenced by attacks in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado, resulting in thousands of deaths and displacement of populations. Efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism have focused on addressing the root causes of violence and providing alternative approaches to resolving conflicts.

*“Explanations of why individuals resort to violent extremism or terrorism frequently stress the “root causes,” “structural factors,” or “underlying conditions” that allegedly drive this phenomenon. Among these “underlying conditions,” in turn, social and economic ones (e.g., large-scale poverty and unemployment, inadequate government services, and insufficient economic opportunities) often receive a disproportionate level of attention. Although perhaps to a lesser extent, political factors (such as bad governance, government repression, and/or the existence of ill-governed or poorly governed areas) also frequently loom large in “root causes” explanations. What typically is downplayed, particularly in the development-assistance community, are other types of “underlying conditions,” such as those that revolve around cultural and ideological issues” – SADC Participant.*

#### **2. Irregular Migration**

*“The main causes of irregular migration in Southern Africa are economic and social factors, including poverty, unemployment, and lack of development opportunities. Poverty and lack of economic opportunities in some SADC countries have driven many people, especially the youth, to seek employment and better living conditions abroad.” – SADC Participant*

Irregular migration, defined as crossing borders without following legal requirements, is a common phenomenon in Southern Africa due to economic and social factors such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunities<sup>9</sup>. Conflict, political instability, and environmental

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<sup>8</sup> UNDOC (2017). Preventing and countering violent extremism (PVE/CVE). General Assembly report A/70/674.

<sup>9</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2019). 2019 year-end report [Online]

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factors have also contribute to irregular migration. Irregular migration is driven by the need to escape economic hardships and systemic inequality. Conflict is not the primary factor, but rather discrepancies in income and resources, while tension in receiving communities arises from competition for resources, racial conflicts, social difficulties, and strained infrastructure. Irregular migration is also caused by displacement due to violent extremism and climate change, as well as the pursuit of economic opportunities and improved living conditions, all of which are rooted in systemic inequality factors.

*“Due to multiplicity of factors including poor socio-economic conditions, political instability, conflict & civil strife, migration has become a survival strategy. Extensive, porous, and unmanaged borders – many of which lack the basic infrastructure, human resources, and equipment to fully function – exacerbate the situation. Corruption at borders and check points further enables and facilitates the passage of undocumented migrants.” – SACCORD Participant*

### 3. Election Related Violence

*“Electoral violence can have serious consequences for individuals, communities, and societies, including loss of life, injury, and disruption of the electoral process. It can also undermine the legitimacy of elections and the overall stability and peace of a country” – SADC Participant*

Electoral violence is defined by the SADC as "any form of violence or threat of violence, intimidation, coercion or harassment that takes place before, during or after an electoral process and that is intended to influence the outcome of an election."<sup>10</sup> The consequences of electoral violence can be severe, including loss of life, injury, and disruption of the electoral process, and can also undermine the legitimacy of elections and the overall stability and peace of a country. Factors contributing to electoral violence in the SADC region include political polarization, competition for resources or power, and disputes over the outcome of an election. The SADC has developed various strategies and initiatives to prevent and address electoral violence, such as promoting dialogue and reconciliation, strengthening electoral institutions and processes and providing technical assistance and capacity building to Member States. However, recurrent issues with electoral violence in the region persist, with reports of violence in 8 out of 15 SADC countries from 2011-2016.

*“Electoral results were strongly contested with reports of electoral violence in 8 out of 15 SADC countries from 2011-2016: 2011: DR Congo; 2012: Angola; 2013: Madagascar and Zimbabwe; 2014: Malawi, Mauritius and Mozambique; 2016: United Republic of Tanzania (Zanzibar) and Zambia”- SADC Participant.*

Election-related violence is often fueled by poor governance, weak electoral management institutions, and socio-economic conditions such as poverty, unemployment, and marginalization.

### 4. Transnational Organised Crime

*“In Southern Africa, transnational organized crime has had a number of negative impacts on individuals, communities, and societies as it has contributed to corruption, illicit financial flows, and insecurity in the region.*

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<sup>10</sup> Southern African Development Community (2021). SADC Election Observation Mission (SEOM) Press Release: 2021 General Elections in the Republic of Zambia

*Efforts to address transnational organized crime in Southern Africa have focused on strengthening law enforcement and criminal justice systems, increasing regional cooperation and coordination, and addressing the underlying drivers of crime, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of development opportunities” – SADC Participant.*

TOC involves criminal activities that are planned and executed across borders, including the smuggling of illegal substances, counterfeit goods, weapons, people, endangered animals, and natural resources<sup>11</sup>. It is estimated that illicit financial flows resulting from TOC in Southern Africa amount to approximately \$14 billion per year, which is equivalent to 10% of the region's GDP (Ibid). Weak governance and limited economic opportunities are catalysts for the proliferation of TOC. TOC groups are drawn to weak regimes and conflict zones due to governance gaps, economic challenges, and the absence of the rule of law. TOC organisations are often viewed as economic players seeking to maximize their income and informal networks are the most common organizational structures for TOC. Southern African countries like South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia have been adversely affected by TOC related activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, and cybercrime. SADC has attributed the rise in TOC partly due to the geographic location of the countries in the region, economic development and political instability.

## 5. Climate Change

Climate change is a significant and pressing issue, caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, that has significant impacts on the environment and human settlements<sup>12</sup>. Southern Africa is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including rising temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, and more frequent and severe weather events. Mozambique, Madagascar, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi are among the countries most vulnerable to these impacts, which can have serious effects on agriculture, water resources, and human settlements<sup>13</sup>. This assertion is supported by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) that asserts that Southern Africa is among the most vulnerable regions in the world to climate change. Climate-related impacts such as droughts, floods and tropical cyclones undermine development and reduce the availability of natural resources, affecting the majority of the region's population. Further, climate change can increase the risk of insecurity and violent conflict, when its impacts interact with social, political and economic stresses to compound vulnerabilities<sup>14</sup>. Concerns about security associated with climate change are also a significant issue, with potential impacts on food, water, energy, and forced resettlement. Addressing climate change requires both adapting to its impacts and reducing greenhouse gas emissions through measures such as improving infrastructure, promoting sustainable development, and implementing policies to reduce emissions.

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<sup>11</sup> Matteson, F. (2015). *Transnational Organized Crime*. 1st ed. London: Routledge.

<sup>12</sup> UNDOC, 2013. *Transnational Organized Crime in Eastern Africa: A Threat Assessment*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

<sup>13</sup> IPCC (2013). *CLIMATE CHANGE 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Summary for Policymakers*. Working Group, Contribution to The Fifth Assessment Report of The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, October.

<sup>14</sup> SIPRI (2022). *Climate-related security risks in the SADC region*. Signalistgatan 9, SE-169 72, Solna, Sweden

## **6. Global Pandemic**

Global pandemics refer to the rapid spread of a disease affecting a large number of people in many countries worldwide<sup>15</sup>. Southern Africa has been disproportionately affected by pandemics, including HIV/AIDS, Ebola, influenza, and COVID-19. HIV/AIDS has reduced productivity, increased healthcare costs, decreased household income, and slowed economic growth in the region. On the other hand, COVID-19 has disrupted healthcare systems, affected the economy, and had social impacts such as an increase in gender-based violence (GBV) cases and mental health challenges. Zoonotic pathogens, as well as factors such as ecological deterioration and the use of bushmeat, contribute to the transmission of infection between individuals and wildlife. In addition, TOC contributes to the spread of pandemics through drug trade and human trafficking.

### **How SADC is addressing the Emerging Threats to Peace and Human Security**

The second objective of the study was to describe how the SADC is addressing emerging threats to peace and human security in the region. In response to violent extremism, SADC established the SADC Regional Counter-Terrorism Centre (RCT) in Tanzania, and the SADC Human Emergency and Humanitarian Centre (HEHC). The SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) was deployed to support Mozambique's combat against terrorism and violent extremism in Cabo Delgado. The operation is supported by the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM). SAMIM comprises troops from eight (8) contributing countries from SADC, working in collaboration with the Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique. The study also highlights SADC's history of engaging in conflict resolution, both through mediation initiatives and military interventions, including its involvement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In 2012, SADC deployed its Standby Force in the DRC to fight and eradicate the M23 insurgency. The troops were deployed as the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) within the UN peacekeeping mission.

SADC has made significant progress in managing irregular migration in the region. SADC has implemented the SADC Border Management Programme (BMP) and the SADC Immigration Advisory Council (IAC), which provides training and capacity-building support to Member States on immigration issues. SADC also promotes legal migration by improving regional cooperation, strengthening institutional capacity, and improving data collection and research. Furthermore, SADC is promoting economic development in the region as a means of reducing the push factors that contribute to irregular migration.

To manage electoral violence in the region, SADC deploys Electoral Observer Missions (EOB) in Member States conducting elections. The SEOM, established in 2002, observes and monitors elections in Member States to ensure that they are conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner. The SEOM also works to promote the adoption of best practices in electoral management and the conduct of elections in Member States.

SADC has implemented various initiatives and programs to combat TOC in the region. The initiatives to address TOC have included the development of protocols on corruption, terrorism, arms trading, and extradition, along with regional committees for intelligence and security, police cooperation, and drug control programs. SADC has also implemented capacity-building initiatives, law enforcement efforts, and collaborated with international partners to address TOC. SADC has implemented policies and measures to manage climate change including regional cooperation and coordination, capacity-building initiatives, renewable energy policies, energy efficiency, and clean water and sanitation strategies. The organization has developed protocols and policies to support these measures and address the challenges of protecting the region's natural resources and promoting sustainable development.

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<sup>15</sup> Werrell, C. & Femia, F. (2018). Epicenters of climate and security: The new geostrategic landscape of the Anthropocene. Center for Climate and Security

### **SADC Regional Early Warning System**

SADC recognises the importance of establishing an early warning system to prevent and address conflict escalation in the region. Article 11 of the SADC Treaty states the need for such a system, leading to the establishment of the Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC) in Gaborone, Botswana, and National Early Warning Centres (NEWCs) in each member state<sup>16</sup>.

The REWC is responsible for integrating information from the NEWCs and providing strategic reports to the AU through the SADC Organ, rather than direct exchange of data and analysis. This is due to the unique character and operation of the SADC system compared to the open system mandated for continental early warning.

The launch of the REWC on 12 July 2010 was officiated by His Excellency Armando Emilio Guebuza, then Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (OPDSC), and witnessed by other members of the Troika and members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Botswana. The REWC serves as the hub that links with the NEWCs in all member states and the Continental Early Warning Centre (CEWC) at the AU.

The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030 aims to enhance conflict prevention, management, and resolution mechanisms with an effective early warning system. The Peace, Security, and Good Governance foundational pillar of the RISDP outlines the intended outcomes, which include strengthened early warning systems, enhanced conflict mediation and prevention capacity, structured engagement with civil society, and regional measures and strategies to address transnational organised crime.

In August 2015, the SADC Heads of State and Government adopted the Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its Plan of Action, leading to the launch of the SADC Regional Counter-Terrorism Centre (SADC RCTC). The SADC RCTC aims to address TOC and terrorism through capacity building, information sharing, and cooperation among member states. The establishment of the REWC and the launch of the SADC RCTC signify SADC's commitment to maintaining peace, security, and stability in the region through effective early warning systems and counter-terrorism strategies.

### **SADC Challenges in addressing Emerging Threats to Peace and Human Security**

The obstacles encountered by SADC in addressing emerging threats to peace and security in the region can broadly be categorised into three distinct groups: institutional, structural and operational.

The first challenge is the SADC Early Warning System (EWS), which aims to prevent conflicts in the region. Its slow implementation has been a point of contention, with Member States being hesitant to share sensitive peace and security information. Critics have raised concerns about the secrecy surrounding the REWC, which some view as an intelligence-based system, designed to protect ruling governments in the region. Furthermore, the exclusion of CSOs from the EWS limits the gathering of broad-based information and objective analysis, ultimately hindering SADC's commitment to cooperate with non-state actors on issues related to politics, defense and security.

The second challenge relates to the principle of non-interference. The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States, guided by the sovereignty of Member States,

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<sup>16</sup> Motsamai, D. (2018). *Evaluating the Peacemaking Effectiveness of SADC* (Doctoral dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, School of Governance).



poses another significant challenge to SADC's efforts in addressing emerging security threats in the region. Both the AU and SADC subscribe to and respect the sovereign equality of states, making it difficult to intervene in situations that threaten peace and security in the region.

The third and final challenge is weak governance structures, which constitute the single most important factor behind the insecurity of many states in Southern Africa. Poor governance from most of the states in the region significantly contributes to insecurity and violence at the national and regional levels. Poverty, usually a symptom of weak or poor governance, is a significant challenge in the region, with approximately 32.8% of the population living below the international poverty line of \$1.90 per day in 2020. Poverty rates vary significantly among SADC countries, with Madagascar having the highest poverty rate of 72.3%, while Namibia has the lowest rate of 25.1%. The complex nature of poverty makes it difficult to address it, with different countries in the region having different perceptions of what it means to be poor<sup>17</sup>.

### **Interconnectedness of Emerging Threats**

Climate change, irregular migration, TOC, and election-related violence have complex interconnected relationships. Climate change can worsen the conditions that breed violent extremism, irregular migration, and displacement. Irregular migration can create opportunities for TOC groups to exploit vulnerable migrants, leading to human trafficking and other criminal activities. TOC groups can also fuel election-related violence by funding political campaigns or engaging in voter intimidation. These issues cannot be addressed in isolation, and a comprehensive approach is needed to tackle the complex and interconnected problems.

### **Poverty and Inequality**

Inequality and poverty are significant factors that contribute to emerging threats to peace and security, including violent extremism, irregular migration, election-related violence, TOC, climate change and global pandemics. Extreme poverty leads to social and economic exclusion, making individuals more vulnerable to extremist ideologies, while inequality can lead to violent extremism groups. Poverty drives irregular migration, leading to exploitation and other forms of violence. Inequality and poverty are used to manipulate voters, creating tensions between different groups, leading to election-related violence. TOC exploits people living in poverty, leading to poor governance and economic stagnation. Poverty is linked to climate change, making people more vulnerable to its impacts, which can ultimately lead to social unrest and conflict. Poor and marginalized communities are the most vulnerable to pandemics, lacking access to basic healthcare and sanitation services. Furthermore, socio-economic and cultural inequities, as well as economic inequality, access to social amenities, and political disparities, play a role in escalating conflicts.

### **Conclusion**

This study explored the emerging threats to peace and human security in Southern Africa and how the SADC is addressing them. The study identified six (6) key emerging threats: violent extremism, irregular migration, election-related violence, TOC, climate change and global pandemics. SADC's approach to addressing these threats is based on promoting regional cooperation, dialogue, and consensus-building, with a focus on a people-centred approach to achieving human security. However, the study also identifies challenges, such as weak governance and institutions, poverty and inequality, and lack of financial and technical resources. The study recommends enhancing regional cooperation and dialogue, strengthening institutions and governance, investing in social and economic development, and enhancing the SADC early warning system to mitigate emerging threats to peace and human security in Southern Africa.

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<sup>17</sup> World Bank (2021). SADC Poverty Report

### **Recommendations**

It is important to note that the emerging threats to peace and human security are interconnected and addressing them requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach. Therefore, these recommendations should be implemented in a manner that addresses the interconnections between the emerging threats and their relationship to poverty and inequality. This requires the active engagement and collaboration of SADC Member States, CSOs and other stakeholders to ensure their effectiveness.

Recommendations to SADC include the establishment of a regional peacebuilding and conflict prevention fund, enhancing cooperation between Member States in addressing irregular migration, promoting regional dialogue and consultation on election-related violence, developing a coordinated approach to combat TOC, establishing a regional climate change adaptation fund, and creating a regional health emergency response plan. These recommendations will help SADC to address emerging threats in a more coordinated and effective manner.

Recommendations to individual SADC Member States include promoting inclusive economic growth to address poverty and inequality, strengthening border management to address irregular migration and TOC, promoting good governance and democracy to address election-related violence and violent extremism, and investing in healthcare systems to improve the region's preparedness for pandemics.

Recommendations to enhance the SADC early warning system include investing in data collection and analysis, strengthening partnerships with CSOs and academia, enhancing cross-border cooperation, and promoting the use of technology and social media in early warning systems. These recommendations will help the early warning system to be more effective in detecting and responding to emerging threats, thereby improving human security in the region.

Overall, the recommendations aim to address the root causes of the emerging threats to peace and human security, improve coordination and cooperation among SADC Member States, and promote more effective early warning and response systems. By implementing these recommendations, SADC and its Member States will be better equipped to promote human security in the region, thereby contributing to a more stable, peaceful, and prosperous Southern Africa.

### **Ethics Statement**

The study involving human participants was reviewed and approved by The University of Zambia Ethical Clearance Committee

### **Author Contributions**

The author conceived the study as part of a Ph.D. Thesis of The University of Zambia under The Institute of Distance Education.

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The author declares that this study was done using personal funds.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest. This research article contains my original work, has not received prior publication, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. The author is aware and has approved the manuscript being submitted.

The views expressed are personal. The author is solely responsible for the content and writing of the paper

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