

Drivers of the Foreign Policies of Southern African Small States

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Abstract

In international relations small states are either discarded as irrelevant, unimportant, or weak; held in high regard as potential movers and shakers in especially smart or niche diplomacy areas; powerful in blocs; or as a non-classification, that is undeserving of a unique type separate from the world body of states. Regardless of varying perceptions, small states exist and more so, they exist with foreign policies. This study examines what drives the foreign policies of the southern African small states of Botswana, the Comoros, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, the Seychelles and Swaziland. It finds that state size is important in shaping the foreign policies of these southern African small states but that it is not mutually exclusive from other typical domestic and international determinants which play roles in conditioning most states' foreign policies. Moreover, defence of national interest features as a common and undeniable primary foreign policy objective of these states.

Keywords: Southern African small states; foreign policy, domestic and international determinants; Botswana; the Comoros; Lesotho; Mauritius; Namibia; Seychelles; Swaziland

Introduction:

A common perception of small states is reflected in the following metaphor. If one were to position states as contestants in a race, then when world powers and superpowers would be close to the finish, small states would be just out of the block, marginally better perhaps than microstates – the contestants still warming up. Crowards (2002, 143), Maass (2009, 65) and Sutton (2011, 141) are correct in their summations that defining small states is conceptually problematic and that within small state literature definitions remain imprecise and often pejorative. Small states have been judged as vulnerable victims or reactors to external circumstances that often have no option but to 'gang up or opt out' of international politics (Benwell 2011, 199). Their vulnerability, that is they are especially susceptible to risk of harm due to their 'openness, insularity, weakness and dependence', among others, reflects political, economic, social and environmental dimensions (The Commonwealth 1997). Others have highlighted how small states are defined by their limitations, for example, their inability to defend themselves against military attack by a larger power (see Elman 1995, 171)¹.

This study aims to investigate what drives the foreign policies of small states in southern Africa? It does so by combining small state literature with that of the so-called ‘typical’ determinants of foreign policy in order to ascertain whether size, per se, plays a primary role in determining what drives the foreign policies of southern African small states. Naturally not all possible determinants shaping foreign policy can be investigated for the purpose of this study.

Making sense of ‘smallness’

Is smallness but a matter of relativity? For example, in terms of geographical size, relative to its Southern African counterparts, Lesotho is smaller than South Africa but larger than Swaziland. Can the same be said for regional location? Are small states in Africa more vulnerable or less vulnerable than those in Europe, for example, and does this play a role in determining foreign policy? Elman (1995, 171) and Handel (1990, 11) circumvent the conceptual clarity dilemma by referring to ‘weak’, ‘small’, and ‘insecure’ states interchangeably. Size, reflected as power or relative strength, does matter in a traditional sense as, according to Hey (2003, 85), it ‘has an absolute effect on foreign policy scope’. Elman (1995, 171) equally contends that access to resources, political and economic, has an unavoidable impact on foreign policy choices. Size is also ‘related to a state’s interdependence with other states’ (Breuning 2007, 149).

In contrast, rather than being trapped by size, small states may be able to use their ‘smallness’ to their advantage in international politics (Aiyar 2008). In many respects well-governed small states are among the most competitive in the world; consider Switzerland and Singapore ranked first and second in the World Economic Forum’s 2015/2016 global competitiveness index (GCI). Southern African small state, Mauritius, ranks at number 46 (see Table 1.1), three spaces ahead of Southern Africa’s regional power, South Africa, making it one of only two African states to feature in the most competitive 50 states in the world. By the very nature of their natural circumstances small states can become ‘emergency’ agenda-setters, in terms of calls for climate change (Benwell 2011, 200), as resilient, innovative actors (Cooper and Shaw 2009, 1-2; Wignaraja, Lezama, and Joiner 2004) as global leaders ‘at the forefront of positive change’ in the world (Ban Ki Moon 2015) and ‘as architects of a culture of cooperation’ (Adam 2014). Moreover small states may be individually weaker than others but collectively they can prove very influential in international relations; as Keohane (cited in Gunasekara 2015, 213) reminds

us, ‘if Lilliputians can tie up Gulliver, or make him do their fighting for them, they must be studied as carefully as the giant’.

Whereas quantifiable definitions reflecting the size of a state (see Neumann and Gstöhl 2004; Thorhallsson 2012) provide us with points of easier comparison, by measuring such objective criteria as population size, physical territory², and national income or Gross Domestic Product (GDP); they do not offer insight into how state size reflects related constraints on or advantages to small state foreign policy choices in international relations. Qualitative, relational definitions highlight the following: perception (Hey 2003, 3); ideational factors (such as image and identity) (Brunn 1999 and Gvalia, Siroky et al. 2013, 100); small states as norm entrepreneurs (Ingebritsen 2006); state influence; initiative of small state leaders (Thorhallsson 2006, Scheldrup 2014); and internal bureaucratic efficiency (Thorhallsson 2000).

Southern African small states

This study defines Southern Africa small states in terms of both quantifiable and qualitative definitions. In the Southern African region, the World Bank (2016) and the Commonwealth (2016) classify Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Mauritius, Swaziland and the Seychelles as small states. Although it is not a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Comoros, a small island state, is nevertheless a member of the Africa Union (AU) and forms part of the southern African region. Although the Commonwealth (2016) defines small states quantifiably in terms of population size of 1,5 million or less, it still refers to Botswana (2,2 million), Lesotho (2,1 million) and Namibia (2,4 million) as small as ‘they share similar characteristics’. Mauritius and Swaziland each has very similar population numbers of just over 1,2 million, the Seychelles has 91 000 and the Comoros has around 780 000 (see Table 1.1 for more specific data). All seven of these small southern African states fit neatly into the World Bank’s definition of small, as having a population of 10 million or less. As stipulated in the literature, although size of territory and population can have practical implications on economic growth and internal stability. Breuning (2007, 149) is correct in her assertion that the size of a state is ‘a very rough guide to estimating its foreign policy behaviour’. After all, surely regardless of size, all states tend to have a policy outlining their view of the world beyond their borders and their goals and position within it.

Table 1.1 Southern African small states in figures

State	Total area in km ²	Population (2014)	HDI value (2015)	HDI rank (2015)	African Development Indicator (World Bank) (2013)	Global Competitiveness Report 2015/2016
Botswana	582,000	2,219,937	0.698	106	Upper Middle Income	71 (4.2)
Comoros	2,235	780,971	0.503	159	Low Income	No data
Lesotho	30,355	2,109,197	0.497	161	Low Middle Income (LDC)	113 (3.7)
Mauritius	2,040	1,260,934	0.777	63	Upper Middle Income	46 (4.4)
Namibia	825,615	2,402,858	0.628	126	Upper Middle Income	85 (4.0)
Seychelles	455	91,526	0.772	64	High income	97 (3.9)
Swaziland	17 364	1,269,112	0.531	150	Lower Middle Income	128 (3.4)

Author's compilation of data drawn from the following sites: SADC 2012; World Bank 2013; 2014; UNDP 2015; WEF 2016.

Foreign policy and small states

Foreign policy is 'the process by which states identify goals in the international system ... acting on the international stage ... in pursuit of their ... national interests' (Nanjira 2010, 330). Of course pursuing national interest might be challenging for those states who are more vulnerable than others. Despite common challenges small states may not necessarily display the same foreign policy behaviour (Hey 2002, 213 and 2003, 6). Even if they did, it would be simplistic and fallacious to assume that this was because they are similar *types*³ of states, but rather the explanation should be sought in the context-specific determinants that influenced their independent foreign policy choices. Baillie (in Hey 2003, 7) adds that a small state's foreign policy behaviour depends on its historical context; its internal bureaucracy, and its negotiation behaviour. Chowdhury (2012, 3) highlights James Rosenau's suggestions that size, level of development and political system would impact small state behaviour. Similarly, Hey

(2003, 9-10) acknowledges Rosenau, using, and slightly modifying, his inductive approach to foreign policy analysis by exploring the individual, state and system levels. In a similar three-step, synthetic framework, Carlsnaes (2007, 19) suggests an alternate approach to explaining foreign policy action in three dimensions: structural, dispositional, and intentional. Structural factors or determinants, for example domestic and international, are the powerful, underlying influences affecting foreign policy actors' choices. These determinants may restrict or facilitate action or inaction.

Some scholars have separated domestic (internal) from international (external) determinants of foreign policy-making with military proficiencies, economic circumstances and type of government emerging as prominent domestic drivers and polarity, geopolitics⁴ and regional context as the most important international influences directing foreign policy pursuits (Blanton and Kegley 2016, 74-80; Morgan and Webber 2002, 226-230). In an effort to embrace an historical context and its impact on foreign policy choices, Nanjira (2010, 304-305) adds colonisation, decolonisation, and membership in international organisations as important international determinants of foreign policy. Masters (2012: 33) reminds us that although governments have the final decision on foreign policy, it would be remiss to ignore potential roles played by nongovernmental sources (including business, academics, the media and research organisations) in governments' decision making. Handel (1990) argues that domestic determinants are less important to small states in their foreign policymaking because the international, structural or systemic influences will simply overwhelm their limited capabilities, constrain choice, and as a result will most often dictate foreign policy decisions of small states. Hey (2002, 213) adds that 'many small states enjoy limited foreign policy bureaucracies'. As such, the challenges facing small states require international cooperation in order to meet them, not domestic measures, according to Asgrimsson (2003), who adds that a small state's 'fundamental interests, such as peace and security ... a sound economy, a healthy environment and sustainable use of natural resources, cannot be defended except through international cooperation.' Bjøl (1971), however, adopts a more middle of the road position in suggesting that the behaviour of small states will vary according to not only geopolitics and type of international system in which they function, but also internal governance.

As Carlsnaes portends foreign policy straddles the 'boundary between the internal and the external spheres of a state' (2008, 86) or as Hill (2003, 23) describes it, foreign policy is at the 'hinge' of domestic and international politics. Domestic and international determinants

influence the direction of foreign policy formulation. Indeed they are the fuel mobilising a state's global relations. Some contend that there is no separation between the domestic and international and so a focus on the intermestic (see Huijgh and Warlick 2016, 5), a combination of these factors, might allow for a potentially greater understanding of the very real complexities guiding a state's foreign policy. Regardless of the terminology used, states adapt their foreign policy based on internal and external conditions. How a state links itself, or is linked, to its immediate and greater neighbourhoods characterises the heart of its foreign policy. Foreign policy issues and interests often pull rank as states push and pull for position in a globalising world. What remains of primary concern to a state is its national interest and what it must do to work in favour of this interest.

Indeed, to a large extent Holsti's (1995, 84-108) four general purposes of foreign policy remain common to most states, although emphasis on priority of purpose may differ, and these are their security, their autonomy (dissimilar from their sovereignty); their welfare; and their status and prestige. In updated terms 21st century security may now reflect as human and environmental security issues, among others, not only conventional military security; and development and growth might best describe Holsti's 'welfare' role. However, small states are diverse in many ways, from most to least developed, from having high levels of political stability to being on the verge of state failure, and as such their priorities may be just as varied (Súilleabháin 2014).

As Handel (1990, 36) contends, small states will be 'continually preoccupied with the question of survival' due to their inability to defend themselves against more powerful states. Although the context of this is embedded in a Cold War power reality, the question of survival holds true today if one alters the circumstances to reflect the current positive and negative characteristics defining small state realities. The Commonwealth (1997, 9-12; and 2016), the World Bank (2016) and Feeny and McGillivray (2010) refer to the characteristics⁵ and development challenges facing small states. Political and social resilience (in terms of political stability); weakness (in terms of power politics limited military capabilities mean that small states must often rely on larger states to maintain their security); vulnerability in terms of trade (both as importers of necessity goods such as fuel and food and heavy reliance on foreign markets for a narrow range of export products); limited capacity (usually weak capacity in public and private sectors domestically and weak institutional capacity to participate fully in international forums); insularity and remoteness (landlocked and island states usually spend more on

transport costs and access to world markets reducing their competitiveness compared to larger more enabled neighbours); exposure to natural disasters and environmental change (the consequences of climate change and natural disasters for example droughts, hurricanes and cyclones); and dependence (which reflects for example, in economic terms as dependence on large levels of official development assistance (ODA)), may individually or collectively foster specific foreign policy orientations⁶.

In Breuning's (2007, 152) view, there are four distinct orientations, the first of which, *consensus-oriented* foreign policy, implies the agents of foreign policymaking in a small state intentionally align their foreign policy actions with the desires of a larger state that has some political, economic or military influence over them because they recognise that their state lacks the resources to act independently. Small states with *compliant* foreign policies, the second orientation, align their foreign policies with a larger state because they have been pressured to do so because of this dependence. The third orientation, *counterdependent* foreign policy denotes a 'defiant reaction to dependence' by small state leaders frustrated and desperate 'to reduce the consequences of that dependence'. A particular strategy in this type of foreign policy may be what Gunasekara (2015, 213) refers to as small state self-reliance. That is small states may use various resistance strategies, such as diplomacy, or using their remoteness to their advantage in proclaiming neutrality on issues important to larger powers, in an effort to 'increase the extent to which [they] are able to secure their national interests'. The fourth orientation, *compensation*, is the most antagonistic, and reflects foreign policies that provokes powerful states in order 'to appease domestic audiences'. These orientations are difficult to discern without intimate knowledge of the foreign policymaking processes within small states, though explanations can be sought in exploring the motivations driving state leaders to act.

All things being equal, states have foreign policies determined by domestic and international factors. Are small southern African states' foreign policies driven by atypical determinants or by the same or similar factors as other larger states? Does their size play a primary role? In summary the following overlapping domestic and international determinants may influence small state foreign policy behaviour to varying degrees: national interests; security (environmental; military; human); economic circumstances; type of government; foreign policy bureaucracy; nongovernmental sources; trade; geopolitics (location; regional context, natural resources); historical context; membership in international organisations (status and prestige); challenges and issues facing states. Having surveyed the literature on small states

and foreign policy behaviour, the next step is to explore which determinants are applicable to the southern African small states context.

Foreign policy and southern African small states

Literature exploring the foreign policy of small states in southern Africa is limited⁷. If we relate smallness to weakness, then history is replete with examples of how smaller states are vulnerable to the interests of more powerful states. For example, apartheid South Africa constrained the foreign policy choices of its landlocked neighbours Lesotho and Swaziland for decades. Vale and Matlosa (1995) and Matlosa (1997, 117-118) refer to the ‘confrontational, ‘patronising and paternalistic role’, the South Africa played in the region. It impacted not only ‘the economic abilities’ of these states but also ‘the content, context and pattern of their foreign policies’. Black, Mugenyi and Swatuk (1988) also provide a review of the challenges faced by Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in their relationship with South Africa in the southern African region during apartheid. Santho and Sejanamane (1990) offer a prospective on southern Africa post-apartheid, but its content is Lesotho top-heavy. By 1995 Vale and Matlosa suggest that southern Africa’s prospects ‘to make new beginnings’ were apparent and signalled hope for the region.

Matlosa offers two important contributions, the first in 1997, which explores vulnerable states in southern Africa in relation to South Africa’s post-apartheid regional role, and the second, in 1998, which explores political instability and the fragility of state systems in southern African small states. The studies are limited to the experience of only two small states in the region, Lesotho and Swaziland. Although the first paper highlights South Africa’s foreign policy in the region, it does offer insight into the vulnerability of the two small states and calls into question their ‘viability as autonomous political entities’ (Matlosa 1997, 129). The second paper explains how political liberalisation efforts in both states have weakened their state systems resulting in conflict between the governing authorities and organs of civil society and these findings help to contextualise the domestic political situations and levels of stability in the states. However, it does not explain how this context informed or conditioned, if at all, foreign policy action or inaction.

More recent reviews of African small states are offered by Dömeland and Sander (2007), who suggest that due to their smaller populations, these states are less likely to suffer ethnic conflict compared with their larger African counterparts; and Aiyar (2008), who provides an economic

slant on the comparative performance of these states in relation to various global rankings. But what prominent factors drive the foreign policies of the seven southern African small states of Botswana, the Comoros, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, the Seychelles and Swaziland? As stated previously, it should be noted that the discussion that follows is not an exhaustive list of determinants and naturally the contextual realities of these states likely involves a far more complex and detailed relationship of actors and agency than this brief overview will allow. That said, the paper will now split into exploration of the island/coastal states and the landlocked states (LLS) for ease of discussion.

The island/coastal states

As a starting off point, it may be expedient to ascertain the declared foreign policies of the southern African small states, before exploring which prominent structural factors might condition their formation. The Comoros' Minister of External Relations and Cooperation, Dr Abdoukarim Mohamed, is tasked with overseeing the Ministry's relations with the Comoros' Diaspora, *La Francophonie* and the Arab world. In his speech at the UN in September 2015, President, at the time, Ikililou Dhoinine (2015, 23-24) of the Comoros, affirmed the following international policy concerns as indicative of his own country's worries: ending poverty in all its forms, eradicating hunger, promoting sustainable agriculture in order to guarantee food security, and making water available to all among others. However, what stood out most in terms of the Comoros' national interests was Dhoinine's emphasis on the size of the Comoros as a natural hindrance to its ability to add to international security efforts when "in a small country like mine ... we must be on the front lines to defend our dignity". The President was referring to the Comoros' territorial integrity which the country does not yet have, more specifically he was raising the issue of Mayotte, one of the Comoros' main islands which is administered by France⁸, as well as another more recent break down in bilateral relations between the two countries over this issue (see below).

In Mauritius, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade is responsible for implementing Mauritian foreign policy. The Ministry's Foreign Affairs Division is divided into seven focus areas, comprising central administration; bilateral divisions in three geographical areas: Asia, the Middle and Far East (Bilateral I); Europe, Australasia and the Americas (Bilateral II); and Africa and the Indian Ocean (Bilateral III); multilateral divisions (political and economic) and a division related to protocol. An additional two divisions are dedicated to regional integration and international trade. Eighteen diplomatic

missions abroad support the Ministry. Mauritius' top five foreign policy goals are to promote its national interests; to promote democratic ideas internationally; to expand its trade and grow its economy and to 'fully integrate Mauritius into the global economy'; and to encourage its participation in regional integration in order to foster sustainable development (The Ministry 2016). The principles underlying its foreign policy are territorial integrity, equality among states, and respect for human rights.

The Seychelles has a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Transport. As a member of the Commonwealth, the Ministry subscribes to the principles laid out in the Commonwealth Charter. Especially pertinent to the Seychelles is the Charter's recognition of the needs of small and vulnerable states. The small size of the Seychelles is acknowledged by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Transport, Joel Morgan, as a challenge for the Republic in its efforts to promote its foreign policy objectives. Morgan refers to the Ministry as often the Seychelles' first line of defence ensuring 'that its international and diplomatic obligations are met' (MFA 2016). Smart diplomacy is a special tactic employed in niche areas such as spearheading the blue economy initiative and highlighting the consequences of climate change. The climate change challenges facing the Seychelles do influence its foreign policy and these are summed up succinctly by the Seychelles Ambassador to the UN, Ronald Jumeau: 'It's not just a question of islands slipping under. People think it's a very simple story, but we would become a failed state. Our economy would collapse.' In 2014 the Seychelles President James Michel met with the President of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) to discuss assistance for the Seychelles in the development of its blue economy⁹, in particular sustainable development of its fisheries. In his February 2016 State of the Nation address, President Michel declared that in the previous year the image and visibility of the Seychelles had 'been reinforced and recognised' on the international scene.

Namibia refers to itself as a 'small developing country'. Namibia has a Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (much like its neighbour to the south) which is tasked with the central aim of formulating and implementing Namibia's foreign policy and its actions in international relations. The main foreign policy objectives, outlined in article 96 of Namibia's Constitution, are the promotion and protection of Namibia's national security and territorial integrity; economic growth, sustainable development and regional cooperation; international peace and security; and Namibian and African 'standing and influence in world affairs' (MFA 2016). There is a prominent link between foreign policy and the aspirations of the Namibian

people as a guiding force. Indeed as declared by the Foreign Minister in 1997, Theo-Ben Gurirab, ‘foreign policy, at its best, is an externalisation of domestic order and public policies’ (cited in Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004, 48).

Trade, economics and geopolitics

As a small island developing state (SID), the Comoros (also known as the Comoro Islands) is located off the south-east coast of Africa in the Mozambique Channel. It consists of four major islands: the largest of which is Grande Comore (Ngazidja), Moheli (Mwali to the lo), Anjouan (Nzwani), and Mayotte (Maore) which the Comoros declares as its territory but which remains governed by France. The Comoros has very few profitable natural resources and is heavily dependent on foreign direct investment and aid and according to its governmental website, high profile donors for development projects in the Comoros include the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the EU, the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Arab Bank for Development in Africa (BADEA) among others (Union des Comores 2016). Its main imports are fuel, cars and rice and its top two import partners are Pakistan and France. The Comoros’ exports are predominantly clove, ylang-ylang and other essences for perfumes and the country exports mostly to Singapore, Turkey and France (Trading Economics 2016).

The Republic of Mauritius is geographically considered to be part of Africa even though it is located in the Indian Ocean about 2 400 kilometres from the southeast coast of Africa. It is on good terms with its continental neighbours South Africa, Mozambique in particular as well as its immediate island neighbours Madagascar and the Seychelles. A practical example of one of these relationships is evident in the consolidation of a six-year long coordinated project by the Seychelles and Mauritius for the shared management of the Mascareignes plateau region, an extended continental shelf of around 396,000 sq km. By 2015 they had agreed to cooperate on matters related to ‘environmental protection, exploration and marine resources management, including fisheries and hydrocarbons’. They have also agreed to share the resources in the zone on a 50/50 basis (Seychelles News 2014 and 2015).

The Mauritian economy is dependent on tourism, financial services, sugar, textiles, and prospects related to advanced technologies¹⁰ (Stiglitz 2011). Their imports exceed their exports, and are mainly oil, food and manufactured goods. Mauritian main exports are sugar and clothing and its main export partner is the European Union, though South Africa, the United States and Madagascar are other important partners (Trading Economics 2016). Despite

this the government does have plans, stipulated in its 2015 programme (2015, 43), to ‘actively pursue deepened economic engagement with Africa ... in a manner that Mauritius becomes recognised as an important economic gateway to Africa.’ Stiglitz (2011) calls Mauritius a successful emerging-market country, a success he ascribes to: high levels of social cohesion, welfare and economic growth; very little military spending, which it considers to be wasteful; a strong commitment to democratic institutions; and in the absence of exploitable natural resources, Mauritius has spent money on the appreciation of its human resources. Grynberg (2013), on the other hand, considers Mauritius’ economic ‘miracle’ label to be down to ‘luck’ and assistance from the EU, the US and India in the form of the 1975 Lomé Convention, the US Agricultural Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA); and a double taxation agreement between India and Mauritius, which exempts Mauritian firms from Indian capital gains tax respectively. Despite the diverging views on the sources of Mauritian economic success, it is apparent that trade is a primary determinant in guiding Mauritian foreign policy. Aside from its regional economic partners, the Mauritian government considers, aside from those mentioned above, India, China and Pakistan also to be key trading partners. Indeed ‘the main thrust of Mauritius’s foreign policy is ... to protect its preferential access to developed markets and cultivate inflows of [FDI] and financial relationships’ (Mauritius Foreign Policy and Government Guide 2011, 86). According to its SADC online profile, the ‘national objective is to graduate Mauritius from the current status of upper middle income country to the league of high-income nations by the 2020s’ (SADC 2012).

The Seychelles is a SID in the Western Indian Ocean, although technically it is an archipelago of 115 islands. Like Mauritius, the Seychelles’ imports (petroleum products, manufactured goods and machinery) greatly exceed its exports, which are heavily dependent on its fishing industry, fish being its primary natural resource especially tuna and prawns. Its import partners include France, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Spain. It also exports to France and South Africa, the UK and others in the EU. Tourism is the Seychelles’ primary industry (Trading Economics 2016).

Namibia, formerly South West Africa, is the largest southern African small state and also the youngest in terms of independence, which it attained from South Africa in 1990. Namibia has an Atlantic seaboard to the West and is surrounded to the north by Angola, northeast, Zambia, to the East, Botswana and to the South, South Africa. It therefore considers bilateral relations with these countries to be of paramount importance to Namibia’s national interests¹¹ (Ministry

of Foreign Affairs 2004, 72-73). Namibia imports food products, petroleum products and fuel, machinery and equipment and chemicals mostly from South Africa, the Netherlands, the UK and China (Trading Economics 2016). It also exports mainly to South Africa and the UK with diamonds making up a quarter of total exports, which also include uranium, lead, zinc, tin, silver, tungsten, food and live animals and manufactured products (Trading Economics 2016). Most of its exports are natural resources which also include copper, gold, lithium, cadmium, salt, and hydropower. Namibia is economically interdependent on the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), through which it receives a substantial chunk of its national budget, and South Africa, against whose currency the Namibian Dollar is pegged (Bosl 2014, 7). Trade forms a principal part of Namibia's bilateral relations and as such the Ministry of Trade and Industry often informs foreign policy choices and undertakes economic diplomacy in Namibia's bilateral relations (Mushelenga 2014, 74).

Membership in international organisations

The Comoros joined the United Nations in 1975 and is a member of the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and a host of other international bodies. It is also a member of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), along with the Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar and Reunion (France). Despite their heterogeneous characters, for example the Comoros is one of the least developed countries and Mauritius falls within upper middle income countries, the five IOC member countries share geographical proximity and common environmental challenges. Mauritius is active in various regional and continental organisations, including SADC, African Union (AU), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Its regional integration division, referred to above, monitors these groupings 'with an aim to assist in expanding the economic space of Mauritius to achieve sustainable development through the regional route'. Internationally, Mauritius is a member of the Commonwealth and the United Nations (UN)¹² among about 50 other organisations. The Mauritian government considers its election to important international bodies as well as its membership and Presidency of the UN Security Council as achievements. Mauritius holds SADC and the AU in high regard as it harmonises its foreign policy with the goals of those international organisations (The Ministry 2016).

The Seychelles is a member of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM), the AU, the Commonwealth, International Monetary Fund (IMF), IOC and Indian Ocean Rim-Association

for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), La Francophonie, and the UN among others. It is also a member of COMESA and SADC. As a result of financial and human resource deficiencies, the Seychelles had to withdraw from SADC but re-joined in 2008. During the Seychelles' Presidency of the IOC, the organisation set up the IOC piracy cell in the Seychelles, established regional development programs such as the 'Vanilla Islands' project and participated in the Madagascar Political crisis roadmap (MFA 2016).

Namibia has membership in 46 international organisations, among them the UN, Commonwealth, SADC, AU, SACU and African Development Bank (AfDB). Namibia is essentially a child of the UN and therefore it comes as no surprise that it would want to maintain an active role within the organisation. Indeed within less than a decade of independence (in 1990) the Republic assumed a non-permanent term on the UN Security Council (1999-2000).

Security (military, environmental, economic, maritime)

According to the Comoros' Minister of External Relations and Cooperation, Mohamed Abdoukari (2015), his country, being "a small island", is dependent on the ocean as its main resource and therefore preservation of the oceans is vital for the future of the Comoros. Moreover, scarce natural resources and its physical insularity make food security a challenge for the Comoros. Less than 15 years ago the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 58/120 on special emergency economic assistance for the recovery and the development of the Comoros. In terms of military security, the Comorian Security Force has a 500-member defense force and France provides naval assistance for the protection of territorial waters.

Mauritius has no standing army. Food security is a concern and the Government has a dedicated Ministry to attend to this challenge. Unlike Mauritius, the Seychelles has an armed force, the Seychelles People's Defence Forces (SPDF). According to the SPDF, the reason for its existence is not dissimilar to any other nation's need for a defence force, including protection against external aggression and maintaining territorial integrity. The Seychelles is strategically important in the Indian Ocean and the Government of Seychelles has entered into several agreements with international partners, including the United States, to protect its territory and economy especially from threats of piracy. Security, therefore, has a direct bearing on foreign policy formulation as piracy in the Seychelles' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) had increased in the last two decades, threatening tourism and the fishing industry, the two most important

sources of the Seychelles' income. Although now there is general consensus that piracy seems to be lessening in the region, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Transport still considers it to be a threat to the Seychelles' maritime security (MFA 2016).

According to the Republic's Constitution (Chapter 15, article 115), the Namibian Defence Force (NDF) is tasked with defending the national interests of Namibia and safeguarding its territorial integrity. It assists domestic authorities when asked and provides support in UN, AU or SADC peacekeeping missions (MoD 2016). Compared to the other four southern African small states, in 2014 Namibia spent the most on its military, around \$550 million, compared with \$300 million (Botswana); \$80 million (Swaziland); \$48 million (Lesotho); \$33 million (Mauritius), and \$15 million (Seychelles) (SIPRI 2015). Territorial integrity¹³ is key to determining Namibia's foreign policy as was clearly the case when Namibia's initial foreign policy steps post-independence included the reintegration of Walvis Bay and the offshore islands (the 'Penguin Islands') as Namibian sovereign territory. Walvis Bay had been under South African control until March 1994. The enclave is of strategic economic importance to Namibia as it is the only deep-water port in the country and as such it is vital to Namibia's 'economic development, maritime security, and foreign trade relations' (du Pisani 2014, 372). Since 2004, additional security concerns became evident in Namibia's White Paper on Foreign Policy and Diplomacy Management, including the environment, marine resources, and economic security (to be ensured through regional integration, FDI and trade diversification) (du Pisani 2014, 379).

Colonial and cultural ties

The Comoros gained its independence from France in July 1975. As mentioned above, the unresolved issue of the island of Mayotte remains a bone of contention for the Comoros. However, France offers support to the Comoros as a trading partner and in terms of military aid among other avenues and as such the Comoros foreign relations with France remain vital, however complex (Massey and Baker 2009, 23). Despite this reliance on France, this has not prevented the efforts of the Presidents of the Comoros to "widen Comoros' diplomatic and commercial ties" (Massey and Baker 2009, 4). For example, in December 2013 the Comoros' President Dhoinine undertook a state visit to Oman in order to establish better bilateral relations and cooperation with Oman (Oman Observer 2013). Efforts such as these have resulted "in an exceptionally diverse foreign policy for such a small state" (Massey and Baker 2009, 4).

Mauritius is a former Dutch, French and British (1814-1968) colony. The implication of this is a continuing strong link with France and the United Kingdom (UK). Mauritius is a voluntary member of the Commonwealth since 1968. The Mauritian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Etienne Sinatambou, declared in a 14 March 2016 speech that Mauritius takes ‘pride in its membership of the Commonwealth ... an organisation that is a champion of Small States.’ Mauritius also joined the International Organization of the Francophonie in 1970 and remains culturally linked to France in language, media and business. Mauritius also has historical and ethnic ties with India, in light of its majority (68%) Indo-Mauritian population. Despite its close ties with the UK, Mauritius continues to actively pursue, at the United Nations in particular, its dispute over what Mauritius claims to be its sovereign territory, the Chagos Archipelago, illegally held by the UK. According to the Mauritian Constitution, Mauritian territory includes among others the Chagos Archipelago including Diego Garcia (home to a US military base) (Mauritius Government Programme 2015-2019, 44). It is apparent that Mauritius uses its historical connections to its commercial advantage. It also uses various multilateral platforms to promote its climate change diplomacy. For example, Mauritius was the first state to sign the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in June 1992. The Seychelles is also a former French colony and British territory until its independence in 1976. Like Mauritius, the Seychelles is a member of *La Francophonie*. According to Namibia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2004, 77), because of historical reasons, Southwest Africa had been a German colony until 1915, present relations between the two states remain ‘of a special character ... and multi-faceted’. Areas of contact with Germany relate to trade, tourism, investment and development.

Type of government or political system

The Comoros’ presidency rotates between the country's three islands Grande Comore, Anjouan, and Moheli. Voting irregularities in the latest presidential election in 2016 resulted in a partial poll re-run after which Azali Assoumani was named the victor. The Comoros has experienced decades of insurrection and civil war since independence in 1975. However, according to the 2016 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance the Comoros has shown improvement in terms of domestic safety and rule of law, something that the Comoros will be seeking to advertise in order to attract much needed foreign investment. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (2016) referred to the 2016 elections as “an important step in the consolidation of democracy” in the Comoros.

Since independence Mauritius has been a parliamentary democracy. It is ranked first in Africa in terms of its democratic performance, affirmed in Gumede's (2016) view as consistently stable and in fact in the stages of deepening its democracy; and first for good governance by the 2015 Economist's Democracy Index and the 2014 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) respectively. Mauritius links its domestic commitment to democracy to its foreign policy goals of promoting democratic ideals abroad. The Seychelles is a multi-party representative democracy and although there are areas for improvement it is ranked at number six out of 54 on the IIAG with a score of 7 out of 10 in overall governance, which includes: safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity and human development (see Table 1.1 earlier in this article for data on the Seychelles' Human Development Index ranking). Namibia is a presidential representative democratic republic. It places great value on a sustained participatory democracy as a source of its domestic political stability and as a foundation for regional peace, security and political stability (du Pisani 2014, 379).

The landlocked states

According to Botswana's permanent mission to the UN, Botswana sees itself as a small, poor state. Botswana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC 2016) is tasked with advancing the country's domestic interests encompassing national principles of democracy and *Therisanyo* (consultation), territorial integrity, sovereignty, development, self-reliance, good neighbourliness and peaceful co-existence among others. These domestic interests are vouched within Botswana's broader interests, including regional integration, the promotion of trade, investment and tourism, promoting Botswana's image internationally, the search for development and technical assistance, and the promotion of international peace and security. The Kingdom of Lesotho's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations (2016) aims to protect Lesotho's sovereignty and territorial integrity, to adhere to the UN principles of non - interference in internal affairs of other states, and to advance and enhance Lesotho's prosperity through the maintenance of good relations with the international community. Using rather feisty language, the Ministry's vision involves 'jealously guarding Lesotho's political and socio-economic interests in a rapidly globalizing world'. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation aims to advance the Kingdom of Swaziland's national interest, enhance national security, project a positive image of Swaziland, grow the economy, and foster public understanding of the state's foreign policy.¹⁴ As part of King Mswati III's Government Programme of Action for Swaziland 2013-2018 (2013, 1), the

projected aspiration of Swaziland becoming a ‘first world country’ by 2022, necessitates increased FDI among other improvements. Good quality FDI brings with it capital, technical expertise and equipment, and access to international markets. This is to be achieved through the marketing of Swaziland’s new brand: *Africa’s New Promise*. According to the Programme (2013, 1), a first world country is defined as:

one where all citizens are able to sustainably pursue their life goals, and enjoy lives of value and dignity in a safe and secure environment. This implies equitable access to sufficient resources, education, health, food security and quality infrastructure and services, as well as good governance.

When it comes to international cooperation, the Kingdom of Swaziland aims to keep bilateral ties with its friends and ‘where possible, play an active part in continental and global initiatives’ (Government Programme of Action 2013-2018, 20).

Trade, economics and geopolitics

As a LLS, Botswana is dependent on its neighbours, South Africa to the south, Namibia to the west, and Zimbabwe to the east. Botswana is a middle income, developing state. Botswana imports food, fuel, machinery, beverages, tobacco, machinery and vehicles among other imports. South Africa is Botswana’s main import partner. The other 25% of total imports come from China, Israel, Namibia and Zimbabwe (Trading Economics 2016). The state’s main export partners are the UK, South Africa, Israel and Belgium and nearly two-thirds of its total exports are diamonds. Other exports include copper and nickel, beef and textiles. Although the diamond industry has been key to an independent foreign policy for Botswana in the past, as its main driver of growth, (see Niemann 1993), the Government is trying to diversify its economy. Moreover, as Taylor and Mokhawa (2003, 280-283) contend, the diamond industry has at times tainted Botswana’s otherwise clean, democratic reputation since its independence in 1966¹⁵. Nevertheless, any potential damage to image has not impacted Botswana’s rankings. It was ranked at number 72 out of 189 states in 2015 in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business Index (2015). In 2015 Mauritius ranked at no. 32, the Seychelles at no. 95, Namibia at no. 101, Swaziland at no. 105, and Lesotho at no. 114.

Lesotho is a small LLS and as such it is already dependent on its neighbours. However, what is most challenging in Lesotho’s case is that it is an enclave LLS, that is, completely surrounded by one state - South Africa. Therefore as Kapa (2007, 117-132) suggests Lesotho’s foreign policy will always be determined by South Africa’s national interests. This depicts a trapped

sovereign state with little or no autonomy. Mahlakeng and Hussein (2013, 35) add that enclave LLS' economic and political existence 'may depend heavily upon the benevolence of their encircling neighbours'. It is no surprise then that Lesotho exports mainly clothing and diamonds mostly to South Africa, but also to the US. It imports food, fuel, machinery and building materials mostly from South Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the US and South Africa (Trading Economics 2016). The country's natural resources include diamonds, wildlife, mohair, wool and water. South Africa is dependent on Lesotho's rivers in terms of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project as a water supply for Gauteng province, which is also a source of income and hydroelectric power for Lesotho. South Africa is subject to potential spill-over effects and negative consequences as a result of political instability in Lesotho (see below).

Swaziland has been referred to as the Switzerland of Africa, but only due to its mountainous topography. It is a lower middle income LLS surrounded by South Africa apart from its north-eastern border with Mozambique. Its natural resources include sugar, food products, wood pulp and wildlife. More than three-quarters of Swaziland's total imports are from South Africa, and include food, fuels and machinery. It also imports from Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia to a smaller extent. In 2015 Swaziland exported more than it imported, unlike the five other small states in this paper, something which has assisted with the state's medium term growth. Its main exports include sugar, wood pulp, cotton and beef and are destined for South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia and Norway (Trading Economics 2016). Swaziland relies on revenue from SACU, which is unpredictable and on the decline, preferential trade agreements and economic partnerships. Agriculture and tourism are prominent industries. Like Lesotho (Loti), Swaziland's currency (Lilangeni) is pegged to the Rand and such is vulnerable to changes in South Africa's economy.

Security (military, environmental, economic, maritime)

Although Botswana's Defence Force (BDF) is small compared with neighbours Angola and South Africa, it has nevertheless played a professional role in regional peace operations (Henk 2004, 85). Lesotho's Defence Force (LDF) has had a rather different reputation. Since independence in 1966, Lesotho has experienced several periods of political instability and insecurity including military involvement in politics (coups in May 1991, September 1998, and August 2014). The LDF is a source of serious instability for political authorities. Additionally, according to Matlosa (2005, 102), Lesotho's 'external security horizon is overwhelmingly dependent on South Africa'; and whereas Lesotho was once referred to as the granary of

southern Africa, it is now experiencing food insecurity, as is Swaziland. Two-thirds of Swaziland's population suffer from chronic food insecurity, as droughts and water insecurity also plague the sugar cane industry. Swaziland has an army, the Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force (USDF), but details on how large it is remain sketchy. Moreover as Swaziland has 'no natural enemies', considering that a Swazi attack on South Africa or Mozambique would mean probable suicide, reasons for a standing army remain elusive although there is a suggestion that the forces are there solely to protect the King against any popular uprisings (Nxumalo 2011).

Membership in international organisations

Botswana is a member of SADC (SADC headquarters are based in Gaborone, Botswana), SACU, the AU, the UN, the Commonwealth and a host of other international organisations. Membership in international organisations affords small states particular advantages, according to Botswana's Permanent Mission to the UN (2008), and as such Botswana places 'high value' on its membership. The UN is considered to be particularly important because as it is based in New York, Botswana has more immediate access to more contacts than its development priorities in its bilateral relations would otherwise allow and thereby provides a platform upon which to promote Botswana's interests abroad. Lesotho is also a member of SADC, SACU, the UN, the AU, the Commonwealth and other organisations. Lesotho is dependent on maintaining its international memberships which must be considered of benefit to the state, as was recently demonstrated in media reports. SADC threatened Lesotho with suspension if Lesotho Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili would not receive and release the SADC report investigating the assassination in June 2015 of the former head of the LDF, Brigadier Maaparankoe Mahao (Africa News Agency 2016). Lesotho agreed in order to avoid suspension. In an historical example, in September 1998, under the auspices of SADC, South Africa and Botswana intervened in Lesotho, in what was named Operation Boleas, to restore the rule of law and quash high levels of post-electoral political instability and rioting in Lesotho. There was controversy over this intervention, South Africa being accused of using its dominance in the region to meddle in Lesotho's affairs. The incident was evidence of the vulnerable nature of this LLS to be able to protect and maintain its territorial integrity. Swaziland too is a member of over 40 international organisations including the AU, SADC, SACU, UN, and Commonwealth. Six southern African small states are members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), an organisation created in 1975 whose objectives include reducing poverty levels in member states and promoting sustainable development.

Colonial and cultural ties

Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland are all former British colonies until their independence in 1968, 1966 and 1968 respectively and, as mentioned above, all have since voluntarily joined the Commonwealth, formerly known as the British Commonwealth. Since independence a large part of these states' foreign policies were directed at bringing about majority rule in apartheid South Africa. They were part of the Frontline States and in many respects seen as 'South Africa's achilles heel'. However, it was difficult for these states to isolate South Africa, due to their geographical location and economic reliance on the Republic. The states remain economically dependent on a democratic South Africa although their focus is now on good neighbourliness with their dominant neighbour.

Type of government or political system

The Republic of Botswana is a parliamentary representative democracy. It ranks highly in most democracy indices, for example, it moved up five places over a period of four years, according to Campbell, Pözlbauer, Barth and Pözlbauer's (2015) study on world democracy rankings. A very real trigger for Botswana's foreign policy behaviour relates to its eastern neighbour and the challenge of illegal immigrants (or refugees) fleeing Zimbabwe's economic collapse and political instability and taking up residence in Botswana. Botswana has a population just over two million and therefore having to contend with a million or more Zimbabweans crossing its border and threatening to overwhelm the local population, as result of failed elections in 2008, impacted its foreign policy. Botswana's President Ian Khama refused to acknowledge Robert Mugabe as legitimate Zimbabwean President after the 2008 presidential re-run. Although Botswana and Zimbabwe almost came to blows over this (see Malila and Molebatsi 2014, 11-12), relations later thawed and some suggest that geopolitical concerns may have been the cause as a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Mozambique and Botswana was set up to jointly develop the port of Beira and build a railway link between the two countries. This MOU would require an amenable Zimbabwe whose territory would be needed for the railway (Malila and Molebatsi 2014, 16). Lesotho also has a parliamentary representative democratic system, but it is a constitutional monarchy. Although Swaziland is an absolute monarchy, the 2006 Constitution makes provision for a prime minister who is head of government and a cabinet, though with the King's approval. Swaziland is a member of many organisations espousing democratic principles, and yet the single reference to democracy in the King's Government Programme of Action 2013 – 2018 (2013, 16) is 'monarchial democracy'

a ‘marriage between the monarch and the ballot box’ and the Kingdom has banned political parties for the past 40 years.

Conclusion

Although this study provides a brief overview it is apparent that despite a globalising world, borders and location still matter. Geopolitics and regional context for the southern African small states directly impact on their national interests (economic, political and otherwise). Although location-related challenges may differ between the LLS of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, the island states of the Comoros, Mauritius and the Seychelles, and Namibia with a coastal border, there is a commonality in what drives their foreign policy: protection of territorial integrity. Moreover, it is clear that these states are driven in their foreign policy formulation by what they define as their national interests. For the Comoros national interest and territorial integrity are one and the same as is evident in Comoros’ persistent calls at the UN to have Mayotte recognised as part of the Union. Namibia and Botswana, for example, safeguard their interests through the promotion of good neighbourliness, and regional peace and cooperation because in one view they are aware of the advantages of peace to a prosperous economy and a prosperous economy implies positive spinoffs for their citizenries, and therefore is of national interest. The Seychelles’ foreign policy is driven by the need to boost its tourism industry as a major source of income, to ascertain ways to mitigate the consequences of climate change, and to lessen piracy-related insecurities. These foreign policy objectives are of priority interest to this small state. Although Lesotho might be asymmetrically dependent on South African interests for its survival, South Africa too is aware of the troubles it faces when there is instability in the small state. In that respect Lesotho is aware of the unmistakable role played by regional security initiatives in its own national security. For Mauritius trade, the country’s small size, colonial links, and commitment to democratic governance are driving forces behind its foreign policy. Like Lesotho, Swaziland’s foreign policy in practice is influenced by its geography and asymmetrical relations with South Africa, its largest neighbour.

The Comoros, Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, the Seychelles and Swaziland also share similarities in their self-described status of ‘small state’ and the need to participate meaningfully in regional and international organisations, again with a view to protecting their state interests. This description is not necessarily a negative; indeed these states also aim, in their foreign policy documents, to project positive images of their states abroad. It is more a matter of fact than perception. As Handel suggested, small state survival does matter, in this

case more to the Comoros, Lesotho and Swaziland, which are perhaps the least well off in many respects (in terms of political and economic survival) compared with their regional small state counterparts. In contrast, however, although facing climate change challenges that are risking their very existence on the map, the Seychelles and Mauritius are through context, circumstance and diplomatic skill, attempting to use their small status to their advantage and are proactively playing their roles in international relations, especially in relation to the blue economy. Historical context plays a role in determining foreign policy in these southern African small states. Apart from the Comoros which was a French colony, the other six small states are former British territories and chose to become members of the Commonwealth of Nations upon independence. Another shared factor influencing foreign policy is trade, which is essential to all seven small states. Often colonial ties are apparent in trading partnerships and whether or not this is regarded by some as continued unfair dependence of some sort, the reality is that the small states rely on these links. Small state currencies too are vulnerable to global market forces, and especially when they are pegged to a regional power's currency such as South Africa's Rand.

Their foreign policy decisions may also be influenced by context-specific complexities, not explored in this study. Leadership, type of government and foreign policy decision making, for example, only briefly touched upon here in respect of Botswana's President Khama, might be a significant determining factor in small states' foreign policy choices. Some might suggest that Swaziland's absolute monarch, King Mswati III, despite the rhetoric in government policies, rules in many respects in favour of his personal interest and not in the national interest. Domestic challenges such as health issues, HIV and AIDS rates for example, and the role these play in foreign policy choices, have also not been explored in this study. Domestic stakeholders in foreign policy formulation are not included, although brief mention was made of the impact an NGO might have on state image, which is of interest to a state, in this case Botswana and its diamond industry.

However, state size, at least this in the case of these small states, appears to be the 'why' behind the shaping of foreign policy but only in the sense that it informs the typical drivers of many, if not most, states' foreign policies: protecting territorial integrity; promoting national interests; projecting a positive image abroad; participating meaningfully in international organisations, taking history into account in identifying foreign policy goals; and setting up beneficial trading relations. That is to say, what drives southern African small states' foreign policies is not

atypical from other larger states. What is more apparent is that despite commonalities shared by the southern African small states in their foreign policies, their sovereign independence remains important to each state. After all these seven small states are quite diverse, ranging from democracies to an absolute monarchy, from having consistent political stability to constant instability, and from having high middle income economic status to low income status. As such priorities differ even if their foreign policy objectives are influenced by very similar national interests; and all seven states have active foreign policies, to different degrees. For southern African small states, first place in a global race may never be realised but that does not disqualify them from participating.

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Notes

¹ In terms of the global economy, Vickers (2011, 185) describes small states (or small vulnerable economies) as marginal players.

² Crowards (2002) adds ‘trade openness ... total exports plus imports as a percentage of GDP’ and ‘net foreign direct investment [FDI]’, as indirect variables, to his quantifiable definitions of the size of a state, arguing in the case of FDI that presumably small states would attract smaller FDI, compared to larger states, due to limited capacity. This indicator would be important then in terms of determining the influence a state may have in influencing decisions beyond its borders. According to the World Bank (2015), in 2014, the FDI of the five southern Africa states examined in this paper were as follows: Botswana (USD 393,180,125); Lesotho (USD 46,521,786); Mauritius (USD 418,430,128); Namibia (USD 493,302,263); Seychelles (USD 108,307,072) and Swaziland (USD 26,584,894).

³ Even within small state theory, you can refer to small developed states (mostly in Europe), or small developing states; or small island developing states (SIDS).

⁴ Geopolitics relates to how state location, natural resources and physical environment, including regional context, are important in helping to explain certain foreign policy choices (Breuning 2007, 47).

⁵ Although these characteristics are not exclusive to small states, for example even large states may experience remoteness due to the widespread settlements of rural populations, they do, however, reveal as a collective the degree to which small states must face these challenges compared with larger states (The Commonwealth 1997, 12).

⁶ For discussion on small state use of balancing or bandwagoning in their international relations see Gunasekara 2015 and Gvalia and Siroky et al. 2013.

⁷ Literature pertaining to African foreign policies and related processes reflects slightly more favourably in number, see more recent examples in: Herbert (2011); Akokpari 2001; Khadiagala and Lyons 2001; Adar and Ajulu 2002. For an economic emphasis on small states in SADC–European Union (EU) negotiations, see Vickers 2011.

⁸ Mayotte became an official overseas Department for France in 2011.

⁹ Blue economy refers to the sustainability of the world’s oceans by ‘ensuring that economic activity is in balance with the long-term capacity of ocean ecosystems to support this activity and remain resilient and healthy’ (Economist Intelligence Unit 2015, 7).

¹⁰ Although, according to the World Economic Forum (2016) more can yet be done to boost Mauritius’ technological readiness; which sits at a score of 4.1 (with 7 being the best possible score).

¹¹ That is not to say that Namibia has enjoyed uninterrupted congenial relations with Botswana, for example. The two states were in dispute over the boundary of Kasikili/Sedudu Island, located on the north-eastern international border between Botswana and Namibia, from 1992-1999, although a decision was finalised in 2003 (du Pisani 2014, 375-377).

¹² Mauritius served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the first time in 1977 and 1978. In October 2000, Mauritius was elected for a two-year term (2001-2002) at the Security Council. Botswana and Namibia have also served on the Council in 1995-1996 and 1999-2000 respectively. Seychelles, in agreement with its east African neighbours, temporarily withdrew its bid to occupy a 2017-2018 non-permanent seat on the Council, but aspires to represent Africa in the 2021-2022 term.

¹³ See discussion on the Kasikili/Sedudu Island dispute in du Pisani 2014 (375-377).

¹⁴ Swaziland's King Mswati III had no qualms in 2006, attempting to enlarge his Kingdom's territory, claiming parts of Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal from South Africa. Former South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nkhosazana Dlamini Zuma quashed these claims in 2012 on the basis that AU protocol observes borders drawn up during colonial times (Simelane 2014).

¹⁵ See Taylor and Mokhawa's (2003) review of Botswana's diamond industry and related NGO, Survival International's, allegations of the government's ill-treatment of the San people.