

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

**THE EFFECT OF ELECTORAL POLITICS ON A COUNTRY'S INTERNATIONAL  
RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH AFRICA 1994 TO 2017.**

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## **Dedication**

**This research project is categorically dedicated to my parents for seeing me through my education despite all the odd and predicaments.**

### **Acknowledgements**

This study could not be possible without the assistance of an expert. Dr. Kisiangani Emmanuel contributed significantly to the success of the entire research project and as such he is much appreciated. The support that was offered by the classmates is also highly appreciated: this group was so encouraging and motivating not only during the project period but also throughout the educational process.

## **Abstract**

Political systems remain vital determinants of the relations that exist between nations. Before entering into any form of international relations, actors tends to consider various factors among them being the existing political systems. This study focused investigations of how the electoral politics has shaped South Africa's international relations. South Africa has had a long history of racial segregation, an era that is popularly known as apartheid period. However, the apartheid came to an end in 1994 when the first black person, Nelson Mandela, became the president. Since 1994, South Africa has been ruled by three presidents namely; Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma. In the post apartheid period the country adopted a constitutional democracy system of government. The study successfully adopted a qualitative research design that involved a systematic review of information from scholarly sources and was guided by rational choice theory. This research shows that all the post-apartheid presidents have portrayed themselves as democratic leaders so as to persuade both international and regional actors to establish strong ties with the country. Additionally, results of this study indicate that international relation is not determined by one factor as it is interplay of multiple factors. The study found out that in South Africa political traditions, economic development and regional and domestic matters play part in its international relations. All these factors are influence by rational choice that is made by the South African political leaders.

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## **Abbreviation**

**ANC-African National Congress**

**APGRM-African Peer Group Review Mechanism**

**AU-African Union**

**BRICS-Brazil–Russia–India–China–South Africa**

**DFA- Department of Foreign Affairs**

**DIRCO-Department of International Relations and Co-operation**

**FCO-Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

**EU-European Union**

**LSG-Leading Small Groups**

**NEPAD-New Economic Policy for Africa's Development**

**NPC-National people's Congress**

**PAC- Pan African Congress**

**PRC- People's Republic of China**

**PSC-Politburo Standing Committee**

**ROC-The republic of China**

**SASO-South African Student's Association**

**SADC -South African development community**

**OAU- Organization of African Union**

**USA-United States of America**

**UN-United Nations**

**UNOMSA-United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa**

**IMF-International Monetary Fund**

**WTO-World Trade Organization**



## **1.0 CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Political systems are important determinants of the relations that exist between two or more countries. Before entering into any form of international relations actors tend to consider the prevalent political systems that their potential partners have adopted. Some of the most common political systems across the world include the following: communism, democracy, republic, monarchy, communism, and dictatorship.<sup>1</sup>

These types of governments have an overarching impact on the international relations policy of a nation as well as the international relations that a country engages in. Democracies, for instance, have shown to engage in international relations with other democracies and are less likely to engage in war as demonstrated by the democratic peace theory.<sup>2</sup> A perfect example that can be used to determine how political systems interact in matters of international relations is the bilateral relations between United States of America (USA) and India. India and USA engages in bilateral relations that have turned into a global strategic partnership in the recent times. These ties are based on democratic values and a convergence of various interests.<sup>3</sup>

South Africa, on the other hand, has had a long history of racial segregation in all aspects in life including on political matters. The National Party government of South Africa imposed

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<sup>1</sup>Barkan, S. E. (2011). *Sociology, Understanding and Changing the Social World*. Retrieved March 29, 2017, from <http://open.lib.umn.edu/sociology/chapter/14-2-types-of-political-systems/>

A democracy is a form of political system that allows all the citizens to participate in governmental systems. The citizens have the powers to create and vote for any law either directly or through representatives. In such sense, democracy can be divided into either direct or representative democracy.

A republic, on the other hand, is a government system that remains subjective to those being governed. Under this political system, the citizens have the roles of legitimizing the government. Within a republic, there are some forms of democracy that are portrayed. Differently, a monarch is a political system of medieval European countries: it is a form of government where rulers are chosen by the people's voice or their representatives.

The monarch makes the final word in matters of the government and also the head of state holds office until death, or he is abdicated. Additionally, the monarch is granted discretion by the way and how laws are enforced and made.

A dictatorship form of government, on the other hand, involves authoritarianism in which one individual who is the president holds absolute powers in enforcing the law and ruling the country.

Communism alludes to a type of government where the people hold a common ideology that there is a common ownership of the means of production.<sup>1</sup> The goods and products are shared by all people in the society in an equal manner.

<sup>2</sup>Mingst, K. A., & Arreguin-Toft, I. M. (2013). *Essentials of International Relations: Sixth International Student Edition*. WW Norton & Company.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2015). *U.S. Relations With India*. Retrieved March 29, 2017, from <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3454.htm>

Apartheid which was political and social system that brought legal racial segregation in the country between 1948 to 1993.<sup>4</sup> This system worked to curtail the black people's rights and enhance the white minority rule. Throughout the apartheid period, South African position in international matters remained vital. Over all the apartheid period South Africa remained isolated in international matters though not fully. The South African government remained fully aware that it needed cooperation with external community for various products, security and market of their products. Nevertheless, this did not prevent UN from proposing various sanctions against the country which in most cases did not materialize.<sup>5</sup> Although the western powers such as U.S.A, United Kingdom and France did not support the apartheid, they maintained their international relations with South Africa due to strategic and economic reasons.<sup>6</sup> South Africa was a major supplier of Gold to these western powers and was also important in ending communism and as such these countries could not afford to cut their international relations fully. Additionally, due to the apartheid and lack of support for the practice internationally, South Africa had to withdraw its membership in Commonwealth.<sup>7</sup> The African countries did not support the apartheid system in South Africa as most of them has already gained independence and as such considered the practice as retrogressive. Therefore, most of the African countries expressed their soar relationship with South Africa.

However, the apartheid came to an end in 1994 when the first black person, Nelson Mandela, became the president. Since 1994, South Africa has been ruled by three president; Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma under a constitutional democracy system of government. This political system, as will be seen later, has played a pivotal role in influencing South Africa's international relations. Moreover, electoral politics of each of the three presidents has had varied implications on South Africa's international and this study examines the extent to which South Africa's political systems and electoral politics have influenced the country's international relations in the post-apartheid era.

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<sup>4</sup>Clark, N. L., & Worger, W. H. (2016). *South Africa: The rise and fall of apartheid*. Routledge.

<sup>5</sup>Davenport, TRH. (1991) *South Africa. A modern history*. London: Macmillan.

<sup>6</sup>South African History Online. (2017). *South Africa's Foreign Relations during Apartheid, 1948*. Retrieved from <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/south-africas-foreign-relations-during-apartheid-1948>

<sup>7</sup>de St. Jorre, John. (1977). "South Africa: Up Against the World". *Foreign Policy*. Washington Post Newsweek Interactive (28): 53–85

## **1.2 Background to the Study**

The political systems in a country have a significant impact on the international relations policy as well as the relations a state establishes with other states and South Africa has not been an exception. South Africa has, since 1994, been governed under a constitutional democracy system. The constitutional democracy system is made up of three-tier structure consisting of the executive, legislature and the judiciary. The presidency in South Africa is an elective post and the three post-apartheid presidents have had varying impacts on South Africa's international relations. Nelson Mandela ruled between 1994 and 1999 and his administration's international relations was influenced by political ideals of democracy and human rights. President Thabo Mbeki ruled between 1999 and 2008 and changed South Africa's international relations policy to focus on governance initiatives for Africa's development.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, President Jacob Zuma who took office in 2009 and is the current president until 2019 seems to lean more on economic diplomacy matters in his international relations policy.<sup>9</sup> The question is what explains the varying trends in the president's international positions? This study focuses on this question by specifically looking at the electoral politics of the different political regimes and how they have shaped South Africa's international relations.

## **1.3 Statement of the Research Problem**

Before international relations are initiated, there are various factors that both parties consider. An example of these factors is domestic variables which have an impact on the outcome of the international interest of a country.<sup>10</sup> One of such variables is the domestic politics as there is a linkage between the domestic political systems and issues and international affairs. The domestic political system of a country does not only determine the leadership systems but also the international relations policy of a state. A state will therefore engage in international relations with other partners who have similar domestic political systems. South Africa has, since the end of apartheid, had close ties with various international relations countries in different regions of the world. In addition, each of the South Africa's presidents adopted different political styles and ideological positions when it came to international matters. All the South African po-

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<sup>8</sup>Anthony, R., Tembe, P., & Gull, O. (2015). South Africa's changing foreign policy in a multi-polar world-the influence of China and other emerging powers.

<sup>9</sup>Anthony, Tembe, & Gull, (2015).

<sup>10</sup>Boudon, R. (2009). Rational choice theory. *Social Theory*, 179.

apartheid presidents embraced democratic leadership styles but have had differing political ideologies.<sup>11</sup> All these political ideologies have impacted differently on South Africa's international relations. For instance both Mandela and Mbeki supported African renaissance while Zuma was for African enhancement. This study examines in detail how South Africa's electoral politics under the three presidents has affected her international relations.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- a) What has been the structure of South African political system in the post-apartheid era?
- b) What have been the domestic variables under the different post-apartheid presidents that have affected the country's international relations?
- c) How have the personal leadership styles and political ideologies of the different post-apartheid presidents affected the country's international relations?

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Research**

##### **1.51 Main Objective**

The main objective of this study is to determine the effect of South Africa's electoral politics on her international relations.

##### **1.52 Specific Objectives**

The research will focus on the following specific objectives:

- a) To examine the extent to which the structure South African political system has changed in the course of the apartheid era?
- b) To outline the variables under the different post apartheid presidents that have affected South Africa's international relations?
- c) To assess the personal leadership styles and political ideologies of the different post-apartheid presidents and how they have affected the country's international relations?

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<sup>11</sup>Plaut, M. and Holden, P. (2012). *Who Rules South Africa?*. Biteback Publishing.

## **1.6 Literature Review**

### **1.61 International Relations and Its Importance**

International relations remain exceptionally essential aspects of citizenship in the modern global society. The improved communication technology coupled with both complex international system and improved efficient transport system, the globe is continuously becoming smaller and smaller. Therefore, with the increase of globalization, the globe is becoming more interconnected and as such the international relations have become a crucial aspect of every state. Therefore, international relations involve interactions between actors (state and non-state) in the international politics.<sup>12</sup> These actors in the international systems operate on the principle or state of anarchy whereby each state assumes sovereignty and therefore not answerable to any higher authority. Therefore, the states when engaging in international relations are not bound by any law and therefore an actor can choose which nation or non-state actor to cooperate with and those that to sideline. In addition, the identity of the state is important in determining its interests and the actors that such nation is more likely to consider. This is in tandem with the constructivist's arguments that hold the position that those states that have similar traits such as capitalism and democracy view each other positively.<sup>13</sup> However, if there is the difference in characteristics between two nations, then a negative perception develops. Therefore, there are high chances for states with the same characteristics coming into cooperation and establishing successful relations.<sup>14</sup> In the matters of international relations countries may cooperate to bring world order or advance a similar interest. This is in line with both liberalists and realists who agree in their viewpoint that states exist in an anarchical environment where they are guided by their own self-interest.<sup>15</sup> These states only enter into cooperation so as to amass sufficient power so that they can dominate others in the name of a mutual relationship. Examples of matters that countries are addressing by forging international relations in the contemporary world include the following: compacting of terrorism, nuclear proliferation, trade, international development and solving of the international conflicts. Further, the international relations are shaped by cultural backgrounds, geographical relations, religions and identities and a state cannot function without entering into international relations because their importance in trade, security and development matters

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<sup>12</sup>Brown, C., & Ainley, K. (2009). *Understanding international relations*. Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>13</sup>Adler, E. (2013). Constructivism in international relations: sources, contributions, and debates. *Handbook of international relations*, 2, 112-144.

<sup>14</sup>Adler (2013).

<sup>15</sup>Mingst & Arreguín-Toft, (2013).

cannot be underestimated.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, state and non-state actors must rely on each other and as such entering into international relations remains necessary. In the modern times the world is constantly changing leading to emergency of more powerful nations and therefore an actor should keep on reviewing the relation it has with other actors. Therefore, it is prudent to enter into international relations with other global actors whenever it is necessary no matter the frequency.

It is apparent that actors engage in international relations with those other actors which have similar characteristics so as to enhance their self-interests. Irrespective of the intentions or interests of participating in international relations, their importance and benefits cannot be overlooked. One of the essentials of having international operations is to promote peace. Historically, international relations have been characterized by signing and establishment of treaties and agreements between state actors that they promote. He further argues that these treaties have been essential in assuring citizens both at local, national and international levels, a form of peace by making sure cooperating nations do not engage in any form of conflict.<sup>17</sup> This benefit of international relations still remains relevant today. The international relations lead to balancing of powers between actors which are important in maintaining peaceful existences.<sup>18</sup> However, there is different perspective on the peace that comes with the international relationship because trade treaties and agreements only escalate conflicts rather than bringing peace. Peace can be achieved only when trade occurs between mutually dependent trading partners in international relations. These trade treaties and agreement intensifies conflicts especially when the dyads have increased and extensive economic interdependence. In such scenarios, a militarized interstate dispute is most likely to arise.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, though international relations are important in promoting peace they can escalate conflicts when there is extreme symmetrical and asymmetrical interdependence. Additionally, the anarchy that exists between nations in

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<sup>16</sup>Mingst, and Arreguin-Toft (2013)

<sup>17</sup>Aron, R. (2003). *Peace and war: a theory of international relations*. Transaction Publishers.

<sup>18</sup>Richmond, O. (2008). *Peace in international relations*. Routledge.

<sup>19</sup>Barbieri, K. (1996). Economic interdependence: A path to peace or a source of interstate conflict?. *Journal of Peace Research*, 33(1), 29-49.

international relations is deemed detrimental to the promotion of peace.<sup>20</sup> The anarchy creates an environment for war between actors.

Secondly, international relation helps countries to realize economic development. Countries come together and engage in trade ties that allow them to get access to those natural products that are not available in their geographical locations as well as finished product. Having international relations also promotes trade because a country gets a chance to access a large market for their products.<sup>21</sup> All this is important because cross-border trade that comes with international policies help an actor to earn revenues that are important in the development of a country. Further, international relations are vital in opening borders and allowing citizens of cooperating countries to cross borders in seek of better livelihoods.<sup>22</sup> This comes because international relations have an impact on border policies.

In addition, international relations are important in addressing global issues and concerns. In the modern world, there are many issues that are coming up some of which need the cooperation of likeminded countries.<sup>23</sup> One of such events that require countries to come together is terrorism. Terrorism is a major concern for the globe and to end it countries need to enter into international relations. Therefore international relations have a profound impact in solving global issues. Lastly, international relations have a far-reaching impact on the advancement of culture.<sup>24</sup> Public relations lead to exchange programs such as educational scholarship which help in learning other people's culture. This is essential as it helps the globe to start appreciating diversity which is rampant.

### **1.62 Political Systems and International Relations**

Diplomatic relations are a function of country's political systems. International relations policy and domestic politics remain two inseparable aspects. Before any country engages in any diplomatic relations the domestic political systems and actions must be factored in. A government

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<sup>20</sup>Buzan, B. (1984). Peace, power, and security: contending concepts in the study of International Relations. *Journal of Peace Research*, 21(2), 109-125.

<sup>21</sup>Christopher, A. (2011). The Functions of Diplomacy. *E-International Relations*. Retrieved from <http://www.e-ir.info/2011/07/20/the-functions-of-diplomacy/>

<sup>22</sup>Christopher, (2011).

<sup>23</sup> Holmes, H. A. (2010). The Importance of Maintaining Diplomatic Relations. *World Politics Review*, 56.

<sup>24</sup>Christopher, (2011).

will try to balance its intended national interests by assessing the domestic or local political constraints and strength.<sup>25</sup> This is because in every international relations policy that a country develops it will try as much as possible to retain its political power. Such scenario brings forth international relations policy politics which now shapes the international relations strategy in a country. The following factors bring in the international relations policy politics: the political parties (both ruling and opposition parties), interest groups, the news media and public opinions.<sup>26</sup> The office of president which represents the ruling party and is the executive branch of government has an influence on international relations policy through either or combination of the following: the expertise and experience that the president has on the international relations policy, the personal characteristics of the presidents as well as his or her beliefs. Moreover, the office of the president is also made up of a team of international relations policy advisors who influence the international relations.<sup>27</sup> This team's actions and decisions are based on the domestic political issues so as to promote the interests of the president and his political affiliations. The rationality of the office of the president in making international relations policy decisions which in return have an impact on international relations are therefore affected by political matters at the local and national level.

Apart from the political issues surrounding the office of the president, forces that come from outside the government have an influence on the international relations policy. The source of these external forces includes the following: news media, public opinion, and interest groups. Examples of categories of interest groups that mount pressure on the states international relations policies include the following: economic groups, political issue groups, identity groups, state and local governments and international relations governments. In reflection to Bracero program, which was a diplomatic agreement between the United States and Mexico, the interest groups have a role in influencing international relations policy and use different strategies.<sup>28</sup> The news media also have an influence on international relations policy through the following: agenda setting, directly influencing policy makers and sharing of public opinions. The media sometimes support or criticize the international relations policies and international relations that a country

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<sup>25</sup>Mesquita, B. & Smith, A. (2012). Domestic explanations of International Relations. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 15, 161-181.

<sup>26</sup>Mesquita & Smith (2012).

<sup>27</sup>Brown, C., & Ainley, K. (2009). *Understanding international relations*. Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>28</sup>Craig, Richard B. *The Bracero program: Interest groups and foreign policy*. University of Texas Press, 2014.



may try to implement. They therefore serve as a watchdog on the government political decisions on international relations and diplomatic issues. However, in so doing, they must balance between the freedom of press and security as well as objectivity of the news. In influencing the international relations policy and diplomatic relations, the media is in most cases influenced by politicians as well as other bodies that have political interests. Lastly, public opinions also shape international relations policy decisions. These opinions are from the members of the public and can be politically instigated to influence international relations policy. This is contrary to the traditional international relations discipline perspective that public opinion remains insignificant on matters of international relations policy. The voters who generated the public opinion were seen as apathetic and unconcerned parties to the matters of international relations because they were only interested in economic and social issues that were expected immediately. However, currently, there is evidence that the public opinion has a profound impact on international relations policy. Moreover, public opinion set the frame for the public opinion, and also democratic leaders seek the views of the members of the general public before implementing any public policy. Therefore if the government succumbs to the pressure from the public, news media or interest group to institute any diplomatic or international relations, then there are high chances it is based on political reason.

Further, political systems are characterized by the presence of political leaders who play a pivotal role in determining the international relations policies of a country. These political leaders are rational and selfish beings and therefore act to satisfy their interests.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, their goal is to retain the political power that they have and also finding means in which they can promote their political support that can help them keep their political positions. They, therefore, act on the basis of their selfish interests and domestic demands. In that sense, if the politicians feel that the international relations policies are incompatible with the domestic political demands they adjust it. This is to make sure it is consistent with the domestic political situation. In such contexts, fundamental changes are made on international relations policy so as to ensure political

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<sup>29</sup>Doeser, F. (2010). International Constraints, Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in the Small States: The Fall of the Danish 'Footnote Policy'. In *SGIR 7th Pan-European IR Conference, Stockholm* (pp. 9-11).

leaders survive and retain their elective office.<sup>30</sup> This situation is rampant in third world countries where political systems are streamlined to favor political leaders.

In addition, other domestic political factors that shape international relations in a country are the political party opposition. This political party opposition plays a significant role in determining the domestic political issues, especially in the democratic countries.<sup>31</sup> He adds that opposition parties are even powerful when they have the majority of members in the legislative houses: it makes their strength. This is because they have the required numbers that can influence issues of diplomacy and economic policies which are connected to the domestic policy. Apart from having the majority seats in the legislative house the opposition party should have high public support and maintain cohesiveness between members so as to influence policies.<sup>32</sup> In the event, there are multiple opposition parties cohesiveness between these entities is vital so as to ensure they advance a common goal and remains in solidarity. Nevertheless, having different opposition parties is disastrous to the policy making process because it is highly probable that they will not cooperate and mount the necessary pressure on the government or the ruling party.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, opposition party politics is an important determinant of international relations policies and how a country will relate to other states globally.

### **1.7 Hypotheses of the study**

- a) The structure South African political system in the apartheid era was different from that of post-apartheid era.
- b) Various social, political and economic variables in the post-apartheid South Africa affected the country's international relations
- c) The personal leadership styles and political ideologies of the different post-apartheid presidents were different and had effect on country's international relations.

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<sup>30</sup> Knopf, J. W. (1998). Domestic Sources of Preferences for Arms Cooperation: The Impact of Protest', *Journal of Peace Research*, 35, 677-695.

<sup>31</sup> Hagan, J. D. (1993). *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

<sup>32</sup> Doerer, (2011)

<sup>33</sup> Hagan, (1993).

## **1.8 Justification of the study**

Today, international relations have an overarching importance in the political, economic and security arenas of a country. There are various factors that shape these relations in a country, chief among them being domestic electoral politics and political systems.<sup>34</sup> However, there is scanty of information about electoral and political systems of countries such as South Africa have affected the country's international relations., There have been significant changes in South Africa under the different political regimes and little is documented to show how these changes have affected the country's international relations. There is, therefore, a gap in knowledge about the relationship between South Africa's electoral politics and her international relations. A research on this relationship is important in promoting an understanding among South African policymakers about how electoral politics in South Africa has impacted on the country's international relations as well as promote knowledge on the same subject among academicians.

## **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

This study will be guided by the rational choice theory, which assumes that individuals act rationally when pursuing their interests and not those of others.<sup>35</sup> States acts through human beings and therefore before any relation is entered the humans involved must act rationally by scrutinizing the prevailing conditions such as the political systems of their potential partners. Rational choice theory is a theoretical framework that suggests that all actors act with fixed preferences that are maximizing the benefits. It views a person as an instrumentally rational seeker of preference satisfaction. It assumes that actors choose the best alternative to achieve various ends. The model also assumes that decision-makers maximize the utility in that they have certain goals that they strive to achieve through actions.<sup>36</sup> Decision makers have consistent preferences, and they know the outcomes of their alternative actions. The rational choice theory does not explain how individuals modify their preferences over time and factors that motivate them to adopt a certain aim.<sup>37</sup> It assumes that individual preferences are predetermined goals. Furthermore, the rational choice theory suggests that decision makers are not in full control and

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<sup>34</sup>Hagan, J. D. (1993) *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

<sup>35</sup>Boudon, R. (2009). Rational choice theory. *Social Theory*, 179.

<sup>36</sup>Ogu, M. I. (2013). Rational Choice Theory: Assumptions, Strength, and Greatest Weaknesses in Application outside the Western Milieu Context. *Nigerian Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 1(3), 90-99.

<sup>37</sup>Hodgson, G. M. (2012). On the limits of rational choice theory. *Economic Thought*, 1(1), 94-108.

thus they do not have total freedom of action. They must consider the obstacles that may hinder them achieving their outcome and adjust their behavior or even abandon their most preferred goal.

Rational choice theory is used to study politics, and it is widely applied in international relations. International relations refer to the study of how nation-states interact with each other. It constitutes an exchange in which the state actors freely adjust to each other in terms of their expectations, interests, and capabilities. The study of international relations as a rational choice process has helped in informing decisions in choosing partners. Rational choice theory has been used to explain how state actors make decisions in choosing partners. Rational choice theory suggests that a nation state is a rational actor.<sup>38</sup> State actors act rationally to pursue their interest and increase power. In choosing partners, state actors act rationally to choose those nations that will help them maximize their interest. In international relations, rational choice theory is based on the realist approach which suggests that nation-states are the principal actors in the international system.<sup>39</sup> The approach assumes that states are rational because their interest is to maximize utility and seek to achieve their interest through the process of rational decision-making. The primary interest of the nation states is power and security. Nation states make decisions that they believe will lead to the best outcomes. The rational choice theory perceives international law as a tool whereby states seek to achieve their interests. The decision made in choosing the nation to partner with depends on the expected outcomes that result from the alternative actions.<sup>40</sup>

According to the rational choice theory, nation states choose partners by performing an analysis to determine nation states that help them achieve their goals. The first step in selecting a partner is to determine a nation's interests and their political ideologies. Each nation has specific preferences ordering. In choosing partners, nation states rank their preferences in a rational way.<sup>41</sup> The next step is to form an expectation about the behaviors of the actors in international relations. When they are uncertain due to lack of complete information they base their choices on

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<sup>38</sup>Boudon, 2009 p.179.

<sup>39</sup>Mearsheimer, J. J. (2009). Reckless states and realism. *International Relations*, 23(2), 241-256.

<sup>40</sup>Hodgson, 2012 p. 96.

<sup>41</sup>Boudon, 2009 p.179.

their beliefs. In the analysis, the nation actors identify the cost and benefits of partnering with each nation. State actors choose the best alternative to maximize utility. They choose partners who have the potential to bring the best outcomes and have converging political view points. Nation states interact with each other if the benefits expected outweigh the expected cost from the interaction.<sup>42</sup> Thus, state actors choose a nation that they believe will help them maximize their utility and hold similar political ideologies. By acting rationally, state actors negotiate based on their preferences to relate with nations that provide the best outcomes at the lowest cost. Therefore, the rational choice theory will be used to show how actors and states consider electoral politics before choosing on whether to continue or enter into any diplomatic relations. This will be vital in informing how South African political regimes impacts on the country's international relations.

### **1.10 Methodology of the Research**

This is a qualitative study that will involve a systematic review of information from scholarly sources.<sup>43</sup> The study will review scholarly sources that will be obtained from the University of Nairobi library and also from libraries of other educational institution around Nairobi. It will also draw from online platforms such as journals, the South Africa government's internet websites and also news websites. The inclusion criteria for the sources will be the following: articles should be relevant to discussions on issues of electoral politics political systems, the source should be scholarly, or a government publication and the source should be presenting an expert opinion. The research procedure will therefore encompass the following steps: collection of the sources; selection of the research material using the criteria provided; categorization of the sources depending on the topic; reviewing and summarizing each individual article; comparison of the summaries; presentation and discussion of the results.<sup>44</sup> The summarized data will then be critically analyzed at and compared with the existing information to authenticate it.

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<sup>42</sup>Hodgson, 2012 p. 97-99.

<sup>43</sup>Boland, A., Cherry, M. G., & Dickson, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Doing a systematic review: A student's guide*. Sage.

<sup>44</sup>Boland, Cherry & Dickson (2013) p.46.

## **1.11 Chapter Outline**

The entire study will be organized around five chapters.

Chapter one will be this proposal. It comprises of the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, the objectives of the study, hypotheses, research questions, justification, literature review, theoretical framework, the methodology of the study and the chapter outline.

Chapter two will examine literature on political systems and electoral politics and how they shape the international relations of a country.

Chapter three will take a case study of South Africa and examine how the country's post-apartheid electoral politics has impacted on her international relations. .

Chapter four will provide a critical analysis on the extent to which electoral politics in South Africa have affected the country's international relations.

Chapter 5 will provide a summary of the discussions and then give concluding remarks and recommendations.

## **2.0 Chapter 2: Literature Review on the Effect of Electoral Politics on International Relations**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Electoral politics have proved to have an impact on the international relations that a country establishes. Political systems affect the international relations through decision making processes that grow out of the international relations policies that a country establishes.<sup>45</sup> A country's politics and her international relations are about the world. International relations include all the interactions of individual states with others and it is characterized by interactions between two or more states. It is a complex system which is affected by the political systems. Various political factors affect the dynamics of the international relations directly and significantly. In the current globalized world, the decisions made by one state affect others. A considerable body of research has been conducted in an attempt to understand how political systems affect international relation.<sup>46</sup> A growing literature in international relations argues that the political system of a given state is an important part of the explanation of its international relation policies and its influence on the international affairs. Domestic politics lead a state to choose an international relation policy to establish its relations with other states. The head of the state is involved in designing the international relation policies with the aim of achieving international agenda. Additionally, Political leaders control electoral politics of the country as they serve as opinion shapers when it comes to political matters. The voters who are the members of public also play a critical role on electoral politics. They determine the type of leaders who will hold office after elections. The voters act rationally by electing only those leaders who will push for international relations and policies that will favor them. Those leaders who do not support or fail to push for such international relation ideas which are supported by the voters are voted out. As such, the political leaders at both local and national levels work hard to ensure that those international relations and policies favoring the voters and themselves are implemented.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, through the voters and political leaders electoral politics always have an impact on the matters of international relations. This chapter will therefore offer a literature review on how electoral politics affects international relations broadly. This will be achieved by reviewing information on

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<sup>45</sup>Barbara, Farnham. "Impact of the Political Context on Foreign Policy Decision-Making." *Political Psychology* 25, no. 3 (2004): 441.

<sup>46</sup>Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and Alastair Smith. "Domestic explanations of international relations." 168.

<sup>47</sup>Smith, A. (1996). Diversionary foreign policy in democratic systems. *International Studies Quarterly*, 40(1), 133-153.

how electoral politics have affected international relations in the following countries: United States, China, Britain and Kenya.

## **2.2 Effects of Electoral Politics on International Relations**

Electoral politics have an immense impact on international relations that a country establishes. International relations are products of electoral politics which are determined by elected leaders. The elected leaders only act rationally when deciding on these international relation policies because they favor those that increase their chances of being elected. This means that if a political leader finds that a given political policy will curtail his political ambitions by not being elected they will not support it and they will do all what they have to block any chances of that policy being passed and implemented. International relation policies are therefore determined by political leaders and as such they only serve to fulfill their interests. Therefore political leaders act deliberately to enact international relation policies which increase their chance of being elected.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, voters determine the international relation policy of a country. The voters only support those political leaders who are ready to implement those international relation policies that they want. If the voters feel that a particular leader will not influence the international relation policies they are in support of they are voted out. As such voters do not only engage in the electoral process due to economic reasons alone but also to determine the international relation policy.<sup>49</sup> For fear of voted out, the incumbent leaders as well as the aspiring ones will try to align themselves with those international relation policies that the voters support so that they can be elected or reelected. Therefore, both the voters and political leaders have an impact on the international relation policies either directly or indirectly. Both the voters and political leaders are important parts of electoral politics. As such these two parties can be used to discuss how electoral politics have impact on international relation relations. This phenomenon is common in democratic nations because voters have powers to remove those governments that they feel are unsatisfactory.<sup>50</sup> The domestic politics therefore have a greater impact on the international relation policies of a country. This means that electoral politics provides incentives for the government to come up with suboptimal international relation policies. The prospects of

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<sup>48</sup>Smith, (1996) p.134-153.

<sup>49</sup>Kesgin, B., &Kaarbo, J. (2010).When and how parliaments influence foreign policy: The case of Turkey's Iraq decision. *International Studies Perspectives*, 11(1), 19-36.

<sup>50</sup>Dunleavy, P. (2014). *Democracy, bureaucracy and public choice: Economic approaches in political science*. Routledge.



future elections serve as an important shaper of the international relation policy to be enacted. This is because they can force a government to use international relation policy to gain political millage rather than to benefit a nation.

Further, the outcomes of electoral politics have a major impact of the international relation relations that a country will have. For one, the outcome determines who will become the president as well as the members of parliament or the senate. These elected leaders influence international relations policy because they have the privilege of appointing people to serve in critical positions in the judiciary, executive and the legislative branches.<sup>51</sup> These appointed executive only serve to please their masters who gave them the positions that they hold. Those appointed to deal with international relation policy will make sure that those policies that serve the interests of the elected leaders are given a priority. Secondly, the political parties are affected by outcomes of the electoral politics.<sup>52</sup> The results of the electoral politics are that there is the winning party which becomes the ruling party while the losing party becomes the opposition. These parties have their interests in international relation policies and as such they try as much as possible to make sure that the international relation policies of their interests are adopted. This is an apparent indication that electoral politics have impact on international relation policy.

### **2.3 Electoral Politics and the case of Chinese' International Relations**

China is a socialist republic, which is governed through the following organs: Central People's Government, the provincial governments and the local governments.<sup>53</sup> The People's Republic of China's constitution of the country recognizes the leadership roles of the Communist Party. This system of the government thus considers leadership to be a shared phenomenon. Voters are also recognized by the constitution as they are mandated to elect the People's Congress Members. Elections in china occur through a hierarchal system.<sup>54</sup> Under this system, the voters are only allowed to directly elect the local People's Congress. The higher levels of the People's Congress which are above the local People's Congress and the national legislature are elected indirectly by

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<sup>51</sup>Rosati, J. A., & Scott, J. M. (2013). *The Politics of United States Foreign Policy*. Cengage Learning.

<sup>52</sup>Rosati & Scott, (2013 p. 365.

<sup>53</sup>Hussain, Z. Z. (2012). The effect of domestic politics on foreign policy decision making. Retrieved from <http://www.e-ir.info/2011/02/07/the-effect-of-domestic-politics-on-foreign-policy-decision-making/>

<sup>54</sup>Jakobson, L., & Manuel, R. (2016). How are foreign policy decisions made in China?. *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies*, 3(1), 98-107.

the People's congress level which is immediately below. This shows that the voters mandate only ends at local levels. The president of China is appointed by the National People's Congress and is termed as the head of the State. Further, The National People's Congress is accorded the highest level of authority of state power in the country and reviews both domestic and international relation policy matters whenever it meets twice a week.<sup>55</sup> There is also the State Council which have role in designing the international relation policies.

The post of the president in China is considered to be ceremonial. However, it has some influence on the international relation policy that the country adheres to. The president of China is also the Communist Party's Secretary General and as such he has the powers of establishing international relation policies as well as providing directions when it comes to matters of international relation policy.<sup>56</sup> The presidential position in china is a political post whereby the National people's Congress (NPC) elects the president. The NPC is the highest state body in china which is as a result of the series of the representative elections.<sup>57</sup> The Chinese president is therefore part of the country's electoral politics. When he uses his position as the Sectary General of the China Communist party to influence international relation policy then it means that politics influences international relation policy in china. In the current China, for example, President Xi Jinping has the ultimate powers of deciding on the international relation affairs of the country.<sup>58</sup> As the Secretary General President Jinping is the chair of the Leading Small Groups (LSGs) whose major responsibility is to oversee big policy changes, that are most influential such as that of the international relation affairs. He has more formal powers on international relation relations matters than his predecessors, Hu Jintalo and Jiang Zemin. Additionally, the president in China also seems to have taken a strong personal interest on the issues of international relation policy.<sup>59</sup> The combination of these two factors has made Jinping to be a sore coordinator and a critical figure of international relation affairs in china.

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<sup>55</sup>Yang, Q., & Tang, W. (2010). Exploring the sources of institutional trust in China: Culture, mobilization, or performance?. *Asian Politics & Policy*, 2(3), 415-436.

<sup>56</sup>Hussain, (2012).

<sup>57</sup>Martin, M. F. (2010, April). Understanding China's political system. Library of Congress Washington Dc Congressional Research Service.

<sup>58</sup>Lai, H., & Kang, S. J. (2014). Domestic bureaucratic politics and Chinese foreign policy. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 23(86), 294-313.

<sup>59</sup>Jakobson, & Manuel, (2016) p. 102.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs can also be used to illustrate how electoral politics in China influences diplomatic relations in China. China has a well formed Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is one of the important entities in China because it determines the diplomatic relations that the country will establish.<sup>60</sup> This ministry remains under the State Council and is recognized as an executive agency of the Chinese government. The State Council is an equivalent of a government's cabinet: it is mandated with the day to day running of the country. The head of the State Council is the state premier who is an equivalent of a prime minister. The State Council is also a political institution because the members are elected by the political leaders. The head of this vital ministry is a foreign affairs minister who is first nominated by the Premier of the State Council and then affirmed by the National People's Congress. Both the Premier and the National People's Congress are political institutions in China. In general the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is mandated with the responsibility of establishing diplomatic relation between the People's Republic of China and other nations across the globe. This occurs through the following main duties: international relation policies decision making; formulation of international relation policies and preparation of the international relation affairs statements and documents.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, this ministry is responsible for making any negotiations and signing of both multilateral and bilateral agreements as well as treaties on the behalf of the Chinese government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China also serves as governmental representative in the international organizations meetings such as those of the United Nations and also in inter-governmental meetings.<sup>62</sup> Importantly, despite having all these responsibilities the ministry of Foreign affairs remains subordinate and subject to the Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group of the Communist Party of China (FALSG).<sup>63</sup> This body has an upper hand on the policy making. The FALSG is a therefore an oversight and consultation body on matters of the international relation that serves the interests of Communists Party of China. The Communists Party of China is a think tank of the Chinese government on diplomatic relations issues.<sup>64</sup> This is a clear indication that the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs is not an autonomous body because it is highly influenced by political leaders as well as political institution. The minister himself is nominated

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<sup>60</sup>Hussain, (2012).

<sup>61</sup>Sutter, R. G. (2012). *Chinese foreign relations: Power and policy since the Cold War*. Rowman& Littlefield Publishers.

<sup>62</sup>Lanteigne, M. (2015). *Chinese foreign policy: an introduction*. Routledge.

<sup>63</sup>Jakobson, & Manuel, (2016) p. 104.

<sup>64</sup>Sutter (2012).

and appointed by political institutions including both the Premier and the National People's Congress. This shows that the minister serves to fulfill the interests of the political institutions. The decisions made by the ministry of the Foreign Affairs are further influenced by the FALSG which is a subsidiary of the Communists Party of China, a political institution. This shows that electoral leaders and political institutions influence international relation affairs in a country by either appointing executive officials dealing with the matters or by providing an oversight role.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, the electoral politics in China have both indirect and direct influence in determining the international relation affairs of the country.

Further, the Politburo Standing Committee (PSC), which is also a political institution in China influences the international relation affairs decisions. The Politburo Standing Committee is a standing committee of the Central Political Committee which is one of the major wings of Communist Party of China. The committee is made up of the Communist Party of China top leadership. This committee is involved in conducting international relation policy discussions and making major decisions.<sup>66</sup> The major international relation matters where PSC is greatly involved include discussion of relationships with the following countries: Russia, United States, North Korea and Japan. The PSC is also involved in dealing with international crises such as border problems as well as other international incidences.

Therefore, the diplomatic relations and international relation policies in China are products of electoral politics. The political leaders have a direct or indirect influence on the international relation policy to be instituted in the country. The president, for example, uses his powers as the Secretary General of the ruling party to influence the international relation affairs.<sup>67</sup> Political institutions also have their influence on the international relation policy and diplomatic relations reached. The political institutions which have profound impact on Chinese international relations include the following: Politburo Standing Committee, National People's Congress, Ministry Of the Foreign Affairs, Leading Small Group and the Communist Party of China.<sup>6869</sup> Although the world perceives Chinese international relation policy to be realistic in nature where national

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<sup>65</sup>Rosati & Scott, (2013 p. 365-366).

<sup>66</sup>Miller, A. (2011). The Politburo Standing Committee under Hu Jintao. *China Leadership Monitor*, 35, 1-9.

<sup>67</sup>Miller, A. (2014). How Strong is Xi Jinping?. *China Leadership Monitor*, 43, 1-2.

<sup>68</sup>Hussain, (2012).

<sup>69</sup>Jakobson, & Manuel, (2016).

interest comes before the benefits of international society it is not defiant of electoral politics influence. The domestic politics play a major role in influencing the conservative Chinese governmental systems on matters of international relations.

#### **2.4 Electoral Politics and International Relations: The Case of the United States**

The U.S. is the second largest democracy on the globe after India and the most powerful nation militarily, economically and politically.<sup>70</sup> Political power can construct political geography differentiating conflicts among states that are not likely from those that are possible. The challenge facing the U.S. is how to use political power to create a favorable international environment based on its values and interests.<sup>71</sup> Today, U.S. is the only true global power with a unique position in the world. American political power allows it to pursue its interest while relating with other nations. Power politics and international relations are closely linked together. Power politics occur when the most powerful nations compete with each other to influence international politics. Power relationship among nations is a significant factor in explaining the behavior of state in interacting with others.<sup>72</sup>

The U.S. political system is unlike others in the world in many important aspects. U.S. Constitution is very different from those of other nations. Two documents describe American political system: declaration of independence and constitution of 1776 and 1789 respectively. The Constitution provides the structure the U.S. government whereas the declaration of independence describes U.S. as a political entity that is not dependent on any nation. The constitution of U.S. provides an initial allocation of the international relations laws. It offers the congress the majority of international relations laws decision making authority.<sup>73</sup> From a historical perspective, the US political system as described by the constitution was highly influenced by the check and balances in the government. The constitutional design of the international relation powers reflected the balance of competing for functional and institutional factors. The major weakness of the American political system is that it complicates the structure

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<sup>70</sup>Zand, Hussein. (2012). The effect of domestic politics on foreign policy decision making.

<sup>71</sup>Bruce, Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith.(2012). Domestic explanations of international relations.*Annual Review of Political Science* 15: 163.

<sup>72</sup>Armijo, Elliott, and Sybil Rhodes. (2015). Can International Relations and Comparative Politics Be Policy Relevant? Theory and Methods for Incorporating Political Context."*Politics & Policy* 43(5): 619.

<sup>73</sup>Lawrence, Jacobs, and Benjamin. (2005). Who influences US foreign policy?" *American Political Science Review* 99 (1) 109.

of the government and makes it legalistic which is a disadvantage in relating with other nations. The benefit of US political system is that it is counter-balanced and the power is spread. The separation of powers provides a system of checks and balances that prevent any group or individual from gaining too much control. The balance of power in US political system influences international relations in that it ensure that the US avoid war and achieve stability when relating with other nations<sup>74</sup>.

The notion that political factors within states must be examined to understand the interactions between states has been emphasized by many researchers<sup>75</sup>. Over the past two decades, studies that have investigated the link between domestic politics and international relations have been translated into enlightening and extensive research<sup>76</sup>. Political systems in U.S have a great role in the explanation of the international relations because they affect international relation policy choices. The U.S. has established diplomatic relations with other nations and its political system plays a crucial role in the development of international relation policies needed to guide international relation.<sup>77</sup>

The type of political system determines how a state relates with other nations. The political system refers to formal legal institutions that describe a government or a nation.<sup>78</sup> In the US special interest groups have the power to influence international relation policy due to the permeable nature of American political system. Nations that seek alliance with U.S. do so to pursue their national interests. The U.S. political system can be described as representative democracy and constitutional republic where the majority rule is tempered by the rights of the minorities which are protected by the constitution. A system known as check and balances defined by the constitution, regulates the U.S. government. In making international relation policy, the U.S. President who is the head of the government must involve at least two third of the Senate. However in some circumstances, the constitution provides the head of the

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<sup>74</sup>Abebe, Daniel. (2009). Great Power Politics and the Structure of Foreign Relations Law. University of Chicago Public Law & Legal Theory. Working Paper, No. 256.

<sup>75</sup>Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and Alastair Smith. (2012). Domestic explanations of international relations." *Annual Review of Political Science* 15: 168.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid<sup>6</sup>

<sup>77</sup>Jan, Melissen. (2005). The new public diplomacy: Between theory and practice." In *The new public diplomacy*, Palgrave Macmillan UK.

<sup>78</sup>Zand, Hussein. (2012). The effect of domestic politics on foreign policy decision making.

government in the U.S. with the power to enter into agreement with international relation nations through executive agreement without the approval of the Senate, but these treaties do not exist for long. Thus, although the US president has significant control over the international relation policies, he must rely on the Senate consensus.<sup>79</sup>

The U.S. political system is a democracy that includes a free press, free speech, stable political parties and constraints on the ability of the executives to manipulate electoral competition.<sup>80</sup> The domestic politics play a pivotal role in shaping government actions in international relation affairs of the state. The international decisions taken by a state depends on the domestic politics in the United States.<sup>81</sup> This is in line with Armijo and Sybil who argues that the political system of a country determines the scope and power of the head of state in making international relation policy decisions. In any political system, leaders are motivated by two goals: maintaining policy coalition and retaining political power. The political system can also influence the head of the government because of the need to achieve political goals through international relations.<sup>82</sup> This is witnessed in United States when the president makes international relations decisions so as to fulfill his political promises.

Studies have reported that nations with democratic political system do not engage in wars. The observation has led to development of a normative explanation. The US is a democratic government, and thus it is accustomed to the politics that undermine its international relations. It carries this behavior into its international affairs with other democratic governments. However, the normative account suggests that when the US is confronting a state that is not democratic, it adopts rival's norms to protect its nation.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, the electoral politics in the United States determines on the countries to engage in war with and those to help incase a war arises.

Further, in a democratic political system, the decision on whether to intervene in international relation affairs is based on the head of the government belief about the impact of other state's

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<sup>79</sup>Lawrence, Jacobs, and Benjamin. Who influences US foreign policy, 113.

<sup>80</sup>Bruce, Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith. Domestic explanations of international relations, 166.

<sup>81</sup> Fredrik, Doerer. (2010). International Constraints, Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in Small States: The Fall of the Danish 'Footnote Policy'." In *SGIR 7th Pan-European IR Conference, Stockholm*, 10.

<sup>82</sup>Armijo, Elliott, and Sybil Rhodes. Can International Relations and Comparative Politics Be Policy Relevant? 628.

<sup>83</sup>Zand, Hussein. (2012). The effect of domestic politics on foreign policy decision making.

policies on U.S. political system. US tends to avoid international affairs with states that have unacceptable international relation policies. Democratic systems intervene in international affairs to gain policy advantages. As a Democratic country, U.S. is likely to endure the cost incurred during post-intervention because the success in international relations depends on the improvement of international relation policies.<sup>84</sup>

The unipolar international relation system adopted by the United States is highly influenced by the political leaders. The U.S. has a greater capacity to expand its international relation policy because it has a unipolar international relation system.<sup>85</sup> The motivation behind its international relation policy is a democratic peace which is an observation that democratic nations rarely fight with each other. From a strategic perspective, the U.S. status as a unipolar superpower remains strong and in most cases it is determined by the political leaders. U.S. international relations system is unipolar which means that the system has only one great power.<sup>86</sup> In a unipolar system, the superpower should address all the international issues. The polarity of the international relation system refers to the arrangement of power and how the power is balanced between the states. The Polarity concept implies that within a certain relationship, one or several states are important and their leaving or entering changes the structure of the international system. The US-led unipolar system as influenced by electoral politics has affected its behaviors and international outcomes. Although a unipolar system creates less opportunity for the rivalry, it is more peaceful as compared to the multipolar system because the dominating position of a single power provides more stability, security, and peace at the global level. However, US international system is moving away from unipolar system towards the multipolar system. The reversal of unilateral international relation policy towards multilateral approach has been influenced by political led but has led to improved ties between the US and its traditional allies.<sup>87</sup>

## **2.5 Electoral Politics and the United Kingdom's International Relations**

The United Kingdom's international relation affairs are largely affected by political matters, though it operates as a monarch. Electoral politics have an indirect role in influencing

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<sup>84</sup>Daniel, Abebe. (2009). Great Power Politics and the Structure of Foreign Relations Law." *Chi. J. Int'l L.* 10: 125

<sup>85</sup>Andrea, Varisco. (2013). Towards a Multi-Polar International System: Which Prospects for Global Peace?" *E-International Relations Students* 3.

<sup>86</sup>Abebe, Daniel (2009) p. 256.

<sup>87</sup>Zand, Hussein, (2012).



international relation policy in U.K., by impacting on the Prime Minister's office. The Prime Minister's position in the United Kingdom is reserved for the queen or the King to make an appointment.<sup>88</sup> Therefore, the position of the Prime Minister is not part of the electoral process. However, the electoral politics have an impact on this position. The Queen or the King of the Monarch appoints the prime minister from a leader of political party that is deemed to be the most popular.<sup>89</sup> This means that the prime minister has to have a great deal of political affiliations. He therefore must adhere to the ideals of the political party that he or she leads. When these leaders are appointed as the Prime Ministers the political ideals of their party's guides and influences their actions. The Prime Ministers also understands well that they must represent the view of the voters who elect the members of the House of the Commons of their parties. If they fail to do so the popularity of their parties will be lost as they lose significant number of votes that can make the Prime Minister to resign because he will not have enough political backing. This was evident when Tony Blair lost his popularity as a prime minister in 2007.<sup>90</sup>

In the United Kingdom, most prime ministers have had influential role in matters regarding diplomatic relations. Constitutionally, the Secretary of State for the Foreign Affairs in the U.K has the mandate over the international relation policy which is implemented directly by the collaboration of both the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and British mission and embassies abroad.<sup>91</sup> Although the Foreign Affairs secretaries or ministers are given the mandate of dealing with the diplomatic relation matters, some of the prime ministers have overshadowed them in controlling the issue. The prime ministers including Eden, Churchill and Macmillan have at some point expressed a dominating role on matters regarding international relation policy. Other Prime Ministers in the United Kingdom have also been influential on matters of international relations either directly or indirectly. From the United Kingdom's perspective, which is a monarch it is inevitable for a minister to be segregated from the matters of international relations. The Prime Minister represents the U.K government in international relation forums and therefore they establish relationships with other leaders. These relationships

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<sup>88</sup>Heffernan, R. (2005). Exploring (and explaining) the British prime minister. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 7(4), 605-620.

<sup>89</sup>Heffernan, (2005) p. 606-610.

<sup>90</sup>Leach, R., Coxall, B., & Robins, L. (2011). *British politics*. Palgrave Macmillan, p. 2467.

<sup>91</sup>Leach, Coxall& Robins, (2011), p. 426.

are vital in shaping of both informal and formal alliances, treaties and agreements. Conflicts have been witnessed in the U.K between the office of the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The FCO is a department of U.K that is tasked with the promotion of the monarch's interests overseas: it is headed by a minister. In her term, the Prime Minister, Margret Thatcher engaged in antagonistic battles with the officials and diplomats in the Foreign Affairs office due to ideological differences. Thatcher supported the Atlanticist international relation policy while FCO supported Europeanism.<sup>92</sup> Likewise, Tony Blair, a former U.K's Prime Minister was in tussles with the international relation for the informal relations he had established with George W. Bush. His political popularity and that of Labor Party even declined in 2005 by planning to engage in Iraq war without consulting the voters who are members of General public. This forced his subsequent resignation in the year 2007.<sup>93</sup> This is a clear indication of how electoral politics influences international relations matters. If at all Blair did not go against his party and political supporters he could not have lost support as prime minister, a position which is not voted in through the electorate. Therefore, the political affiliations of these U.K's Prime Ministers have had an impact on their perspective of international relations affairs. The voters shape the decisions that are made by Prime Ministers on international relation matters. Though their positions are not elective the prime ministers understand that they must please the voters who support their political parties when making international relation policy and affairs decisions. Otherwise their powers will be weakened if these voters quit as parties that made them to be popular so as to get the position of a Prime minister.

In the United Kingdom, the electoral politics influences international relation relations decisions through referendums. A referendum in the UK is recognized as a vote that is meant to provide decisions on a single issue.<sup>94</sup> The single issue can be a matter of the international relations. In this case the voters can have a chance to determine the diplomatic ties that the country will establish. Political leaders have a major role during referendum because they influence the voters on whether to vote in support of a given issue or they should vote otherwise. Political parties take sides during referendums. An example of a referendum that was recently held in U.K. is the

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<sup>92</sup>Leach, Coxall & Robins, (2011), p. 427.

<sup>93</sup>McAnulla, S. (2011). Post-political poisons? Evaluating the 'toxic' dimensions of Tony Blair's leadership. *Representation*, 47(3), 251-263.

<sup>94</sup>Gov.UK. (2017). Types of election, referendums, and who can vote. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/elections-in-the-uk/referendums>

European Union (EU) referendum. This referendum targeted the determination of whether U.K. should remain as a member of EU or should it exit. This referendum is perfect illustration of how electoral politics play a role in international relation matters. The referendum was managed by The Electoral Commission of U.K. The major parties in U.K. were also involved in convincing the voters to take a given stance. The Conservative Party campaigned against leaving the EU while the Labor party campaigns supported the decisions to leave the EU.<sup>95</sup> When the results were out, the majority supported exit from EU compelling the then prime minister, David Cameron who was the leader of Conservative party to quit his leadership positions.<sup>96</sup> This was one of the major international relation decisions to have been made through a political electoral process despite the powers of determining international relations affairs diplomacy being vested on the CFO. Therefore, in the United Kingdom electoral politics can influence international relation affairs through referendums. The political leaders also get an opportunity to influence the international relation by taking a stance on these referendums.

## **2.6 Electoral Politics and Kenya's International Relations**

Kenya is an East African country, which adopted a republic system of government when it attained independence in 1963. Within the republic system the country also portrays some forms of democracy.<sup>97</sup> Kenya has had a long way in the transformation of its political systems. The transformation started after the attainment of independence where the country adopted one party state in 1963 and then went on to adopt a multiparty state in 1992 which brought a form of parliamentary democracy.<sup>98</sup> Since 2002, Kenya took a new shape where she started adopting major strides towards democracy. In 2010, a new constitution was promulgated which brought many democratic changes and reforms in Kenya. The changes to the political systems were driven by different presidents and opposition leaders. Since independence Kenya has been ruled by the following presidents: Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel ArapMoi, MwaiKibaki and UhuruKenyatta.

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<sup>95</sup>BBC. (June 22, 2016).EU vote: Where the cabinet and other MPs stand. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-35616946>

<sup>96</sup>Heather, S., Rowena, M. and Rajeev, S. (June 24, 2016). David Cameron resigns after UK votes to leave European Union. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/24/david-cameron-resigns-after-uk-votes-to-leave-european-union>

<sup>97</sup> Embassy of the Republic of Kenya.(2017). Government and political System. Retrieved from <https://www.kenyaembassyaddis.org/about-kenya/government-and-political-system/>

<sup>98</sup> Maberu, F. (2016).Kenya's foreign policy in context (1963–2015). *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 23(3), 365-384.

These presidents adopted different political systems that have had an impact on the diplomatic relations that Kenya has had. During President Moi era Kenya became a *De Jure* one-party state where the presidency and central government had absolute powers.<sup>99</sup> The international relation policy was largely unilateral as the president was involved directly in all matters involving international relations. President Kibaki, on the other hand, instituted some democratic reforms in the country that even affected the international relation policy. The Kibaki era adopted bilateral as well as multilateral international relation policies.<sup>100</sup> President Kenyatta, who is the fourth president, adopted totally different international relation strategies from his predecessors. He adopted a liberal approach where Kenya remains open to establish diplomatic relations with any country that has converging interests.<sup>101</sup> Kenya, therefore, has had close ties with various international relation countries in different regions of the world. However, each of the Kenya's presidents since independence adopted different political systems that had an impact on the country's international relation relations. The first president, Jomo Kenyatta, adopted a unitary state system; the second president, Daniel Moi, embraced one party state that was later changed to a multi-party state contrarily to his wishes.<sup>102</sup> Both President MwaiKibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta adopted a democratic system. During President Jomo Kenyatta and Moi era the country's diplomatic states were skewed to the Western countries while president Kibaki and Uhuru's era the international relation shifted to Asian countries while maintaining positive relations with the West.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, it is quite clear that each of the presidents in Kenya applied a differed international relations strategy. The presidential office is an elective post and as such the presidents only seek to fulfill their political agenda by embracing different international relation strategies. Additionally, the Senators and Members of parliament, who are products of the electorate, influence the international relation policies through their law making roles and authorities.

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<sup>99</sup> Widner, Jennifer A. (1992). *The Rise of a Party-State in Kenya: From "Harambee!" to "Nyayo!"*. Berkeley: University of California.

<sup>100</sup>Mabera (2016).

<sup>101</sup>Edwin, Okoth. (n.d). Kenya: We Don't Look West or East, President Kenyatta Says. Daily Nation. Retrieved from <http://allafrica.com/stories/201507281426.html>

<sup>102</sup>Nzau, M. (2010). On Political Leadership and Development in Africa: A Case Study of Kenya. *Kenya Studies Review*, 3(3).

<sup>103</sup>Mabera (2016)

## **2.6 Conclusion**

It is apparent that electoral politics have a profound influence on international relations. The scope of the states in making decision concerning international relations is defined by the political system of the country. United States, which is one of the largest democracies globally, uses its outstanding political power to enter into international relation based on its values and interests. China, on the other hand, a socialist republic uses its political leadership system based on the local and national government to determine the international relations. Although in China major decisions concerning the international relations are made by various political offices in the national government, all these systems have roots in the local political institutions where the voters have the direct mandate of electing their leaders. In the United Kingdom, a monarch, the electoral politics have indirect impact on the international relations. However, the offices of Prime Minister, the House of Commons as well as the Secretary of State for the Foreign Affairs office are politically influenced when making decisions on international relations. Lastly, Kenya, an East African country, which is republic system of government and also embraces some form of democracy, can also be used to illustrate how electoral politics influences matters of international relations. Political leaders in Kenya including the president, members of Parliament and the members of Senate have greater influence on the matters of international relation. From this literature review it is evident that electoral politics have impact on matters of international relations.

### **3.0 CHAPTER THREE: DISCUSSION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE POST-APARTHEID ERA**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

When the new South Africa was born in 1994 the citizens, especially the black majority, were full of jubilation. This is because they were unchained from the vices of human rights abuses that were perpetrated by the white minority rule. The challenge for the new South Africa, however, was how to reintegrate a previously isolated country into the international system. This chapter looks at South African Post-Apartheid electoral politics and how it has affected her international relations.

Since its transition from the apartheid system of government to a democratic state, South Africa has had various elections whereby the following presidents got a chance to lead the country: Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma. All of them used the African National Congress (ANC) party as a vehicle to campaign for their election and respective reelection into the office. While in office, each exhibited varying principles and patterns in matters of international relations. This chapter examines these dominating patterns in each of the South Africa president's international engagement.

#### **3.2 Apartheid Electoral Politics in Context**

Although this chapter majorly focuses on South Africa's Post-Apartheid electoral politics and their influence on the country's international relations, it is important to have an overview of what apartheid was all about. Apartheid refers to a racial system of government established in South Africa in the year 1948 and extended up to 1994.<sup>104</sup> Apartheid was introduced by the colonial government's National Party and constituted a violently repressive policy that ensured that the whites who were the minority continued to dominate the country. Although, apartheid policies started taking shape in the year 1948, racial discrimination practices had been deeply rooted in the country's society earlier. As early as 1700s both the British and Dutch settlers established laws that separated native Africans and white settlers. Later on, Africans were restricted to specific areas that were called homelands. The main architect of apartheid in 1948

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<sup>104</sup>Martin, M. (1988). *In the Name of Apartheid*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.

was D.F. Malan, a white Prime Minister who led the National Party in South Africa.<sup>105</sup> After he won the seat he instituted laws that ensured that South Africa remained a segregated society.

Therefore, apartheid was a legal practice, though discriminatory in South Africa. It started with the 1949 Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act where marriage between non-Europeans and Europeans was outlawed. Additionally, in 1950 the Population Registration Act was passed which grouped South Africans by race and were required to carry identification cards and later reference books. Besides, the Group Area Act was also instituted in the 1950s which established racially segregated neighborhoods and citizens were only allowed to live in designated areas.<sup>106</sup> Later on the minority government instituted laws that required people of different races to use different public transport systems as well as restaurants. Further, the blacks and the colored people living in South Africa were also stripped off their voting rights legally and as such they had no representative in the minority government.<sup>107</sup> All in all the apartheid policies favored the white minority and majorly affected and marginalized the blacks who were the Africans.

This form of discrimination went on until 1994 when it was officially terminated. There were various movements that were vital in pushing for the end of apartheid in South Africa, which included the ANC, Pan African Congress (PAC) and South African Student's Association (SASO). The apartheid period was therefore politically influenced by the white government and during all this period the South African international relations was at stake. The United Nations met several times during the apartheid period to impose sanctions on South Africa so as to bring the practice to an end. However these sanctions did not materialize because major powers such as the USA and France did not support them. These major powers were keen on maintaining good relations with South Africa because they relied on her for supply of major commodities such as gold although they did not support the practice<sup>108</sup>. The African nations did not also support the apartheid and as such most of them withdrew their relationship with South Africa. The Organization of African Union (OAU) imposed economic sanctions as well as diplomatic

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<sup>105</sup>Evans, M. K. (2016). Apartheid (1948-1994). Retrieved from <http://www.blackpast.org/gah/apartheid-1948-1994>

<sup>106</sup>Evans,(2016).

<sup>107</sup>Mokgethi, M. (1988). *Challenge to Apartheid: Toward a Moral National Resistance*. Grand Rapids: William B. Erdmann's Publishing Company.

<sup>108</sup>de St. Jorre, John. (1977). "South Africa: Up Against the World". *Foreign Policy*. Washington Post Newsweek Interactive (28): 53–85

isolation during this time of apartheid.<sup>109</sup>To continue with apartheid South Africa also had to withdraw its membership as a commonwealth country.<sup>110</sup> Therefore, the Apartheid had a dent on the South African international relations. The end of apartheid in 1994 therefore marked the start of the post-apartheid era.

### **3.3 Post Apartheid Electoral Politics and South Africa's International Relations**

The year 1994 marked an important period for the electoral politics and international relations in South Africa. This is because 1994 was the year in which the country transitioned from the apartheid systems to majority rule. The first democratic elections were held in 1994 that saw ANC clinch the power of leading the country. In the subsequent elections of 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014 the ANC retained power. The presidents who came into power in all these years include Nelson Mandela (1994 to 1999), Thabo Mbeki (1999 to 2008) and Jacob Zuma (2008 to Present).

#### **3.31 Nelson Mandela's Presidency**

The Nelson Mandela presidency only lasted for five years from 1994 to 1999. He was deputized by Thabo Mbeki and F.W. de Klerk and a cabinet that comprised 21 members (12 representatives from ANC, 6 representatives from the National Party and three from Inkatha Freedom Party were formed. Under Mandela's rule the government majorly focused on Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) so as to address the socio-economic consequences that came up as a result of apartheid.<sup>111</sup> The program aimed at alleviating poverty and making social services available to all the people. To achieve the aim of this program, Nelson Mandela was aware that he needed strong international cooperation. A new constitution also replaced an interim constitution that aimed at ending apartheid.<sup>112</sup> During the Mandela's presidential term a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established so that the crimes committed during the apartheid era could be exposed. The president, Nelson Mandela, worked closely with international investors, who then pressured him to introduce the Growth,

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<sup>109</sup>Pfister, Roger (2005). *Apartheid South Africa and African States: From Pariah to Middle Power, 1962–1994*. I.B.Tauris.

<sup>110</sup>South African History Online. (2017). South Africa's Foreign Relations during Apartheid, 1948. Retrieved from <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/south-africas-foreign-relations-during-apartheid-1948>

<sup>111</sup>Habib, A. (2013). *South Africa's suspended revolution - Hopes and prospects*. Wits University Press.

<sup>112</sup>Kesselring, R. (2017). *Bodies of Truth: law, memory and emancipation in post-apartheid South Africa*. Stanford University Press.



Employment and Redistribution strategy. Additionally, the international sports bodies started recognizing South Africa during the Mandela's era: this was witnessed 1995 when rugby world cup was held in South Africa.

On matters of international relations, Mandela was strategic enough before the 1994 elections were held. Shortly, before the 1994 elections he published an article that touched on international affairs issues. Nelson Mandela claimed that the document was not an individual perspective but that he compiled it as the party leader of ANC and that the contents were supported by the ANC members working group of which Thabo Mbeki played a vital role. Therefore, former President Nelson Mandela had a prior outline of international policy principles that were to guide South Africa under the leadership of ANC. The international policy principles were based on the following pillars.<sup>113</sup> First, Human rights issues remain central and important to international relations and that they transcend the political boundaries to embrace social, environmental and economic aspects of life. The second pillar is that promotion of democracy worldwide is the foundation of just and lasting solution to humankind problems. The third pillar is that any relations between nations should be guided by principles of international law and justice. The fourth pillar for international relations as outlined by Nelson Mandela is that all nations should strive towards achieving peace and if there is a breakdown of the peace internationally agreed and non-violent means should be pursued. Fifthly, the South African international relations policy should reflect the interests of the entire African continent. The last principle was that economic development call for both international and regional cooperation in this interdependent world. The main aim of these principles for international relations as outlined by Nelson Mandela was to create prosperous and peaceful conditions for the country when interacting with other actors within the international systems. All these international relation principles were clearly outlined in a 1994 document titled "Foreign Policy Perspectives in a Democratic South Africa".<sup>114</sup> Therefore, in the establishment of the international relations policy Mandela was sensitive of the tectonic shifts in the world order that were brought up by the end of the cold war and the collapse of the bipolar world and the need for the internal transformation. Therefore, his outlined principles engaged effectively with the globalizing world.

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<sup>113</sup> Mandela, N. (1993). South Africa's Future Foreign Policy. *Foreign Affairs*, 72(5), 86-97. doi:10.2307/20045816

<sup>114</sup>Le Pere, G. (2004). South Africa's Foreign Policy in a Globalising World An Overview: 1994-2002. *A review prepared for the Policy and Advisory Services in the Presidency as part of a*, 10.

The human rights agenda featured prominently in South Africa's international relations during the Mandela era. Mandela was therefore keen to ensure that human rights guided all aspect of South African interaction with other nations.<sup>115</sup> His agenda on international relations went beyond South Africa to cover the entire African continent. This is because he emphasized that Africa needed to accept the principles of accountability, tolerance and good governance. Additionally in his international relations agenda Nelson Mandela wanted to bridge the economic gap between the poor under developed south and the wealthy industrialized north.<sup>116</sup> He was keen to ensure that South Africa took an active role in bridging this divide. Further, Mandela's international relations plans also recognized the role of United Nations in bringing a new world order. This made South Africa to return to United Nations and be a member after the apartheid period. Mandela wanted the UN to help South Africa in cooperating with other nations globally and addressing the global problems. However, he was skeptical that without restructuring the UN could not be able to effectively address the balance of power in the post-Cold War world. President Mandela was specific on the UN Security Council restructuring as it was dominated by few powers and as such it was not a representative of humankind diversity. South Africa was also committed to complete disarmament under international control when Mandela was on the throne. In his document "South Africa's Future Foreign Policy", Mandela recognized the role of cooperating with African countries so as to realized future economic development in the country.<sup>117</sup> Mandela was keen on establishing strong and greater cooperation with other African countries in terms of forging trading ties and networks. The document also sought to seek solutions to African problems by consulting and cooperating with various African organizations such as the Eastern and southern African Preferential Trade Area as well as South African development community (SADC).<sup>118</sup> Additionally, Mandela was cognizant of the importance of international economic activities in development of a nation and establishment of international ties. Therefore, in his plans Mandela documented the establishment of African manufacturing

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<sup>115</sup>Youla, C. (2009). *The foreign policies of Mandela and Mbeki: a clear case of idealism vs realism?* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

<sup>116</sup>Barber, J. (2005). The new South Africa's foreign policy: principles and practice. *International Affairs*, 81(5), 1079-1096.

<sup>117</sup>Mandela, N. (1993). South Africa's future foreign policy. *Foreign Affairs*, 86-97.

<sup>118</sup>Youla, 2009.

and service sectors that are competitive. Attraction of foreign investors was therefore part of the international relation policy as it was planned by Nelson Mandela.

Mandela had an interest in South African international relations and therefore he appointed the members to be involved in international affairs carefully. After forming a Government of National Unity that had representatives from different parties he ensured the foreign affairs department was controlled by the ANC members that he trusted. This ensured that the international face of the newly formed government remained in the hands of ANC. He also shielded the ANC stalwarts in the department by ensuring he and Thabo Mbeki (First Deputy president) were directly involved in the matters of international relations of the country. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) was considered to be a prisoner of the apartheid regime as it was structured to favor the atrocities of the time.<sup>119</sup> Therefore, it had to be restructured so that it can reflect the universal perspectives of establishing international relations for South Africa under the ANC leadership. The restructuring majorly involved inclusion of ANC personnel; this was meant in order to advance the party international relations policies rather than the white apartheid policies.

It was expected that when Mandela assumes office as the South African president he will lean to the left in terms of his international relations. This is because during the apartheid period the soviet Union provided diplomatic support, military equipment and training to the ANC military wing that was called Umkhonto we Sizwe.<sup>120</sup> The western states, on the other hand, through their leaders such as Margret Thatcher did not support The ANC armed struggle.<sup>121</sup> The exiled ANC leaders had a strong believe that the world was moving towards adoption of socialism. The apartheid regime, on the other hand, was sustained by military, political and economic support that it received from the west. Therefore, there was a gap between the ANC leaders and the west even before Nelson Mandela became the president.

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<sup>119</sup>Barber, 2005.

<sup>120</sup>Alden, C. (1993). From liberation movement to political party: ANC foreign policy in transition. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 1(1), 62-81.

<sup>121</sup>Klotz, A. (1999). *Norms in international relations: The struggle against apartheid*. Cornell University Press.

The South African government under Nelson Mandela also maintained positive international relationships with other African countries. Since the time that the ANC was in exile various African countries provided material support as well as formal diplomatic relations. Therefore, Mandela extended the same positive international relationship with other African countries when he assumed office as the president. The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) that was started immediately the ANC took power required South Africa to rebuild its economy in collaboration with its regional neighbors.<sup>122</sup> Therefore, Mandela established broader strategic diplomatic ties with other African countries.

Mandela's inauguration ceremony was a clear indication of positive international relations in his term as a president. The ceremony was attended by representative from 169 countries from all over the world. In the first year South Africa was able to establish diplomatic ties with at least 147 countries globally. The republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan and People's Republic of China were some of the countries that were eager to have strong international relations on China. ROC and South Africa maintained close ties even during the apartheid period especially because they were isolated by the international community.<sup>123</sup> The PRC, on the other hand, expressed its critical criticism of apartheid and seemed to sympathize with ANC during the same time. Mandela was interested in establishing international relations with both ROC and PRC. ROC had a strong economy in the world and as such was an important investment, trade and tourism source for South Africa. ROC was one of the top six largest trading partners of South Africa. Therefore, during the Mandela era ROC was vital in making significant contributions towards South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Program. Contrary to ROC, the PRC did not have high levels of trade and investment as well as development assistance to South Africa. However, Nelson Mandela regime seems to consider it as a more strategic partner than ROC because of its high population and position in United Nations. In 1990's PRC had a population of over 1.2 billion people and therefore Mandela's regime believed that it could provide market for their manufactured products. Additionally, PRC held a permanent position in the United Nation Security Council and was therefore recognized by other nations as a legitimate representative of

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<sup>122</sup>Le Pere, (2004).

<sup>123</sup>Lin, S. H. (2007). *The relations between the Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa, 1948-1998* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria).

all the Chinese people.<sup>124</sup> Therefore Mandela's regime was at crossroad on which country to establish international relations with, between ROC and PRC. Some of the top government officials supported continuing with strong international ties with ROC while others opted for PRC. However, on January 1998 South Africa terminated its ties with ROC and established diplomatic ties with PRC.<sup>125</sup> Although Nelson Mandela supported a dual recognition policy of having international relations with both People's Republic of China and Republic of China, he was restricted by Beijing regime's stance of not supporting the decision. Indeed when entering into diplomatic relations South Africa was made to recognize Taiwan to be part of China though PRC did not have any sovereignty over Taiwan.

Additionally, in pursuit of stronger international relations Nelson Mandela went on to have diplomatic ties with both international and regional organizations. The year 1994 was vital in South Africa's journey in international relations matters, as it was ushered into both regional as well as international organizations. Examples of organizations that welcomed the cooperation of Nelson Mandela include the following: UN, OAU and the Nonaligned Movement, among others. Before 1994, the UN had already participated and played a pivotal role in transition of South Africa to a democratic nation starting from the year 1992.<sup>126</sup> During this period the United Nations Security Council Resolution 772 allowed the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) to assist in ending violence due to politics and also oversee elections in 1994. Mandela regime saw the United Nations Security Council removed the last of its stern measures, that is, the November 1977 arms embargo on May 25, 1994.<sup>127</sup> Additionally, due to Mandela's positive international relations with UN, the \$100 million dues and annual payments for the years South Africa was suspended from UN participation was waived in 1995 as the UN stated that Pretoria was not supposed to bear the consequences of apartheid regime.<sup>128</sup> Further, after he became South African president, Mandela, started establishing international relations

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<sup>124</sup>Grimm, S., Kim, Y., & Anthony, R. (2014). South African relations with China and Taiwan Economic realism and the "One-China" doctrine.

<sup>125</sup>Taiwandc.org. (1998). South Africa drops "ROC" for PRC "NO" to Chinese neo-colonialism. Retrieved from <http://www.taiwandc.org/nws-9801.htm>

<sup>126</sup>Nathan, L. (2005). Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy. *International Affairs*, 81(2), 361-372.

<sup>127</sup>Youla, 2009.

<sup>128</sup>Landsberg, C. (2000). Promoting democracy: the Mandela-Mbeki doctrine. *Journal of Democracy*, 11(3), 107-121.

with OAU. The OAU first admitted South Africa into its membership in 1994 as a 53<sup>rd</sup> member, a meeting that was held in Tunis, Tunisia. The then Foreign Affairs Minister Alfred Nzo was also authorized to be part of OAU Council of Ministers meeting. During the same time President Mandela offered his speech to the OAU summit. In his address he stressed his support for other African leaders and emphasized on South Africa's solidarity as well as the focus on African interests. Moreover, apart from being a member of UN and OAU, in June 1994, the country rejoined the British Commonwealth of Nations, after thirty-three-year of absence. This ensured that Mandela's regime had strong ties with former British colonies as well as Britain itself. In the same year, in Gaborone, Botswana South Africa was admitted in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as eleventh member.<sup>129</sup> This process was facilitated by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki who attended the SADC meeting at the organization. Again in 1994, South Africa under Nelson Mandela joined the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone as twenty-fourth member. The country also put a signature on a declaration that affirmed that the South Atlantic as a nuclear-weapons-free zone and also entered an agreement on environmental protection in the region and trade. Therefore Nelson Mandela established various international relations with both regional and international organizations including OAU, UN, SADC and South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone.

### **3.32 Thabo Mbeki's Presidency**

Unlike President Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki ruled South Africa for ten years from 1999 to 2008. The 1999 presidential elections in South Africa were not only democratic but also multiracial as observed in 1994. The ANC won the majority seats under the leadership of Thabo Mbeki. During the 1999 elections Democratic Party became the official opposition party and took the mantle from the National party.<sup>130</sup> Another party that took active role in the 1999 presidential elections was the KwaZulu-Natal Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Although Mbeki was a shrewd president his stance of HIV crisis and failure to condemn the worsening situation in the neighboring Zimbabwe led to criticism from the international actors.<sup>131</sup> Thabo Mbeki's administration was also under a limelight both locally and internationally for corrupt deals and establishment of some ineffective economic policies. For instance, the office of Vice President

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<sup>129</sup>Barber, 2005.

<sup>130</sup>Hirsch, A., & Hines, S. (2005). *Season of hope: Economic reform under Mandela and Mbeki*. IDRC.

<sup>131</sup>Nathan, 2005.

under Jacob Zuma was accused of alleged corrupt and fraud deals. In term of the ineffective economic policy the Mbeki government unveiled the black economic program that was launched for the second time as Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment. Mbeki lost his presidential powers in December 2008 during the National Conference of African National Congress which was held at Polokwane. The power shifted to Jacob Zuma because all the ANC leadership positions were taken by Jacob Zuma supporters.<sup>132</sup>Zuma also got a reprieve whereby the High Court in 2002 made a landmark ruling that he should be dismissed from corruption charges on the basis that Mbeki unduly influenced them. Lastly, Thabo Mbeki resigned as the South African president in September 2008. After the resignation of Thabo Mbeki, Kgalema Motlanthe was appointed as a caretaker president until April 2009 when presidential elections were held and Jacob Zuma won.

Mbeki's two terms in office as the president from 1999 to 2008 consolidated the hold on political power of ANC as he continued from where President Nelson Mandela Left. This era represents the international relations of South Africa which was under the rule of ANC government which followed the second South African democratic elections. However within this continuity of ANC leadership there were various significant and important changes. The most vital change was the replacement Mandela a charismatic leader with Thabo Mbeki, an enigmatic and reserved leader.<sup>133</sup> President Mbeki remained influential and pivotal in foreign policy work during Mandela's reign. Mbeki had a new international affairs minister, by the name, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, she was a more forceful character than the former and late foreign affairs minister Nzo.<sup>134</sup> Additionally, Dlamini-Zuma worked closely with Thabo Mbeki on matters of international relations. All these individuals brought changes to transform South Africa's international relations which were built on the prior policy, but introduced various and subtle new changes.

The new South African president, Thabo Mbeki started by making changes to the rather bureaucratic and infective international relations mechanism. After his in inauguration several

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<sup>132</sup>Gumede, W. M. (2007). *Thabo Mbeki and the Battle for the Soul of the ANC*. Zed Books.

<sup>133</sup>Nathan, L. (2005). Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy. *International Affairs*, 81(2), 361-372.

<sup>134</sup>Youla, 2009.

transformative changes were implemented to the already existing systems for policy making, which were considered to be not only costly and fragmented but also inefficient. The most important factor to this restructuring was the ideology in the dire need for having a restructured South African Presidential office.<sup>135</sup> The presidency was considered as the main locus on matters of international relations formulation and decision-making. The changes started with the closure of the RDP office which was followed with the adoption of the GEAR strategy.<sup>136</sup> During these changes the President, Deputy President and Minister's office were brought together and harmonized to work closely by an integrated administrative structuring, which was under the management of the Director General (DG).<sup>137</sup> The work of these offices was supported by six cabinet committees which included the following: investment and employment, international relations, peace and security economic sector, governance and administration, justice, crime prevention and security and social sector. The Foreign Minister together with her Deputy, the DG and his deputies, all came from ANC party and such it was easy for them to advance ANC's political agenda's in the international policies.<sup>138</sup> Their work were complemented and enhanced by a squad of four advisers who were found in the President's office for political, legal and economic as well as international affairs. President Mbeki entrusted this team with the delivery of his international relations vision.

The fundamental distinguishing features of Thabo Mbeki's administration in matters of policy-making and international relations were the following ideological elements: democracy, anti-imperialism and Africanism.<sup>139</sup> Thabo Mbeki was therefore different in terms of international relations ideologies from Nelson Mandela as he also seemed to abandon the human rights and democracy ideologies which were priority in Mandela's era.<sup>140</sup> This is clear because in 2005 Mbeki's administration welcomed North Korean Vice president in the country with the aim of strengthening and forging bilateral relations as well as trade ties.<sup>141</sup> This raised questions across

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<sup>135</sup>Youla, 2009.

<sup>136</sup>Visser, W. (2004, September). Shifting RDP into GEAR: The ANC Government's Dilemma in Providing an Equitable System for Social Security for the New South Africa. In *A paper presented at the 40th ITH Linzer Konferenz* (Vol. 17).

<sup>137</sup>Le Pere, 2004.

<sup>138</sup>Le Pere, 2004.

<sup>139</sup>Barber, 2005

<sup>140</sup>Nathan, 2005.

<sup>141</sup>Geldenhuys, D. (2005). Pretoria and Pyongyang: Supping with sinners. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 12(2), 143-156.



the world because North Korea defied the international standards on how a state should conduct itself. North Korea is termed as unreconstructed Marxist totalitarian state, while South Africa is considered as a democratic nation and as such their relation was unlikely. Contrary to this thinking, Mbeki's administration with Jacob Zuma as the vice president welcomed North Korea in their international relations pursuit.

Mbeki's international relation agenda was largely influenced by the economic empowerment of South Africa as well as the development of a global system that is equitable. Therefore, a number of issues were considered as the country's main concerns in its international relations journey. The major ones includes the following: The African Union (AU) as well as SADC's restructuring activities; South Africa being the host of major and vital international conferences; Peace and security promotion issues in both the Middle East and Africa; the reform of both regional and international organizations including the following: World Bank, United Nations, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Commonwealth and World Trade Organization (WTO); South Africa's international priorities and goals and its bilateral relations influences.<sup>142</sup> President Mbeki was also keen on South Africa's international relations and cooperation with the G8 members.

President Mbeki had a major focus Africa in his international relations agenda. He closely associated himself with the triumphs as well as tragedies of the African continent and was hopeful the region will remain resilient by working to end poverty.<sup>143</sup> Mbeki also went further to appeal to global business investors to consider Africa in their investment Agenda. During the reign of President Mbeki, South Africa's relations with Nigeria significantly improved greatly from 1999 onwards. These stronger links between the two countries were demonstrated when Mbeki's officially visited Nigeria in the year 2000. There was also another South African reciprocal visit by the former Nigerian President, OlusegunObasanjo.<sup>144</sup> It is during these two visits that the two states made an agreement to create a commission for matters affecting these countries: the Jacob Zuma, the then South African Deputy President, spearheaded and represented South Africa in these discussions. Pretoria further went forward to urge various companies such as SA Breweries, Anglo-American, and Standard Bank to extend their

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<sup>142</sup>Le Pere, 2004 p10.

<sup>143</sup>Mbeki, T. (1996). I am an African. *African Renaissance*, 1, 19-13.

<sup>144</sup>Barber, 2005

operations to Nigeria. These international relations between Nigeria and South Africa saw both nation's trade and investments increase steadily.

Further, Mbeki's international relations in Africa were not only limited to bilateral matters. He was a prominent figure in the continental affairs. In the year 2002, President Thabo Mbeki became the chairman of the OAU, a position he took from the then Zambia's president Levy Mwanawasa. He was also part of negotiating leaders so as to resolve conflicts that were occurring in DRC, Burundi, Comoros, Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire and Sudan.<sup>145</sup> Additionally, president Mbeki was also part of the mediation in a conflict involving Zimbabwe and Swaziland. While in all these negotiations president Mbeki used ANC approach that encompassed pioneering peaceful negotiation as well as conciliation. Due to being in the forefront in addressing the continental matters, president Mbeki, and crowned as a representative for all Africa and invited in various international forums such as the annual Davos economic summits and G8 meetings The West did so because they realized the stability and relative strength as well as honesty of South Africa. All this was vital for international relations between South Africa, Africa and the West.

Besides, increased involvement in African continental matters saw Mbeki chair the steering group, which led to the established of the New Economic Policy for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in the year 2001. The key aim of forming NEPAD was the eradication of poverty, the integration of African continent into the global economy and sustainable growth.<sup>146</sup> Nevertheless, Mbeki and others in NEPAD secretariat realized they could not succeed without assistance from G8 states to achieve these goals having stability in political matter as well as good governance in the African Continent was of essence. They therefore followed the ANC principles, of establishment of democracy, peace and good governance and human rights respect in making policies that can allow political stability, integration, sustainable development and high economic growth in the African continent. NEPAD under the leadership of Thabo Mbeki also created African Peer Group Review Mechanism (APGRM) so as to put pressure on those states which lacked the set standards that aligned with G8 intentions. NEPAD was welcomed not

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<sup>145</sup>Katzenellenbogen, J. (2005). Guardian of peace: Pretoria's burden'. *Focus*, (38).

<sup>146</sup>Olivier, G. (2003). Is Thabo Mbeki Africa's Saviour?. *International Affairs*, 79(4), 815-828.

only by the majority of African countries but also in the West. The NEPAD also led to the endorsement of the “Action Plan for Africa” by G8 members and also support for African countries by both European Union (EU) and United States of America.<sup>147</sup> The increased involvement of Mbeki as a leader of African matters and incorporation of the West in these matters saw South Africa as a country benefit from the west. Washington entered into a free trade agreement with South African Custom Union which comprise on the following states: Botswana, South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland.

Further, Mbeki established strong international relations with both AU and UN through involvement of South African troops in Africa’s peace keeping missions. The South African troops were deployed in countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Eritrea, Sudan and Ethiopia.<sup>148</sup> The inclusion of South African troops in the UN peace keeping mission was to strengthen the country’s diplomatic prestige as well as have a UN Security Council seat which is permanent.

South Africa’s international relations under Tambo Mbeki as a president can be analyzed from the reaction to Zimbabwe’s situation during the time. During the reign of president Mbeki Zimbabwe’s economic and political crisis were at unbearable level and attracted the attention of the entire globe. President Thabo Mbeki refused to show full disapproval of the developing and increasing authoritarianism and the rising human rights violations by Robert Mugabe who was and is still the president.<sup>149</sup> This behavior can be described as “quiet diplomacy” as it was expressed by President Mbeki towards Zimbabwe. When Zimbabwe was suspended from the Commonwealth membership on the basis of its human rights abuses in 2002, South Africa did not seem to support the decision. The then South African President, Thabo Mbeki, went ahead to appeal to the Commonwealth to abandon Zimbabwe’s suspension.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup>Barber, 2005

<sup>148</sup>Youla, 2009.

<sup>149</sup>Meredith, M. (2007). *Mugabe: Power, Plunder, and the Struggle for Zimbabwe's Future*. PublicAffairs.

<sup>150</sup>McKinley, D. T. (2004). South African foreign policy towards Zimbabwe under Mbeki. *Review of African Political Economy*, 31(100), 357-364.

### 3.33 Jacob Zuma's Presidency

Jacob Zuma took over the presidential mantle in 2009 and to date he is the president after winning the second presidential elections in 2014. However, the popularity of ANC in the two presidential terms that Zuma has been the president seems to be diminishing. In 2009 ANC got a majority vote of 65.9% which further went down to 62.1% in 2015. In both Zuma's presidential terms the Democratic Alliance formally Democratic Party was the official opposition party. Zuma's economic policies seemed to be different from those of Thabo Mbeki. In the year 2010, South Africa hosted 2010 FIFA World Cup showing that the Zuma's government was in good terms with the rest of the world.

President Zuma's administration started by changing the original Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) name which managed and coordinated the Republic's diplomacy and international relations policy to become Department of International Relations and Co-operation (DIRCO) in the year 2009.<sup>151</sup> This was in line with the ANC's resolution which was made at Polokwane. The changing of the name was overseen by Minister Nkoana-Mashabane. The name change indicated Zuma government administration's intentions to bring a new style as well as an approach to carry out international relations affairs. The rebranded department now emphasizes on non-hegemonic attitude and collaboration. Zuma's administration was also sensitive on mutual recognition of its and other actor's self-interest in matters of international relations. The new Minister, Nkoana-Mashabane, in her first public address stated the reasons behind the change of department name, saying that it was meant to reflect on a new focus that South African government intended. This new shift focused on placing on partnerships as well as co-operation so as to enhance development. The change was also in line with the international trends that call international actors to focus more on cooperation rather than competition; and collaboration as opposed to confrontation.<sup>152</sup> This shows that President Zuma's era is ready to cooperate and collaborate with other international actors. The renaming was a decision made deliberately by the South African government to establish a comprehensive approach to international relations that is reflective of South African developmental agenda. It was indeed a promotion of domestic

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<sup>151</sup>Landsberg, C. (2012). The Jacob Zuma Government's Foreign Policy: Association or Dissociation?. *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations*, 1(1), 75-102.

<sup>152</sup>Department of International Relations and Cooperation. (2009). Speech: Statement by Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane on the name change to Department of International Relations and Co-Operation (DICO). Retrieved from <http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/speeches/2009/mash0514.html>

priorities of South Africa at an international stage. Despite the changes the following traditional international policies of South Africa remained: resolution of conflicts through peaceful resolutions, establishment of strategic partnership for development, reforming institutions in African continent, having influence on global economic and political affairs as well as eradication of underdevelopment and poverty in South Africa and African continent as a whole.<sup>153</sup>

Jacob Zuma regime's international relations pursuit is based on the broad perspective of the "Pursuing African Advancement and Enhanced Co-operation". In 2009 the South African government came up with various pillars to guide the international relations matters. These pillars includes the following: closing the gap that exists between domestic (national interests) and international relations policy; Promotion of the integration of the Southern African Development Community; having active role in systems of governance globally; improvement of the strategic relations with the North; African continent prioritization through the banner "African advancement"; strengthening of the South-South international relations strengthening and strengthening of both political as well as economic relations.<sup>154</sup> Under the leadership of Zuma South Africa went on to prioritize matters of the African continent. Africa remains at the centre of what South Africa does in the world. The prioritization of Africa is pursued through the following two main themes: improvement of economic and political integration of SADC and Africa continental theme. Zuma government pursues its African agendas and strategies under the banner African advancement. Zuma's administration is also open, committed and focused to the NEPAD programs. Therefore, Zuma's regime remained committed to the NEPAD implementation and also to the improvement of the regional environment for both growth and development.<sup>155</sup> Zuma has also been focused on placing and exposing the development needs of the African continent on the worldwide platform. Thus in his international relations agenda Zuma's government remains aware that NEPAD provides the main pivotal guidelines for the relations of African nations as well as partnerships involving Africa and international actors. Moreover, the current South African government supports African Peer Review Mechanism

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<sup>153</sup>Landsberg, C. (2014). The concentric circles of South Africa's foreign policy under Jacob Zuma. *India Quarterly*, 70(2), 153-172.

<sup>154</sup>Landsberg, 2012, p.75-100.

<sup>155</sup>Landsberg, C. (2009). South Africa's "African Agenda": Challenges of policy and implementation. *Presidency Fifteen Year Review Project*, 1-32.

(APRM). This is a unique governance promotion tool for Africa which was formed to promote corporate, democratic and economic governance of the entire continent. Lastly, Zuma has been keen on pursuing strategies to promote unity of African states so as to make sure the AU and its institutions are well strengthened.<sup>156</sup> The South African government also makes contributions to support the advancement of the AU agendas.

The new Zuma administration remained focused on an international relations policy that can assist in delivering its domestic objectives and priorities. One of the important tenets of this policy was having a secure as well as an integrated continent capable of taking its rightful place internationally. South Africa's international relations policy is therefore keen on conflict resolution and also development in Africa.<sup>157</sup> Additionally Zuma's administration focuses on forming partnerships with other international actors that are deemed like-minded nations so as to make sure that South Africa is an active participant in international matters. To prove its African Agenda South Africa under President's Zuma's administration has actively participated in peacekeeping and developmental support in countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Burundi. Moreover, South Africa engaged in mediations on behalf of the AU to resolve political conflict in Cote d'Ivoire. Additionally, South Africa has been keen on supporting AU's mandate and work by supporting the AU at different multiple levels. In this regard Zuma's administration has been one of the biggest contributors to the AU. In addition, the country continued to host and support the the South African Chapter of the AU Economic, Social and Cultural Council, Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the Pan-African Women's Organization. Therefore, South African's commitment towards the advancement of the African continent agenda during president Zuma's era has been vital.

South Africa's international relations matters under the leadership of Jacob Zuma are also based on regional integration. Currently, South Africa focuses on strengthening of the South-South Cooperation. This occurs by establishment of dynamic relations with nations found in the South

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<sup>156</sup>Parshotam, A., &Helly, D. (2016). *South Africa, Europe and Africa: Building bridges across barriers?*.Briefing Note 88. Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management.

<sup>157</sup>Landsberg, 2014, p. 153-172.

African nation based on the principle of the shared interests as well as common challenges.<sup>158</sup> This international relation policy also allows South Africa to position itself as part of the emerging power. Therefore, Jacob Zuma's administration is focused on ensuring the formation of the economic, political, and social spheres that can help to fight against poverty, marginalization of the South and underdevelopment. Since Jacob Zuma was elected as a South African president the country has continued to establish international relations dwelling on the principle of cooperation and remaining together (solidarity) with both sub-regional as well as regional actors. Examples of these groups include the following: Forum for China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), Non-aligned Movement (NAM), the New Asia–Africa Strategic Partnership (NAASP), Africa–India Forum, the India–Brazil–South Africa Dialogue Forum and G7 plus China. This is in effort to consolidate African Agenda for the country.<sup>159</sup> To enhance the South-South cooperation South Africa became part of the Brazil–Russia–India–China–South Africa (BRICS) establishment. The country's main intentions of joining BRICS were to: form partnership with the main economies of the South, fulfill its national interests and enhance regional interests. Through the BRICS Zuma's era has managed to establish strong economic and political diplomatic ties with the following countries: China, India and Brazil. This has given South Africa an opportunity to have a diversification of its international relations, more so in the political affairs. South Africa under the leadership of Zuma perceives BRICS as a counterbalance of political and economic hegemony posed by the Western powers in the world affairs. Therefore, South Africa's membership and participation in the BRICS is to promote the continent's and the country's national interest.<sup>160</sup> The South–South relation thus remains a priority in the President Jacob Zuma's international relation agenda.

Further, Zuma's administration international relations policies recognize the western power actors. The country has established working partnership with western countries on the basis of cooperation and mutual respect so as to enhance development. South Africa recognizes Western powers as industrialized states that can help the nation in promotion of its economic

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<sup>158</sup>Death, Carl (2011). Leading by example: South African foreign policy and global environmental politics. *International Relations*, 25(4), 455-78.

<sup>159</sup>Landsberg, 2012 p.75-100.

<sup>160</sup> Olivier, Gerrit. (2013). 'South Africa in BRICS: Substance or piggybacking?', in Francis A. Kornegay and Narnia Bohler-Muller (Eds), *Laying the BRICS of a New Global Order, From Yekaterinburg 2009 to Ethekweni 2013* (p. 413). Pretoria: AISA Publishers.

development.<sup>161</sup> These economic advantages and considerations compelled Zuma's administration to establish a partnership that is based on development, trade and cooperation. This cooperation with the west is important because it addresses the South African development agenda as well as that of the African continent through the implementation of the programs of NEPAD. In 2010, the former United States Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, visited South Africa which signified the enhancement of close relations between Washington and South Africa. This visit solidified the promotion of strategic economic relations between the two nations. South Africa had the intentions of utilizing effectively the US Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). President Zuma also solidified international relations between EU and South Africa as he recognized the block as an important trading partner. This was in attempt to make sure EU trading block benefited not only South Africa but the African continent as a whole. Jacob Zuma's administration has been vital in promoting South Africa as one of the EU's strategic partners.<sup>162</sup> The SA-EU Strategic Partnership came into existence in the year 2006. This strategic partnership preceded the Joint Action Plan which came in the year 2007. These two arrangements facilitated increased cooperation between these two actors. The enhanced partnership between the EU and South Africa during the President Zuma's was based on common interests in the following areas: peace and security, good governance, human rights, migration, social cohesion, energy and innovation.<sup>163</sup> Currently South Africa and EU enjoys broad and comprehensive relation that is based on mutual trade, development and political interests. There are regular Presidential summits as well as Ministerial meetings that occur between the two parties. For instance, there are regular SA-EU Political and Security Committee meetings that take place to discuss matters of peace and security in the Middle East, Africa and Iran. Besides EU forms a significant source of South Africa's foreign direct investment (FDI). There are EU-based companies that invest in various economic sections of the country. Therefore, international relations between South Africa and EU have been a vital contributor to the country's industrialization agenda. In the year 2016, Zuma's administration together with other South African nations entered into the Southern African Economic Partnership

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<sup>161</sup>Landsberg, Chris. (2006 ). 'Foreign policy-making and implementation in post-settlement South Africa', in Albert Venter and Chris Landsberg (Eds), *Government and politics in the new South Africa*, third edition (pp. 255–258). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

<sup>162</sup>Parshotam, A., &Helly, D. (2016). *South Africa, Europe and Africa: Building bridges across barriers?*. Briefing Note 88. Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management.

<sup>163</sup>European Union.(2016). South Africa and the EU. Retrieved from [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/730/South%20Africa%20and%20the%20EU](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/730/South%20Africa%20and%20the%20EU)



Agreement (SADC EPA) agreement.<sup>164</sup> Under this arrangement most of the imports from South African regions are partially or fully exempted from custom duties.

Zuma government is also an active Participant in the Global System of Governance as part of its international relations activities. South Africa recognizes multilateral system operating in the United Nations, as well as mini-lateral bodies such as G20.<sup>165</sup> The participation in these global governance systems is based on the premise that international system offers an opportunity for the African continent to transform as well as placing it at strategic position for development. Through the participation in global governance issues the South African government ensures that the challenges of the developing nations are addressed.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

During President Nelson Mandela's international relation principles were contained in a document titled "Foreign Policy Perspectives in a Democratic South Africa" and produced in 1994. These international policy principles can be summarized as the following pillars: The Human rights pillar, promotion of global democracy, relations between nations that are guided by principles of international law and justice pillar, achieving peace through non-violent means pillar, the harmonization of South African international relations policy and the interests of the entire African continent pillar and international and regional cooperation for economic development. These principles were meant to create prosperous and peaceful conditions for South Africa when interacting with other actors globally.

Thabo Mbeki picked from where President Nelson Mandela left to advance international relations matters. However, there were various significant and important changes. President Mbeki was an influential and pivotal figure in international policy work during Mandela's reign. Thabo Mbeki's administration in matters of policy-making and international relations were guided by the following ideological elements: democracy, anti-imperialism and Africanism. Thabo Mbeki was therefore different in terms of international relations ideologies from Nelson Mandela. He abandoned the human rights and democracy ideologies which remained a priority

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<sup>164</sup>European Union. (2016)

<sup>165</sup>Landsberg, 2014, p. 153-172.

in Mandela's era. Additionally, Mbeki's international relation agenda was largely influenced by the economic empowerment of South Africa as well as the development of a global system that is equitable. The following issues remained South Africa's main concerns in its international relations journey: The African Union (AU) as well as SADC's restructuring activities; South Africa being the host of major and vital international conferences; Peace and security promotion issues in both the Middle East and Africa; the reform of both regional and international organizations; South Africa's international priorities and goals and its bilateral relations influences. Further, President Mbeki had a major focus on Africa in his international relations agendas.

Lastly, President Zuma's government also has its unique operation on matters of international relations. Zuma seems to focus more on the following issues as far as matters of international relations are concerned: economic relations solidification, advancement of African continent, North-South association and cooperation, South-South cooperation and being an active participant in matters of global governance systems and economic. All these issues are tied to the national interests of South African nation.

## **4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT OF SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTORAL POLITICS ON HER INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Electoral politics and international relations are closely intertwined disciplines both in theory and practice. International relations encompass all interactions that occur between individual states and other states. It is an important factor in this era of globalization and interdependence that exists between states. The international relations that a country establishes are defined by policy guidelines that a state establishes to be followed by the various governmental sections in relations or associations with other actors that take a role on the international stage. These international relations policies are meant to advance and secure a country's national interest. Political leaders are mostly tasked with the mandate of effecting international relations policies. The purpose of states in developing international relation policies is to realize the complex domestic as well as international objectives. Leaders work on behalf of their states to advance the interests of the electorate that in turn benefits the country and also fulfills the country's international duty. Designing international relations policies can be an elaborate process characterized by series of steps which are chiefly dominated by domestic politics.<sup>166</sup> In designing the international relations policies, political leaders are guided by various motivating factors which can be used to explain decisions they make. Some of these factors of influence include: rationality degree, the personality and cognition of the leader, and domestic politics as well as domestic and international interest groups.<sup>167</sup> Despite all these factors when a political leader such as the head of government is making decisions on international relations, the political system of a country seems to play a major part. The political environment can, therefore, influence political leaders in decision making on international relations matters. In most cases the political leaders consider electoral political factors so as to please the electorate and make sure they are reelected in subsequent elections. This chapter takes a critical analysis of effects that South African electoral politics has had on her international relations.

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<sup>166</sup>Hill, C. (2003). *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>167</sup> Farnham, B. (2004). Impact of the Political Context on Foreign Policy Decision-Making. *Political Psychology*, 25(3), 441-463.

## **4.2 The Structure of South African Political System in the Post-Apartheid Era**

The political environment in a state is determined by the set laws, lobbying groups, government agencies, which pose restrictions on individual's life in the society. The international decisions made by the political leaders are therefore depended on domestic politics of a state. The political system provides boundaries for the heads of government because they determine the power as well as the scope international relations policy decision making.<sup>168</sup> Political system refers to a set of formal and legal institutions that makeup a government of a country. South Africa can be regarded as a democracy in terms of its political system because it is ruled by the majority. The head of the government is not only the sole actor in the South African international relations matters. International relation decisions remains collective in the country as are influenced by others organs in the political system especially the dominant ANC party. In South Africa the president remains subject to group think. This is because there are various advisory committees especially the cabinet which mostly advices him on various matters and helps him to make critical decisions.

Thus, South African government can be categorized as a constitutional democracy which is organized into the following branches: the executive, the legislature, and judiciary.<sup>169</sup> The executive is the cabinet which rules the nation by having different departments which are equivalent of the ministries. Each of the department deals with a specific issue such as health, education or even sports. The second branch is legislature which is the Parliament and it is concerned with law making functions. The parliament has two arms namely; the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and the National Assembly. NCOP legislative arm is a representative of the nine South African provinces in the national government. The council is comprised of ten representatives from each province. The council receives matters arising from the province and tables them in the parliament for voting. The national assembly consists of members of parliament who are elected by the electorate and is headed by the speaker. The national assembly is a representative of the public which ensures that democratic laws are instituted in line with the constitution. It is also a watchdog to the Cabinet in that it complies

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<sup>168</sup>Neack, L. (2008). *The New Foreign Policy- power seeking in a globalized era.* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Rowman& Littlefield Publishers Inc.

<sup>169</sup> *South African History Online.* Structure of Government in South Africa. Retrieved from <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/structure-government-south-africa>

with the set laws in its function. Lastly, the Judiciary forms part of the South African government. The Judiciary alludes to the court system. This branch of government makes sure the laws of the land are observed.<sup>170</sup> The court system is made in a way that a higher court can reverse a decision made by any given lower court in South Africa. The two highest courts in South Africa are namely; the Constitutional Court and Supreme Court of Appeal. The courts are autonomous of any influence. In South Africa the parliament and responsible cabinet department as well as the office of the president plays a major role in determining international relation matters.

#### **4.3 South Africa's Domestic Variables and her International Relations**

The political system in a country is made partly by domestic politics which normally influence international relations policy decisions. The domestic political issues are raised by the electorate and interested parties as well as historical events that have ever happened in a country. When making international relations decisions, matters of domestic politics comes into play and as such they influence them to some degree. In making such decisions the political leaders focuses on retaining political power and building and maintaining policy coalitions. Therefore, national leaders, especially the president must balance between international interests and domestic politics. The politicians have a tendency of mobilizing and retaining public support so as to maintain public office. These political leaders have to please their supporters in the policies that they make. Some of the affected policies are those that touch on the international relation issues. The ideals of a political party that sponsored a politician to office also have influence on decisions that he or she makes about international relations. This is where the issue of rational choice theory comes in. The process of international relations involves critical decision making where actors rationally make choices through the following steps. The first step is the recognition and definition of the problem. In this step the rational international relations policy decision-maker notices a particular problem requiring action. The second step involves goal selection which involves making decisions on the way to solve the problem. In the third step the rational decision makers identifies alternatives. Then in the fourth step which is the last step the rational decision makers has to make a choice after a cost benefit analysis. The choice made is to

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<sup>170</sup> Anonymous. Structure and functions of the South African Government. Retrieved from <http://oldgov.gcis.gov.za/aboutgovt/structure/structure.htm>

advance the interests of a country.<sup>171</sup> When rational thinkers are formulating international relations they are guided by three main principles: protecting and promoting domestic security, advancement of domestic welfare and the preserving as well as promoting of the values and interests of the country. This agrees with realist's idea who believes that international policy formulation involves rational actors whereby they make decisions by exhibiting interest-maximizing and value-maximizing behavior. Therefore, actors have to make international relations decisions rationally so as to advance their interests of maximizing the gains and maintaining their political career.

The organization of a government which is part of the domestic politics may also have an impact on the international relations policy. In those nations that are perceived as democratic, leaders remains directly accountable and answerable to the public as well as political parties: in that way they must represent their interests in the international relations policies that they make. For instance, in South Africa, the country was largely affected by racial segregation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century under the rule of the white minority. The issue of human rights was therefore a problem during the apartheid era in South Africa. When the black leader, Nelson Mandela took power he was influenced by domestic political issues in his international relations matters as he prioritized the human rights issues as part of his efforts to democratize the nation.

#### **4.4 The Personal Leadership Styles/Political Ideologies and South Africa's International Relations**

All South African post-apartheid leaders demonstrated democratic leadership styles but were guided by different political factors. President Mandela set the standards for democratic leadership in South Africa. Both president Mbeki and Zuma were also focused on advancing South African democratic ideals as they were set by Nelson Mandela. However, as democratic post-apartheid leaders these presidents adopted different personal and political ideologies to advance South African democracy as discussed below.

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<sup>171</sup>Wittkopf, E. R., Jones, C. M., &KegleyJr, C. W. (2007). *American foreign policy: pattern and process*. Nelson Education.

### **) On Human rights and democracy.**

Human rights issue was a prominent factor in the democratic leadership of South African post-apartheid presidents. President Mandela, for example was a democratic leader who was guided by human rights issue. Mandela clearly outlined the human rights issue as part of his international rights agenda under his November/December 1993 Foreign Affairs article. According to the article the human rights issue remained central to international relations matters and transcended political issues to affect both social and economic life of the citizens. It was indeed the first among the seven tenets of international relations as outlined by the Mandela's era. The international relations blueprint for Mandela's era made pledges to include human rights in the country's international relations and went on to assign the issue a central role in its global campaign for human rights. The document also clearly stated that the country will remain non-selective or fear in bringing out human rights violations with those states where their interests may be impacted in a negatively manner.<sup>172</sup> In 1996, Alfred Nzo, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the inclusion of the human rights in the South African international relations agenda was informed by the previous human right abuses during the apartheid era and therefore they had to spread it globally.

From 1999-2008, Thabo Mbeki took over the president in two successive democratic elections; he also emphasized on the human rights and democracy issues in his international relations agenda. He indeed focused on the establishment political systems that are democratic as well as the human rights protection.<sup>173</sup>

When Jacob Zuma took over the presidential office as the officially and democratically elected president he also focused on the matters of international relations and democracy. This was in efforts to uphold the ideals of the democracy in which the majority government was founded on. The DIRCO which deals with the international relations issues has also been important in advancing democracy and human rights ideals in all places globally. In all these presidential terms South Africa's agenda of advancement of human rights in other parts of world was not

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<sup>172</sup> African National Congress.(1994). Foreign Policy Perspective in a Democratic South Africa. Retrieved from <http://www.anc.org.za/content/foreign-policy-perspective-democratic-south-africa>

<sup>173</sup> Mbeki, Thabo (1999). Speech of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, at the launch of the African Renaissance Institute, Pretoria

only limited to political rights issues, as it majorly touched on economic, environmental and social rights issues. However, president Zuma seems to deviate from the strong focus that his predecessors have had on human rights as integrated in their international relations policy. It was during Zuma's era that South Africa failed to arrest Sudan's president Omar al-Bashir who attended an African Union (AU) Summit in the country. South Africa not only went against domestic court order but also violated its member of the International Criminal Court (ICC) international obligations when permitted President al-Bashir to leave the nation without arrest. Bashir is accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes as well as genocide in connection with the Darfur's conflict. Therefore Bashir's case is linked to the human rights issues. South Africa, on the other hand, was under both domestic and international law obliged to arrest Bashir incase he landed in South African territory because she is a State Party to the Rome Statute. However, South Africa together with the AU had signed an agreement that had guaranteed diplomatic immunity to all participating heads of state. The Supreme Court of Appeal of South Africa also made a ruling that South Africa acted unlawfully when they failed to arrest Omar al-Bashir. Before the episode, South Africa posed as unlikely nation to curtail international justice because in its transitional justice process she has been a human rights advocate. Zuma's government acted contrary to his predecessors who had shown high levels of respect for international law. For instance, President Nelson Mandela always expressed his respect for international law in his international relations agenda. Regional politics seems to have played a major role for Zuma's government not arresting president Bashir. Since the establishment of ICC in the year 2002, African leaders have been in the forefront in expressing their concern that the international court has shown its bias against heads of state from Africa. The African leaders argues that the Office of the Prosecutor is not objective as it has only initiated investigations Africa yet there are many cases involving war crimes that are committed elsewhere in the world. Additionally the evidence gathering exercise by the ICC has in the past been politically influenced and manipulated. The court lacks localized mechanisms that can allow it make investigations that cannot be doubted and as such cannot connect well with victims as well as civil society groups. The African leaders therefore believe that ICC perpetuates culture of impunity and there is no guaranteed justice.<sup>174</sup> Therefore, South Africa had all the reasons not to

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<sup>174</sup>Syria justice and accountability center.(2015). Failure to Arrest al-Bashir Undermines International Justice. Retrieved from <https://syriaaccountability.org/updates/2015/06/18/failure-to-arrest-al-bashir-undermines->



arrest the Sudanese president. Zuma's defiance could be attributed to factors of South African electoral politics and the interest that he had in uniting African continent. It is also during the Zuma's era that South Africa gave ICC withdrawal intentions notice to the United Nations. The Zuma administration's argument for withdrawal from the international court is on the basis that ICC failed because it did not make consultations on if the head-of-state immunity is above an ICC indictment.<sup>175</sup> South Africa remains one of the ICC founders and as such the Treaty of Rome remains integrated into her domestic law and as withdrawal poses an uphill task because it deals with the human rights issues. The withdrawal is also a matter of electoral politics because it was not witnessed in the other regimes. This discussion shows that the human rights issue was part of domestic electoral politics during transition of government from the white minority to the black majority and how it shaped democratic leadership in the country. Therefore, it found its way into the South African international relations issues. The human rights issue in South Africa can therefore be used to explain how electoral politics determines international relations as well as democratic leadership styles in the country.

#### **b) South Africa and the African Agenda**

The agenda that Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma had for the Africa in their presidential terms can also be used to explain how electoral politics affects matters of international relations and the principles of democratic leadership. The post-apartheid government regimes in South Africa have been advancing the idea of 'African agenda' which was integrated with the principles of democracy. These governments have engaged in different geo-strategic diplomacy in the African continent. South Africa was focused on having a reliable partners as well as strategic allies to help in the success of this agenda. The following sub-regions were therefore important in South Africa's international relations policy: North Africa, East Africa and the Horn, Southern Africa, West Africa and Central Africa. The 'African agenda' as pursued by South Africa is about drafting a new strategic path to guide in the African continent's politics, economy, development orientation and governance. South Africa was therefore focused on the being a critical player in charting the new development agenda of the

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[international-justice-2/](#)

<sup>175</sup>John, C. (2016). South Africa's Possible Withdraw from the International Criminal Court. *Council of foreign relations*. Retrieved from <https://www.cfr.org/blog/south-africas-possible-withdraw-international-criminal-court>

African continent. The African agenda has therefore been a major issue in the South Africa's post apartheid electoral politics.

All the South African post-apartheid presidents had a comprehensive plan to regenerate African continent and spread the gospel of democratic leadership. Both Mandela and Mbeki's eras embraced the 'African renaissance' in their efforts to unify and develop Africa. President Mandela wanted African countries to embrace democracy and respect for human rights as well as good governance. In his 1993 article titled Foreign Affairs, Nelson Mandela demonstrated the commitment of ANC to the promotion of democracy internationally because he believed that respect for human rights can be achieved through true democracy.<sup>176</sup> This was in his interests to attract international organizations and countries especially those from western region which are more aligned to democratic principles so as to invest in the African continent.<sup>177</sup> Mandela was also interested in making South Africa the champion of the African developmental agenda and a gateway for Africa. However, in his African Agenda Nelson Mandela seemed not to favor any country that violated the human rights. President Nelson Mandela did not support any African country that violated the human rights at international summits. For instance, during the Commonwealth meeting of the year 1995 Mandela requested for sanctions against Nigeria and also wanted the country to be suspended from the Commonwealth.<sup>178</sup> These calls were due to the fact that the then Nigerian government, that is, Abacha regime had no respect for human rights: for instance it was accused of executing nine activists especially from Niger Delta region which was Nigerian troubled region. This led to the Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth but Mandela's sanction calls were not implemented. African leaders condemned South Africa as a white state that wore a black head.<sup>179</sup> The Organization of African Unity also described Mandela's way of solving African problem as not inline African ideals of solving problems. Therefore, Mandela seemed to represent the interest of the whites or the western powers in his African international relation Agendas though he called for the good governance as well as having democratic governments that respected human rights.

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<sup>176</sup> Manby, B. (2000). Human Rights And South Africa's Foreign Policy: A Guiding Light or Flickering Candle?. *South African Journal on Human Rights*, 16(2), 372-401.

<sup>177</sup> Le Pere, G. (2004). South Africa's Foreign Policy in a Globalising World An Overview: 1994-2002. *A review prepared for the Policy and Advisory Services in the Presidency as part of a*, 10.

<sup>178</sup> Skogly, S. I. (1997). Complexities in human rights protection: actors and rights involved in the Ogoni conflict in Nigeria. *Neth. Q. Hum. Rts.*, 15, 47.

<sup>179</sup> Jordaan, E. (2010). Fall from grace: South Africa and the changing international order. *Politics*, 30(s1), 82-90.

Away from Mandela's era, During Mbeki's tenure the African renaissance agenda was also part of the pillars of South Africa's international relations policy objectives. He strongly advocated for democracy and good governance under this African renaissance banner. Unlike Mandela's focus, Mbeki's interest was achieving better life for all South Africans as well as Africans as a whole. Mbeki seemed to be a stronger ambassador of African renaissance than President Mandela. When he was the deputy president and during Mandela's regime, Mbeki's idea of the South Africa's obligation towards contribution African continental development was evident. During this time he advocated for achievement of African Renaissance, which encompassed establishment of human rights respect, having stable democracies, stopping of violent conflicts, and lastly having better life for all Africans. This idea of African renaissance was an important pillar of Mbeki's administration international relations policy. The policy clearly outlined South Africa as an intermediary between foreign powers and Africa. On the issue of human rights agenda Mbeki blamed western powers of manipulating Nelson Mandela for decisions he made. His deep support for Africa made South Africa to be a more trusted partner in the African continent than during the Mandela's era. South African relations with Nigeria also improved when President Abacha died and also during president Mbeki's era. A perfect example of the stronger ties that ensued between South Africa and Nigeria during Mbeki's era was demonstrated by official visit of Mbeki to Nigeria in October 2000, and also President Olusegun Obasanjo reciprocal visit to South Africa.<sup>180</sup> Additionally, Mbeki used to urge Africans to adopt democracy but not to compromise their traditional cultures.<sup>181</sup> The African Renaissance sought to make African leaders visionary and be focused on the development of the continent. Therefore, Mbeki's African Renaissance central goal was to make Africans to take an active role in determining their own future. Mbeki called for the expansion of development assistance as well as trading activities.<sup>182</sup> He was also a chief architect of the New Partnership for Development of Africa and also the changing of OAU with the African Union in the year

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<sup>180</sup>Barber, J. (2005). The new South Africa's foreign policy: principles and practice. *International Affairs*, 81(5), 1079-1096.

<sup>181</sup>Landsberg, C. (2000). Promoting democracy: the Mandela-Mbeki doctrine. *Journal of Democracy*, 11(3), 107-121.

<sup>182</sup>Landsberg, C. (2000).

2002.<sup>183</sup> Therefore, Mbeki's international relations policy was driven by his African Renaissance vision. This came to encourage South Africans and Africans at large to embrace and adopt an African identity. He was also determined to promote and enhance the political, social and economic renewal in South Africa and African continent.<sup>184</sup> Lastly, President Thabo Mbeki's showed not only constant and consistent but also continuous South Africa's peaceful involvement in the African continental wars as well as conflicts.<sup>185</sup> This was an effort to keep the African continent united. Therefore, Mbeki as compared to Mandela had stronger ideals for African Renaissance. Both Mandela and Mbeki were products of electorate as they were chosen through democratic elections but their international relations policies and actions differed at some point. It can therefore be concluded that electoral political issues as well as leadership of different political leaders have an impact on the international relations in a country.

President Jacob Zuma succeeded President Mbeki as the South African president and up to date he is still the president. After he was elected there were speculations on whether Zuma's international relations policy would prioritize matters of African continent in the same manner as his predecessors. In 2009 during his first address to the nation Zuma assured the citizens of his commitment to in prioritizing the African continent agenda by strengthening the AU together with its structures and also promoting democracy across the continent.<sup>186</sup> He also insisted on South Africa's desire to foster regional integration, bolstering conflict resolution efforts, enhancing developmental partnerships with other countries in the African region and working towards ensuring the entrenchment of democracy as well as the human rights respect in the continent. When Jacob Zuma was democratically the South African president he replaced the African renaissance with African advancement.<sup>187</sup> To affirm his commitment to African agenda Zuma chose to visit Angola as his first state visit destination. This underscored the recognition of

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<sup>183</sup>le Pere, G. L. (2014). Critical Themes in South Africa's Foreign Policy: An Overview. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 36(2), 31.

<sup>184</sup>Louw, C. A. (2000). The concept of the African Renaissance as a force multiplier to enhance lasting peace and stability in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Research Paper, Executive National Security Programme*, 2.

<sup>185</sup> Mboya, M. M. (2006). Mbeki and the peace process in Africa: A contribution to Africa's renaissance. *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies*, 1(1), 80-90.

<sup>186</sup> Landsberg, C. (2014). The concentric circles of South Africa's foreign policy under Jacob Zuma. *India Quarterly*, 70(2), 153-172.

<sup>187</sup>Landsberg. (2014).

Angola by South Africa as an upcoming geopolitical and economic power.<sup>188</sup> Therefore, under Jacob Zuma's presidency South Africa realized its cooperation with Angola as vital in helping Pretoria realize its regional and continental objectives. The visit was also critical as it signified South Africa's readiness to repair diplomatic and political relations estrangement that was historical between the two countries. Such effort was not evident in the both President Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki regimes. Zuma's government has also been committed to the NEPAD implementation which was also the case during the Mbeki's era.<sup>189</sup> This was in an effort to improve the climate for growth and development in Africa. Additionally, Zuma was keen to place the African development requirements on the global agenda through the NEPAD. Additionally, Zuma's administration supports the paradigm of building and developing a Union of African states.<sup>190</sup> This is achieved by continued strengthening of the AU as well as its institutions which is vital for realization of African advancement dream as it enhances Africa's development and unity. Thus, under the banner of African enhancement, Zuma was interested in the promotion of security and peace as well as strengthening of good governance and democracy in the African continent. Other interests that Zuma has had in his African agenda include the following: restructuring and building the capacity of the AU organs, enhancing African development and enhancing of the regional integration.<sup>191</sup> Therefore, despite having similarities, there have significant differences on how Presidents Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma pursued the African agenda as part of their international relations. These differences could be contributed by the electoral politics which is shaped by myriad of factors. However, they were all guided by principles of good governance and democracy in their pursuit.

### c) South Africa-Zimbabwe Relations

South Africa-Zimbabwe relations can be used to demonstrate democratic leadership styles employed by Mandela, Mbeki and Zuma and how electoral politics influenced them in their decisions. South Africa's relations with Zimbabwe are an indication of the good neighborliness. However, since 1994 democratic elections the establishment of this relationship has not been a

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<sup>188</sup>Hengari, A. (2014). South Africa's diplomacy 20 years on: Implementing the African agenda around core values, principles and issues. *SALLA Policy Briefing*, 107(October), 1-4.

<sup>189</sup>le Pere, G. L. (2014). Critical Themes in South Africa's Foreign Policy: An Overview. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 36(2), 31.

<sup>190</sup>Landsberg. (2014).

<sup>191</sup> Qobo, M. (2010). Refocusing South Africa's economic diplomacy: the 'African Agenda' and emerging powers. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 17(1), 13-28.

smooth path. The three South African post-apartheid presidents have related differently with Zimbabwe despite the international pressures that were meant to compel South Africa to take stern measures against Zimbabwe which was accused of abusing human rights as well as other social, political and economic problems. Since 1994, South Africa and Zimbabwe has had strong traditional ties. Zimbabwe plays a fundamental role in domestic, regional and international interests of South Africa.<sup>192</sup> The relations can thus be used to show how the principle of democratic leadership among South African post-apartheid presidents was applied.

When President Nelson Mandela was democratically elected as the head of state in April 1994 the main preoccupation of his government was developing internal stability and democratic leadership as well as reestablishing international ties. There was no deliberate international relations policy that could be used by South Africa to reengage Zimbabwe. However, there were trade ties that existed between the two countries. As a democratic leader, in January of 1999, President Mandela and Thabo Mbeki, his deputy visited Harare to advance trade agreement so as to protect the domestic businesses.<sup>193</sup> The Mandela regime differed with Zimbabwe on the issue of regional security. This came in 1996 when the idea of establishing of the politics, defense and security organs of SADC came up. The differences between Harare and Pretoria on the issue was based on whether or not the security organ would be recognized as part of the SADC Secretariat bureaucracy or it will be separate but answerable only to the Summit.<sup>194</sup> Furthermore, during Mandela's era South Africa and Zimbabwe differed on the issues of SADC support and intervention of troubled Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).<sup>195</sup>

When Thabo Mbeki came to power bilateral relations between the two countries continued but South Africa was accused to be soft on Zimbabwe's lack of respect for human rights and economic as well political crisis that were facing the country.<sup>196</sup> In 2000 Zimbabwe experienced political crises due to troubled referendum elections and there was also tension as war veteran

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<sup>192</sup>Rupiya, M. R. (2002). Eight Years of Tension, Misperception and Dependence from April 1994 to December 2002 Zimbabwe-South Africa Foreign Relations: A Zimbabwean Perspective. *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, 1(4).

<sup>193</sup>Rupiya, M. R. (2003). Zimbabwe in South Africa's foreign policy: A Zimbabwean view. *South African Yearbook of International Affairs* 2002, 3, 161-170.

<sup>194</sup>Malan, M., & Cilliers, J. (1997). SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: Future Development.

<sup>195</sup>Rupiya, (2003).

<sup>196</sup> Alden, C. and le Pere, G. (2003) *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy: from Reconciliation to Revival?* Oxford University Press.

occupied the white-owned farms. To retain his power Mugabe turned to violence which affected the poor electorate negatively and sabotaged democracy. Poverty and hunger hit the country leading to adverse effects on the citizens. Zimbabwe was then suspended from the Commonwealth because of its human rights violations in the year 2002. Thabo Mbeki made an appeal to the Commonwealth to stop the suspension.<sup>197</sup> In this period South Africa chose 'quiet diplomacy' as a way of dealing with the political situation that affected their neighbors which demonstrated his democratic leadership style. There were various reasons for adopting this form of diplomacy. To start with, South Africa under Mbeki's administration wanted to demonstrate respect for the Zimbabwe sovereignty. Secondly, South Africa demonstrated that they respected and honored Zimbabwe's internal affairs. Thirdly, Thabo Mbeki's government sympathized with Zimbabwe because it felt that imposing economic sanction would make the Zimbabwe situation worse since the country depended on them for major resources such as power.<sup>198</sup> Therefore, Mbeki's administration was keen on making the Zimbabwean economy keep on running rather than seeing it undergo a complete collapse. Thus, Mbeki's administration saw the quiet diplomacy as a constructive engagement that was meant to make Mugabe reform and end the social, economic and political crises that affected the country. Additionally, South Africa's 'quiet diplomacy' towards Zimbabwe should be understood in the context of Mbeki's idea of African Renaissance. This is because the principle of African Renaissance was a key pillar of South Africa's international relations during Mbeki's era. Mbeki was disconnected to the problem in Zimbabwe as he used to proclaim that there were no crises. He also did not interact much with the South African Embassy that is based in Harare. Sometimes he even flew in the country without their knowledge. This led to questioning of his democratic leadership because this type of leadership requires high involvement of other parties. He seemed to be more aligned to ZANU-PF elite whom they he established contact with during the liberation years and as such he did not seem to support the MDC formation.<sup>199</sup>

Unlike Thabo Mbeki, Jacob Zuma has adopted a tougher approach on Zimbabwe which could be attributed to the criticism on 'quiet diplomacy' approach. As a democratic leader, Zuma was keen on promoting democratic process in Zimbabwe although he maintained silence on the

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<sup>197</sup>Youla, C. (2009). *The foreign policies of Mandela and Mbeki: a clear case of idealism vs realism?* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

<sup>198</sup> Makekeng, L. (2010). *Analysing South Africa's foreign policy towards Zimbabwe: 2000-2009* (Doctoral dissertation).

<sup>199</sup>Youla, (2009).

situation when he served as vice-president during Mbeki's administration. When he became the president in 2009, he clearly stated that intervention measures for Zimbabwe if they violate democracy will be applied through SADC.<sup>200</sup> He even went further to draft roadmap to democratic 2013 Zimbabwe elections. Zuma's administration also kept on warning Zimbabwean government for failure to honor Global political agreements especially the world cup deadlines. Therefore, on the South African approach to Zimbabwe issues changed immediately when Zuma came to power. Zuma took a proactive approach toward the Zimbabwe crisis, because he believed that if the situation is not addressed promptly it could be a catastrophe. This was a contrast to his predecessor Mbeki, who chose a lackluster approach, and claimed that there were no crisis in Zimbabwe and the situation could be managed.

Therefore there were significant differences on the way Presidents Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma handled the Zimbabwe situation. Although they were elected during different times in all these eras Zimbabwe continued to suffer from political, social and economic problems. President Nelson Mandela chose to continue with bilateral relations with Zimbabwe with less interest on the problems affecting the nation as he was more concerned with the internal matters of South Africa as well as the international community. President Mbeki on the other hand, adopted a 'quiet diplomacy' approach toward Zimbabwe and went on to engage in trade relations. This was in line with the African renaissance principles which Mbeki pursued. Mbeki wanted a more united Africa and as such he did not want to interfere with what was happening in Zimbabwe, besides, he advocated for peaceful resolution of conflicts. President Zuma, on the other hand, chose a proactive approach and offered condemnation as well as threats to Zimbabwe's crisis. These different approaches of the relations between South Africa and Zimbabwe could have been brought about by electoral political effects. Pressures from interest groups and the electorate which forms part of the electoral politics could have compelled these presidents to act in such a manner towards Zimbabwe.

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<sup>200</sup>Leon, H. (2017).Contextualizing. University of South Africa.



#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Electoral politics and International relations are two related aspects. The domestic politics have a role in determining the relations that a state has with other states either regionally or globally. The International relations policies are determined by political leaders who draw their influences from the electorate. The electoral political factors also shape the leadership style that a political leader will take. South Africa is a constitutional democracy comprising of the following arms of government: the Executive, the Legislature, and Judiciary. The electoral politics in South Africa have a role in determining the international relations that the country establishes. The country's post-apartheid electoral politics are founded on the principles of democracy, human rights and African agenda which have also found its way in international relations matters. When political leaders are deciding on the international relations policy in South Africa they act rationally by ensuring that they promote the domestic interests such as the human rights, democracy, country's economic development and people's welfare agenda as well as the regional interests which are the African agenda. Therefore, all the South African post-apartheid presidents have acted rationally in making choices on the actors to engage in matters of international relations so as to achieve these agendas. However, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma have demonstrated differences on how they pursued these interests in their international relation actions due to the electoral political effects. For instance, the pursuit of this African Agenda by these presidents was differentiated by the policies they used. Nelson Mandela was largely guided by the tenets of human rights and democracy and collaboration of western powers while Thabo Mbeki was majorly guided by achieving African unity by supporting the AU and its organs and also use of peaceful mechanisms to solve African problems as well as promoting democracy and human rights although the latter two were not important to Mbeki as his predecessor. When Jacob Zuma came to power as the South African president there was a major shift from Mandela's and Mbeki's African agenda pursued which was indicated by the change from the "African renaissance" to African enhancement. President Zuma advanced his "Africa Agenda" under the "African enhancement" which concentrated more on strengthening the AU and its organs, engaging in peace missions, empowering Africa for development and ending poverty with least emphasis on human rights and establishment of democratic nations. Therefore, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma were elected at different times to be the head of state for South Africa and in their presidential terms they have had differences as well as similarities in

their international relations policies and actions as well as their democratic leadership styles. These differences and similarities can be attributed to electoral politics which makes the leaders to come up with their own strategic plans that have a major impact on the international relations matters. However, the central theme among all these three leaders is their democratic approach to leadership.

## **5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Over the post-apartheid period the South African political systems has not changed significantly. This is so because all the post-apartheid presidents, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma were elected from the ANC party. Therefore, they had to stick to the ideals of the party in all areas of operation. Their international relations agenda did not, therefore, change dramatically because each president had to continue the work of his predecessor. However, there were some changes on the international relations that could be attributed to slight changes in the leadership styles as well as electoral political issues that were prevailing during each regime. The three presidents have demonstrated democratic leadership styles when pursuing international relations agenda with each leader being unique in his application and adherence to the principles of democratic leadership. These leaders have therefore adhered to the ideals of a constitutional democracy which the country adopted in 1994 during the process of transitional government.

### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

According to the results of this study, international relation is not determined by one factor as it is interplay of multiple factors. Myriad of factors interact and determine the international relations activities and actions among different actors. The importance of these factors in determining international relations varies according to circumstances. This study revealed that international relations policy has its roots in political institutions, historical backgrounds of a country, economic needs, geographical circumstances, power factors, aspirations, and the culture of a country. From the South African perspective it can be declared that international relation policy basis its foundation on the geography, political traditions, economic development, international milieu, domestic milieu, and military strength. Therefore, the domestic and international environment plays a chief role in determining the international relations established by the country. An example of domestic environmental factors that affects international relations is the electoral politics. This study revealed that in the post-apartheid South Africa, international relation policies have been dominated by the following factors: racial policies, political factors and historical events as well as the international environments factors. Political factors features prominently in determining the South African international relations. These political factors are determined by the history and traditions of South Africa. The democratic traditions of South

Africa have an influence on the international relation policies that the country establishes. The success of these international relations is based on how well the country establishes democratic political systems. Since 1994 South Africa have been holding democratic elections which have been a key determinant of the international relations. In the post-apartheid period, South Africa have held five successful democratic elections and thus setting example for the rest of the African region international relations. All the post-apartheid presidents have been portrayed themselves as democratic leaders so as to persuade both international and regional actors to establish strong ties with the country. Democracy is one of the key electoral political factors that South Africa has used to establish intentional relations with actors in the international relations arena. President Nelson Mandela, as the first president of South Africa adopted democratic leadership. This was in an effort to give the black minority who had been oppressed for a long time a chance to participate in that national decision making of the country. South Africans have been denied democracy for the long time by the colonial masters and as such it had to be featured prominently in the domestic politics of the country. Mandela also wanted the leadership style of South Africa to be in line with those of the Western powers so that he can woo them to bring developmental programs into South Africa and Africa at large. President Mbeki who succeeded Mandela was also elected twice through a democratic process and went on to follow Mandela's democratic style of leadership which was deeply entrenched in the country's electoral politics. He also adopted democracy as part of his international relations agenda. For instance, in his African Renaissance agenda he used democracy as a tool for him to be accepted by all African nations. In his African renaissance agenda Mbeki became an ambassador of democracy spreading it across all the African nations. He also used his democratic ideals to encourage peaceful resolution of conflicts in the African continent. President Zuma was also democratically elected and adopted democratic ideals in his international relations agendas. As a democratic president he used to consult other governmental officers on the issue of international relations. Zuma has also been in the forefront encouraging African leaders to adopt democracy and the ideals of good governance. Therefore, democracy has been part of the electoral politics in South Africa and found its way into the international relations agenda of the country that was advanced by the three presidents. The second major factor that featured prominently in the South African electoral politics and found its way into the country's intern international relations agenda of the post apartheid regimes is the human rights issues. Human rights matters have been a political

issue in the apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. During the apartheid period the black majority were mistreated through the apartheid laws as advanced by the white minority. When it came to post-apartheid era the issue human rights has dominated each and every election in South Africa. The citizens and the interest groups have been pressuring the leaders to uphold high standards of human rights. This compelled all the three South African post apartheid presidents to be guided by human rights aspects in their international relations agenda. To start with, Mandela has been a chief agent of human rights in his international relations missions both in regionally and internationally. Regionally he preached the respect for human rights to all African leaders. He pleaded with all the African presidents to respect human rights. Internationally, Nelson Mandela did not condone any country that did not respect human rights. For instance, despite advancing the African renaissance he advocated to the international community to impose sanctions on Nigeria, an African country, for violation of human rights during the reign of President Abacha. This shows that Nelson Mandela was a true advocate of respect for human rights in his international relations mission.

Mandela's two successors including Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma also included the human rights agenda in their international relations policy. In their relationship with the other African national they emphasized on the importance of respecting human rights. Thabo Mbeki preached the human rights gospel when pursuing the African renaissance agenda. Jacob Zuma, on the other hand, used his African enhancement banner to encourage African leaders to adopt the respect for human rights. Therefore, electoral political issues such as human rights which were and are rampant in South Africa have a major impact on the countries international relations agenda. It has defined what these three post-apartheid presidents have included in their international relations agenda. The inclusion of South Africa into Africa has also been part of the electoral politics in South Africa during the post-apartheid era and as such it was included into the international relations agenda by all the three presidents. During the apartheid period South Africa was excluded from African affairs and thus making the country to be isolated by other African countries. When South Africa became a constitutional democracy after 1994 elections the first president made sure that the country united with other African leaders. President Nelson Mandela included African agenda in his international relations mission of African renaissance. He strongly called for African unity and pleaded with the international actors to help South

Africa and African continent develop. President Mbeki also included the African agenda theme in his international relations mission by extending the African renaissance. He used this banner to place South Africa on a top position as a representative of African nation on international platform. He has also helped to develop and build different organs of AU. He has also used the African agenda to persuade Africans to work towards ending poverty and develop the continent. Zuma has also pursued the African agenda under the banner "African Enhancement". As part of the international relations Zuma has offered support to the AU and its institutions as well as calling for peaceful resolution of conflict, good governance and development of the country. Therefore it is clear electoral politics have an impact on the international relations agenda. Predominant matters that are part of electoral politics will always infiltrate and find their way into international relations issues as it has been the case with South Africa. Lastly, the electoral political matters will always influence leaders when making decisions about international relations agenda.

Additionally, this research revealed that international relation is a matter of choices and interests. Therefore, rational choice theory can be used to explain the international relation acts that have occurred in the post apartheid South Africa. As an actor in the international system, South Africa has had systems run by human beings to advance its agenda. The major system that was concerned with the international relations issues was the Department of Foreign Affairs that later changed its name to Department of International Relations and Co-operation. This department is made up of human being who acts rationally when making decisions about matters of international relations. South African president and the department of the foreign affairs have been making rational choices for international relation based on the country's preferences in a manner that they will maximize gains from these relations. South Africa has been focused in establishing relations that can lead to development and economic benefits in the country and the nation as a whole. According to the rational choice theory individuals make choices based depending on individual preferences in a rational manner. When making these choices they try to consider the gains more. For instance, President Nelson Mandela acted rationally when he was choosing between ROC (Republic of China) and PRC (People,s Republic of China). Although South Africa had already established strong relations with ROC as trading and development aid partners Mandela had to choose PRC and forego all the benefits that were realized as a result of

association with ROC. President Mandela acted rationally when choosing PRC because he realized that PRC was a more strategic partner than ROC. This is because it had high population that could offer market for South African goods and also PRC had a permanent membership in the United Nation Security Council and as such the world recognized it as a representative of the people republic of china. Therefore the maximization of benefits that came with establishment of international relations with PRC made Mandela choose it despite opting for dual recognition of ROC and PRC initially. In another example, Both Mbeki and Zuma's continued to have strong ties with Nigeria despite being accused of human rights violations. Mbeki and Zuma rationally chose Nigeria as one of their major partners in Africa for various reasons. One of the reasons is Nigeria is a major nation in the West African region and also a respected African country that has a big population. Therefore to be relevant and have influence in Africa South African leaders knew very well that they had to establish strong ties with Nigeria. The interests of these leaders were to ensure that South Africa benefits in all international relations decisions and choices that they make. Secondly, the South African presidents were also interested in making sure that the African continent benefited from all the international relations decisions that they make. This shows that before engaging into any international relations matter presidents and the respective department first engages in rational decision making before making any choice. Therefore, a country acts rationally in matters of international relations so as to pursue her self-interest but not those interests of other actors. The actors in international systems seeks to maximize gains and reduces losses loses in their international relations pursuit. These actors try as much as possible to have sufficient information that they use in their rational analysis and decision making on matters of international relations. In making these choices the research shows that the electoral politics in a country plays a role. For example, in South Africa the electoral politics are dominated by matters of democracy, human rights and Africa agenda and as such the three post-apartheid presidents were keen on considering these when making decisions on matters of international relations. Therefore, electoral politics have a major role in all aspects of international relations. This study therefore agrees with the hypothesis that the South African electoral politics have had an effect on the country's international relations.

### **5.3 Areas for Further Research**

This study focused on the investigation of the “The Effect of Electoral Politics on a Country’s International Relations: A Case Study of South Africa 1994-2017”. Its major focus was the behavior of presidents Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma on matters of international relations and how electoral politics influenced them. Further studies are required on a different context to determine whether or not electoral politics have an impact on international relations and if they do, then in what ways and how different from the context of South Africa. This will be a vital study in confirming that indeed electoral politics in a country can affect the international relation decisions and actions. The investigation will also help to authenticate or nullify the result of this current study.



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