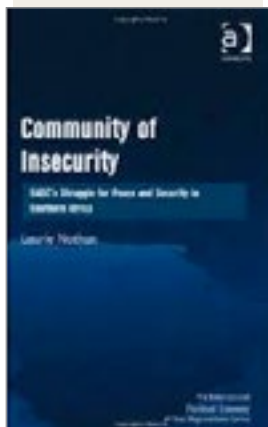**André Dumon** is an intern at the Helen Suzman Foundation.

Laurie Nathan's *'Community of insecurity: SADC's struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa'*

Laurie Nathan's authoritative examination of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a well sustained analysis on its failure to achieve its main objectives: peace and security in the region. The reasons for this failure are argued to portend a dark future for the regional organisation and its stated objectives. As someone who served SADC in an advisory capacity, Nathan's analysis certainly provides a privileged perspective and he should be given an attentive reading.

The book presents a neat account of SADC's security architecture and the inability of the organisation to live up to the laudable goals sought in its treaty, agenda and protocols. Replete with examples, an in-depth account of SADC's creation, evolution and efficacy is offered to the reader.

The theoretical grounding of the author's argument is found in Karl Deutsch's writings on the idea of 'security communities'. As such, the author is quick point out that the region's lack of a commitment to common values and a deficit of trust, lies at the heart of SADC's failure as a veritable 'security community'. This lack of common values is evidenced in the disparate domestic or 'national' characteristics of each member state. One need only look at the World Justice Project and Freedom House's ranking of the SADC member states to see how the region's members differ in regimes, adherence to the rule of law and democratic character. With such a varied array of identities the region's security architecture is built on bad foundations.

The first problem is then that in the place of common values and trust one finds in SADC priority being accorded to regime solidarity. This is not surprising as SADC is the reincarnation of the former Front Line States, which was a trade and security response to the regional strategy of the Apartheid regime in South Africa. The lasting history of this set of relationships is wonderfully exemplified in the person of the octogenarian Robert Mugabe, who still assumes the role of the 'elder', to whom homage must be paid and deference shown. Obviously, the idea of a historical debt remains in the collective political psyche.

The lack of common values compounds the second reason for SADC's failure: the weakness of the member states and the unwillingness to surrender sovereignty to any

regional or supra-national organisation. For the SADC states, who only relatively recently won their independence and still have a rather tenuous grip of *de facto* sovereignty, even though they have full *de jure* sovereignty, transferring sovereignty to any other organisation comes across as threatening. In an international arena characterised by anarchy, sovereignty in a 'self-help system' remains the guiding rationale. Being mired in such a paradigm is deleterious to the goals of a security community, which requires submission to the institutions of its own creation.

Speaking at 'SADC Tribunal: Removing the scales of justice', a public dialogue series hosted by the University of Pretoria, Laurie Nathan's narrative introduced a timeous addition to the body of literature about SADC. This is particularly true in light of the SADC Summit in August, when the future of the SADC Tribunal will be decided, and with it the efficacy and continuity of its judicial organ, without which SADC's human security onus will be non-existent. This is another instance of a failure to institutionalise the SADC Treaty. The Summit will thus test whether member states cohere to Treaty principles, the normative fabric that is still lacking in SADC, as the book makes unequivocally clear.

Nathan cogently and convincingly argues that the preoccupation with sovereignty results in priority being given to regime security. As a consequence, the liberation movement of the past, now placed in the role of ruling party in a supposedly democratic state, is a conflicted entity, struggling with the two roles. This preoccupation with regime security is done at the expense of human security, one of the objectives of the SADC grouping.

If the lack of common values of the relationships begins to explain SADC failure then it is argued that one must consider the national and domestic failure of the region. The author states this saying, "The inhabitants of a country wracked by violence cannot plausibly be said to live in a security community."[1]

The book also contains case studies of instances reflecting those dynamics that inhibit SADC from achieving its objectives. These include the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1998-2002), the on-going mediation in Zimbabwe and the coup in Madagascar (2009). In each case it is shown that the lack of consensus on normative issues results in a lack of unity of purpose and vision.

A general readership would have benefitted from a more systematic exposition of SADC's structural problems, being duplicative membership and competing cooperative schemes in the areas of security and economics. This compounds problems of foreign policy orientations that are often at odds and various degrees of regional responses to the ideal of democratic governance, which the book does take up. Despite not presently much in the way of successes, one must be reminded that this is not the purpose of the book. Nathan does, however, make the telling point that SADC's on-going restructuring suggests more of a forum than a true community.

NOTES
1   Nathan 2012:152

REFERENCES
Nathan, L. (2012). Community of insecurity: SADC's struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa. London, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing Limited.