

Strategy Research Project International Fellow

The Impact of Illegal and Legal Migration on the Defense Security of South Africa

by

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United States Army War College
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**THE IMPACT OF ILLEGAL AND LEGAL MIGRATION ON THE DEFENSE SECURITY
OF SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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ABSTRACT

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This paper will examine the phenomenon of migration, movement of people across national borders, into South Africa causing socio-economic challenges that negatively impact the internal defense security of South Africa. The question remains what role and how South Africa will approach neighboring countries in an effort to resolve this issue. This paper briefly explains why migration is a problem, what negative consequences it poses, and what interventions South Africa in collaboration with neighboring countries should engage to mitigate this migration phenomenon and the reduce the impact on defense and military forces. Comparisons will be made with the migration of people to the United States to see if there are any similarities and lessons learnt to be used as a basis to build and improve the security challenge imposed by migration to South Africa.

THE IMPACT OF ILLEGAL AND LEGAL MIGRATION ON THE DEFENSE SECURITY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

South Africa (SA) as a developing state is facing the challenge of huge population movements within and between neighboring states. Cross-border labor migration between SA and its neighbors is not a new phenomenon and dates back to the mid-19th century, when the South African diamond and gold mining industries were founded. Internationally, cross border migration is governed by the highly regulated and formalized mine contract-labor system established between 1890 and 1920, which continues today. Other methods are various kinds of informal or unregulated movements across borders. The issue of border control and illegal immigration into SA is a major concern and listed priority on the SA government issues. Illegal migration was neglected and initially not addressed to such an extent that steered out of control and allegedly it was a mechanism used in politics in order to accommodate history. During apartheid, Mkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), went underground in neighboring countries rebelling against the apartheid regime. That is why the SA government feels obliged towards foreigners by easily allowing them into SA in an effort to compensate for their contribution to the struggle. Despite efforts by national and local government and civil societies there is still a lack of adequate migration policy and illegal migration into SA will remain causing xenophobic attacks within several areas. With statistics showing high rates of population growth in South Africa, does migration serve as a welcoming invitation for foreigners into an already saturated SA labor market? How many people migrate, and to what extent are they accepted by the population of SA? With all these factors taken into consideration the

vital question, viewed through a security lens, is: what impact does the migration of such people have on the defense security of SA? I will compare the migration issues experienced between the US and Mexico to determine what lessons SA can learn in order to improve its own border issues.

The purpose of this paper is to understand the global migration crisis in the specific context of illegal migration into SA and how it impacts defense security. The aim is to explore the various causes which lead to population movement, its effect, and to arrive at specific conclusions relevant to policy-making. A comparative study will undoubtedly not only enrich the understanding of migration, but will also enable South Africa and neighboring countries to learn from the experiences and lessons learnt by the United States facing similar problems.

Background

In SA, the apartheid state channeled unauthorized migrants to commercial farms by offering them the option of working on farms or being deported. South Africa has received seasonal migrants for decades, as the country began its trek toward a modern industrial economy. South Africa has embraced democracy and a liberal bill of rights, but also gives rights to criminals. On 09 March 2011, Dr Johan Burger told *defenseWeb's* second annual Border Control conference. "Many are fleeing situations of conflict, unemployment, poverty...they see hope in South Africa and come here in search of opportunity, but in essence put severe strain on border measures and control".¹

Migration is defined as a move from one place in order to go and live in another place for a continuous period of at least one year.² In practice, it proves hard to control immigration to the extent that only 'wanted' migrants enter countries of destination, and

that they only stay for certain periods of time. According to the World Migration Report “migration is also becoming more complex, but also because of the difficulties in distinguishing the particular needs and rights of various types of persons forming part of irregular migration flows – for example, asylum-seekers or unaccompanied minors.”³ The original predominance of labor migration and past colonial migration flows has become more diversified as family reunion and family migration has become more common, as well as the arrival of asylum-seekers increasing in numbers from many regions in the world stricken by war, civil conflict and poverty.

Initially, approaches to the phenomenon of migration were predominantly economic in nature.⁴ According to Gordon H. Hanson, from the University of California, San Diego, Mexico is the most important source country for US immigration, accounting for 34 percent of total immigrant arrivals since 1990.⁵ Reasons influencing the flow of Mexican migrants to the US, are real wages far exceed those in many other countries, the geographic proximity, and the well-established migration networks back and forth finding jobs and housing in the US. The United States, as the economic superpower, lures huge amounts of illegal foreigners in search for an improvement in their lifestyle. Income differentials are major factors in the movement of Third World nationals to the First World, but the approach should not be applied to the phenomenon of illegal immigration into SA from neighboring countries. SA is an overwhelmingly Third World country displaying some First World characteristics and it is not the functional equivalent of what the US is to Mexico, comparing statistical data as more illegal migrants want to enter the US. SA can learn from the lessons learnt by the US in how to deal with the illegal migration issue into the country.

The mining economy established in South Africa in the late 19th century relied on labor not only from South Africa's rural areas but also from neighboring countries. Miners from Lesotho, Mozambique, and other countries formed the majority of the mining work force until the 1970s; they continued to make up some 40 percent of the total thereafter, despite new preferences given to South African workers. Until 1995 only whites were considered potential permanent immigrants, with African immigrants defined as "foreign natives."⁶ Apartheid SA accorded privileged status to white immigrants and attempted to increase white immigration at the expense of prospective non-white immigrants. Even the new democratic SA has been out of step with the rest of the region regarding post-colonial, independent migration policies that neighboring states pursued. In SA, the policy of apartheid was directed against every person who did not belong to the white minority. As such, black South Africans were accorded the status of refugees in their respective residential areas.⁷ The apartheid regime allocated all black ethnic nations their own states, where they could operate and manage their domestic business, however if they were working in the "white areas", a curfew was enforced. During the apartheid era, black people were seen as illegal migrants in their own country, and were treated as such.

"Consequently migration, in the sense in which we have defined it, has existed and is likely to be purely a temporary phenomenon, whereby the breadwinner will leave his country for another to improve his family's living conditions."⁸ Illegal or legal migrants prefer to move to SA for economic reasons but when it comes to the actual move, family-related reasons determine the choice of country. Undoubtedly, admission policies, which generally provide more scope for family migration than for economic

migration, contribute to this. For more than a century the political economy of Southern Africa has been molded by a complex pattern of labor migration and political exclusion. The economic explanations neglect two critical political elements. The first is that population movements are often impelled, encouraged, or prevented by governments or political forces for reasons that may have little to do with economic conditions. Second, even when economic conditions create inducements for people to immigrate, it is governments that decide whether their citizens should be allowed to leave, or whether migrants should be allowed to enter their state territories, and their decisions are frequently based on non-economic considerations. SA's government wishes to control the entry of people, and regard their inability to do so as a threat to its sovereignty and security. Consequently, any efforts to develop a framework for analyzing migration flows and their effects must take into account the political determinants and constraints upon these flows.

Internally, pass laws defined the rights of South Africa's own Africans. None had political rights, and only a few were granted rights of residence in urban and other "white" areas. The most notorious example, of course, is the South African apartheid system. This system, established in the late 19th century, was systematized and intensified under the "apartheid" label in the period following World War II. The pass laws and forced removals of Africans to rural "homelands" were among the most visible and widely denounced aspects of the apartheid system. The parallel between the forces at work in internal and international migration can also be seen by analyzing systems in which states have attempted to control internal migration by imposing internal borders and restrictions of movement. That system is often envisaged merely as a system of

racial separation, but it was also an elaborately constructed system of labor control, as pass laws defined the rights of Africans to live and work in specific areas. Workers on temporary contracts but without rights were channeled to places where labor was needed, to be used and then returned to “homelands” and neighboring countries. The Group Areas Act regulated where those classified as Indians or Coloreds by the apartheid state were allowed to live and do business. The segregation laws prohibited the free movement of black people, and during the post-apartheid era a total migration of people took place. Black South Africans were moving from the rural area to the urban area searching for better future. These vacated rural areas can easily become a nest and safe-haven for terrorists’ activities.

Post apartheid, SA citizens expected government to perform better regarding the managing of illegal migrants, but the issue seems to be worsening despite efforts implemented by the relevant agencies responsible. The end of political apartheid in 1994 dismantled racial barriers where all South Africans could reside. South Africa is one of the few countries in the world where the overall levels of economic inequality have increased. These internal legacies of apartheid have been widely debated and criticized by the rest of the international community. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the discrepancies in living standards among southern African countries, SA is rated 90 out of 175. Until recently, the legacy of apartheid on regional structures of inequality, reflected in the treatment of regional migrants in South Africa, did not face the same level of being unwanted and discriminated against as post 1994.⁹ There was not such a huge influx of illegal migrants into SA, comparing from post 1994 till currently. The South African political

system adopted a friendly approach towards neighboring countries. Despite the friendly approach, SA citizens made it obvious to the illegal migrants that they are unwanted in SA. Contrary to that, the pre-1994 government arrested all illegal migrants and deported them immediately back to their country of origin. Illegal as well as legal migration to South Africa continued to grow in the post-1994 period, driven both by economic opportunities and by the arrival of political refugees. In addition to migrants from the traditional Southern African sending countries, Somalis, Nigerians, and Congolese are among the nationalities prominently represented and visible in urban centers, particularly Johannesburg and Cape Town. With the unemployment rate at 25 percent of citizens, the SA government has faced criticism for its poor management allowing immigrants into SA, resulting in competition for scarce jobs and space in shantytowns that have mushroomed in major cities. Citizens are moving from the rural areas, to the cities in the hope of being nearer to employment opportunities. The current SA government and political elites are caught between their strong commitment to human rights and economics, and citizen demands inherited from years of struggle against the apartheid regime. The issue of illegal migrants is a sensitive issue, but also has severe consequences on the socio-economic aspect of the country. How will the government rectify the influx of illegal immigrants or even reverse the friendly approach they adopted post-1994? Illegal migrants have flooded the cities making it a fighting ground between themselves and citizens for employment and survival which is the reason that xenophobic attacks become rife.

Xenophobic Attacks

The South African public attention has been focused on the allegedly socio-economic impact of illegal migrants within South Africa.¹⁰ Despite contradicting or lack of

evidence to confirm these attentions, the socio-economic impact of illegal migrants on SA has been diverted from the suffering and exploitation experienced by aliens as a result of official policies and xenophobic attitudes. A widespread outbreak of xenophobic violence in May 2008 led to over 60 deaths. These violent attacks brought fresh attention to the issue of the battle between citizens and foreigners. Several forms of harassment towards foreigners included verbal insults, threats or acts of violence, intimidation and physical attacks. Migrants from Zimbabwe, roughly estimated between 1 and 1.5 million, most undocumented, were granted temporary protection from deportation in 2009 and 2010. The illegal immigrants, who may face deportation at the end of 2011, might have the privilege of a possibility of extension to June 2012.¹¹ There is still much disagreement about the causes of and the remedies for anti-immigrant sentiment in South Africa—even the use of the term xenophobia is contested—and about the potential for further violence. Evidence shows that hostility to foreigners from other African countries is pervasive, deep-rooted and structural, cutting across all divides in South African society. South African citizens fear the worst as many illegal migrants have skills related to armed fighting and are therefore capable of sustaining an armed response against the South African state.¹² This sentiment is shared by the majority of South Africans of all races and classes, making South African views on migrants among the most hostile anywhere in the world. This is despite the fact that the South African constitution explicitly extends basic human rights to all residents. Researchers concluded that violence against foreign nationals was not more prevalent in locales with the highest rates of unemployment or the highest percentages of foreign residents. Although violence did occur in areas with high levels of economic deprivation,

male residents, and informal housing, violence was typically triggered by the competition of leaders for local political and economic power, which occurred in areas with weak local governance structures. The implication is that even in the absence of adequate policy at the national level, local governments and civil society coalitions can have an impact on curbing violence. Unless, the SA government can draft a migration policy applicable to the SA border and neighboring countries it will remain with the challenge of managing the influx of illegal immigration that stretch and finally exhausting existing resources as well as defense resources.

There are still discrepancies within government and other agencies regarding the exact total of illegal migrants within SA borders. The total migrant stock in Southern Africa reached 2.2 million people in 2010, with an average annual increase of 7.3 percent since 2005. South Africa hosts the vast majority of these migrants (1.9 million). The stock of international migrants as a percentage of total population increased from 2.7 percent in 2005 to 3.7 percent in 2010.¹³ Estimates of the number of illegal immigrants entering the country range from two to eight million.¹⁴ Among the most detailed surveys of attitudes was one done in 2006 by the Southern African Migration Program. In that survey, 67 percent of South African respondents regarded migrants as a criminal threat, and the same proportion said that foreigners consumed resources that should be allocated to South Africans. More than 30,000 motor vehicles illegally cross South African borders into neighboring states every year, with one car hire firm losing five rental vehicles every month. Foreign migrants are a huge problem and are associated with crime and overrepresentation in trade.¹⁵ Most of these illegal migrants enter SA without documents and are difficult to control, nor does the SA government

know who these illegal immigrants are, where they come from or what their immediate destination is. This makes it difficult to trace them in case it becomes necessary. These illegal immigrants are prone to crime as targets and victims. They are also often used to commit crime. The figures for illegal migration are growing, and the SA government needs to put stricter control measures in place in allowing migrants into the country. With the deployment of the SANDF along the borders, the soldiers will be exposed to these criminal activities before handing the perpetrators over to the South African Police Services (SAPS) for criminal investigation and trial.

Law Enforcement Agency

How does the US statistical data regarding illegal migrants compare to that of SA? According to data collected by the Census Bureau that was released in the latest American Community Survey (ACS) regarding illegal immigrants, in 2010 there was a total immigrant population of 40 million (legal and illegal). Of this number some 10 to 12 million are likely illegal immigrants.¹⁶ The ACS also shows 13.9 million immigrants (legal and illegal) arrived in the last decade. This compares to the 13.2 million (legal and illegal) who arrived from 1990 to 2000 shown by the 2000 Census.¹⁷ Statistically, the figures for the decade just completed are higher than those from the 2000 Census, making the period from 2000 to 2010 the highest total of new migrants in the nation's history. In the 1980s, which like the 1990s was also a period of economic expansion, 8.7 million new immigrants arrived. The economic effects of migration vary widely. Sending countries may experience both gains and losses in the short term but may stand to gain economically over the longer term as the people send money back to their families. As for receiving countries, temporary programs help to address skills shortages but may decrease domestic wages and add to the public welfare burden. South African

law enforcement agencies must establish an integrated system that is interconnected which allow all agencies to update information. This method will prevent information regarding illegal migrants in SA being distorted and not regularly available for public consumption. United States federal law enforcement agencies work cooperatively with local law enforcement agencies to identify illegal immigrants in state and local detention facilities for purposes of reimbursement for some of the expense of incarceration. As the immigrant population grows, it creates pressure for more immigration; therefore it forces the SA government to be pro-active to make an impact on border issues. As a result, the level of new immigration remained high, even in the face of a weak job market. The secondary task of the SANDF is to support other state departments; population movement entry control is the primary responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs, South African Revenue Services (SARS) and SAPS.

Policy

“In the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, for example, domestic laws of citizenship have inconsistent rules on migration and often limit the rights to citizenship for children of migrants.”¹⁸ According to Hussain Solomon, since 1994 SA immigration policy can be best described as ambiguous. As the key player, the Department of Home Affairs was unable to produce and publish a White Paper on Migration Policy. The lack of clear policy guidelines resulted in ad hoc, reactive and uncoordinated responses to illegal immigration and confusion among civil servants awaiting clear, unambiguous signals from policymakers. This ambiguity arose within government that in contrast, at least in its policy documents, advocates a softer approach to the issue. The SA government seems divided on the approach to deal with migration. Nothing has really changed, as SA sought to tighten measures of control

regarding illegal migration of people, but policies still lack continuity. However, SA was faced with an obligation towards neighboring countries, being challenged with the inherent “immorality” of enforced deportations. It, posits that, given the years of apartheid destabilization of the region, SA owes a moral debt to its neighboring countries. This debt prevents SA from employing coercive measures to solve its illegal migration problem. Thus SA needs to accommodate migrants from the region within its borders in some form. From this perspective the SA government faltered by not seriously putting active control measures in place and by allowing illegal immigration at an increasing tempo. This is very dangerous to SA’s safety, because in the context of opening its borders, it risks being overwhelmed by a massive influx of migrants from neighboring countries. South African migration policy still lacks provisions to accommodate the legal migration of African migrants. At the national level, in light of anti-migrant sentiment among government officials and the public, major reforms will undoubtedly be hard to achieve. It is likely, however, that incremental measures in this regard, such as the effort to register Zimbabwean migrants in 2010, will continue to be accompanied, as in the United States, with stepped-up deportations and largely ineffective efforts to tighten border control. US policy is straight forward, unless you entered the US through a valid entry point the person is identified as an illegal alien. Given structural economic realities and the embedded character of public opinion on the issue, it is virtually certain that these measures will not significantly reduce the growth of the migrant population in South Africa, curtail ongoing human rights violations, nor eliminate the threat of new large-scale violence. The lack and the unwillingness of the SA government to control illegal migrants, because of history with neighboring countries

pre-apartheid, leave them indecisive as whether to tighten this sensitive issue of border control measures, or not. With the lack of clear cut policy and guidelines, the SANDF who will be responsible for the physical border control, will be disadvantaged if these issues are not clarified between the respective countries.

"In response, countries of destination, SA included, are keen to distinguish between "genuine" refugees and "economic migrants", writes Professor Gavin Cawthra, Chair in Defence and Security Management at the Graduate School of Public and Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. He says security, including border control, is the responsibility of a wide range of government departments and other agencies.¹⁹ Borders and migration need to be managed in the context of national security policy and strategy, based on national interests and values. Security as the first and most important obligation of any government is, "Not just the safety and security of the country and its citizens ... but also guarding national values and interests against both internal and external dangers."²⁰ He also stated that it is not just freedom from undue fear of attack against their person, community or sources of their prosperity and sovereignty, but also the preservation of political, economic and social values – the rule of law, democracy, human rights, a market economy and the environment. South Africa should anticipate that the situation will definitely worsen with the semi-control of illegal migration into SA. Illegal migration will eventually lead to a stage whereby it negatively impact on security, and will take longer to restore and recover the principles as stipulated in the constitution.

Border Security Priority

Border security has become an important national priority – so much so that it has supplanted South Africa's attempts to bring peace to the African continent. The

SANDF's mission is to protect the national border against illegal entry by means of border or maritime control. South Africa maintains a re-active approach while respecting the sovereignty of others. According to the military's Chief Director Operations, Major General Barney Hlatshwayo, the SANDF will deploy 22 companies to strengthen the land borders over the next four years.²¹ The SANDF is the lead department for safeguarding the border, and is working alongside several other agencies such as Home Affairs, Customs and Excise, and the SAPS. The SANDF area of deployment is from the Zimbabwe and Mozambique borders to include the Kruger National Park, Swaziland and Lesotho as well as along the border with Namibia and Botswana. Safeguarding South Africa's 4973 kilometres (km) land boundaries and 2881 km coastline is a logical extension of the defense of the territorial integrity of the Republic of South Africa. Border patrol successes achieved during the 2010-2011 fiscal year was a value of R61 million rand that was seized while 400 criminals were arrested and 19, 641 illegal foreigners were recorded. Despite these successes the fundamental issue will remain whether SA's own security can depend on the neighboring countries' ability to police their own borders. From all this data, it is clear that SA has to secure its borders and charge those who illegally enter the country in order to have better control. The issue of illegal immigration should be discussed on a political level of the respective countries putting plans in place to provide employment in order to mitigate the over border crossing between countries. The question remains why the SA government does not establish an entity whose priority is to oversee Homeland security. This will allow the SANDF to focus on their primary task, of which some elements are currently engaged in peace keeping operations in Africa.

Crime Prevention

In the new SA national security is no longer viewed as a predominantly military and police problem.²² The widening security agenda has also impacted the role of the armed forces in the changing global security landscape, considering the various tasks the military has performed more recently. In SA, the SANDF is used to support police operations against crime and to curb the influx of illegal immigrants. A similar situation exists in Finland, where commanders of each military district are responsible for environmental welfare.²³ To what extent should force planning for the medium and long range be driven by low probability high-impact (LPHI) events? Chapter 3 of the 1998 *Defense Review* presents what it calls a threat-independent approach, given the strategic judgment of the lack of an immediate conventional threat or of anticipated aggression without long warning time. Very correctly, therefore, it starts its analysis with contingencies and examines the possibility of invasion of South Africa. While it concludes that the risk of this is extremely low, nonetheless it is a LPHI risk and cannot be totally ignored as a contingency; indeed the current force structure of the army is predicated upon a classical hierarchy in the analysis of military contingencies that might threaten the joy and peace of South Africans. South Africa's failure to apply control measures should not be seen as a failure of control measures, in comparison to the United States which has made extensive use of control measures with a great deal of success. The US, Canada and Mexico engaged in a regional integration in an effort to ensure that there is movement of people in a controlled manner. Three countries signed the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), however, as a result, the US is strengthening its border controls with Mexico in an effort to mitigate illegal migration. The US invested a significant amount of resources in efforts to mitigate and reduce the

influx of illegal immigrants from Mexico into the United States. A fenced portion of the US border has increased significantly in the last 18 months and the number of Border Patrol agents has more than doubled in recent years to over 16,500. The number of detention beds used to hold aliens has more than doubled since 2000 to over 30,000. In 2007, 426 local law enforcement personnel participated in the 287(g) program, which trains police and allows them to enforce immigration laws.²⁴ The number of aliens removed (including deportations) has increased significantly in recent years. In 2007, 285,000 aliens were removed; nearly double the number in 2002.²⁵ That is why the US adopted "enforcement first" as the only plausible approach to immigration: put in place the mechanisms needed to truly enforce borders, overcome the myriad court challenges from the opponents of immigration law, and reduce the size of the illegal population through attrition before starting a debate on amnesty. The US and Mexico should undertake a joint effort to mitigate illegal migration and combat these corrosive threats while building a closer, enduring relationship. The two countries engaged in training programs through several annual Border Commanders' Conferences and border contact meetings between the Mexican military and the US Border Patrol. Training programs for US law enforcement agencies responsible for the US–Mexico border with training, technology and intelligence support to enhance interdiction capability.

Migration Challenges in US

According to Henry Pratt Fairchild (1880-1956), a distinguished American sociologist actively involved in race relations and immigration stated in his book, "Immigration is a world movement and its American significance, and quote immigration must not to be regarded simply as an 'American public problem', but as a sociological phenomenon of world-wide organization constantly on the move."²⁶ A graver concern

would be if the country turned inward and seriously curtailed migration. With its current levels of migration, the United States is one of the few developed countries that may avoid demographic decline and keep its share of world population, but this could change if xenophobia or reactions to terrorism closed its borders. The percentage of foreign-born residents in the United States reached its twentieth-century peak, 14.7 percent, in 1910. Today, 11.7 percent of US residents are foreign born, but in 2009, 50 percent of Americans favored decreasing immigration, up from 39 percent in 2008. The economic recession has only aggravated the problem. Although too rapid a rate of migration can cause social problems, over the long term, migration strengthens US power. Today, the United States is the world's third most populous country; 50 years from now, it is likely to still be third (after India and China). The take away for SA from this issue on illegal immigration is to act immediately to curb illegal entry into the country, and that an approach is arrived at for long term consensus goals that all political parties can agree to and enforce while they are in power to give logic and consistency to migration policy. If the SA government remains reluctant to act, migration will increase and soon the country will find it among the leading countries with illegal migrants with second and third order effects worse than now.

Not only is this relevant to economic power, but given that nearly all developed countries are aging and face the burden of providing for the older generation, immigration could help reduce the sharpness of the resulting policy problem. Rather than diluting hard and soft power, immigration enhances both. The existence of illegal migrants in any country creates and adds to economic problems. As illegal migrants within the borders of the country grow older, the social security system may bankrupt

unless appropriate reforms are put in place. People have moved in response to the growing interdependence of the major economic powers and to the wide disparities between countries in income and employment opportunities. The US, with its commanding economic position and its long-held reputation as a haven, continues to attract immigrants. Even whilst the US experienced a deep recession, it was hardly surprising that an immigration and boundary enforcement debate emerged again in mainstream political discourse. Nonetheless, the movement of migrants most notably of the “illegal” variety – across an ever- hardening US - Mexico boundary continues. Keeping in mind that macroeconomic forecasts (like weather forecasts) are notoriously unreliable, it appears that the United States will experience slower growth in the decade after the 2008 financial crisis. Not only did the recent bank bailout and Keynesian stimulus package add to US debt, but the rising costs of health care and entitlement programs such as Social Security, along with the rising cost of servicing the debt, will claim large shares of future revenue. The US government realized that the stakes in border control measures to mitigate illegal migration into the country are large. Despite economic challenges the US allocated resources in a manner that assists US law enforcement agencies responsible for the US-Mexico border. These efforts have a positive effect in lowering the figure of illegal migrants entering the United States. The citizens of South Africa and the United States constantly complain about illegal migrants, because of the perception that they take more than they contribute to the growth of their respective countries. What should the SA government do in order to address illegal migration? The mass deportation of illegal migrants is not a pragmatic solution as it would have disastrous consequences for the economy.

Socio Cultural Factors

Countries and regions around the world recognize that although migration is inevitable and potentially beneficial, it may cause social unrest and political backlash. “Socio-economic rights, such as the rights to housing and health care, have provided individual citizens and civil society organizations the basis for challenging the government when it fails to deliver on these rights.”²⁷ Extreme political and economic circumstances in a given country contribute to population movement across borders, legally or illegally. South Africa is perceived to be the rich and organized country, and various cultural groups migrate to South Africa. The migrants usually find employment in the following sectors of the economy: agriculture, hotel and restaurant, construction, domestic and informal trading. The impact on the national security of South Africa is that the government must now also provide protection for migrants against the will of its citizens. Despite declining demographics, SA leaders are reasserting the need to close their borders. Although North American leaders maintain an open immigration regime, political pressures drew attention away from beneficial benefits of human movement. Overturning the restrictions of the past, South Africa’s approach to migration in the post-apartheid period has guaranteed freedom of movement to all. Domestic migrants are allowed to access economies, enjoy critical social and financial services, and live anywhere without fear of violence and abuse – although, of course, such access is not always realized in practice. On the other hand if SA wants to fulfill its aspirations for economic growth within the region, the leaders need to consider the viability of these options and weigh the costs and benefits of action and inaction in the application and management of migration.

Demographic Factors and Population

Population growth in itself does not necessarily constitute a factor that urges people to cross neighboring countries' borders. However, when coupled with economic decline, it certainly induces people to cross borders in search of a better life, due to fewer employment opportunities in their home country. In the event of South Africa, the influx of migrants creates greater stress on the social and welfare services of the state and ultimately, social and political discontent. The impact is that employment opportunities are decreasing, and the potential labor force is expanding at an alarming rate with limited employment available. Thus, as population growth outstrips governments' capabilities to deal with increased demands, urban areas are increasingly characterized by overcrowding and scarce housing, strained health and education services, and unemployment. Given negative public attitudes by SA citizens towards migrants, SA government officials are unlikely to insist that resources be dedicated to unwanted future residents, especially when they are equipped with only a limited knowledge of migration trends. The expansion of the SA labor force is decreasing employment opportunities throughout, and increasing social alienation. As the unemployment levels increase, as does the motivation to migrate, the domestic labor market is increasingly unable to absorb a growing workforce.

Global Economic Factors

Faced with declining economic performance and fewer employment opportunities illegal migrants choose to move to the more prosperous economies. "Despite the amplitude of the problems that need to be addressed to increase growth and employment it is anticipated that South Africa's economy will continue to grow, and that business, along with its proactive role, will continue to grow along with it."²⁸ Uneven

economic development, skewed growth patterns, or economic disparities do not in itself induce population movements. However, economic disparities, combined with knowledge of such disparities, cause migrant influx. Intentionally, the southern African governments reinforced economic disparities by supporting the migrant contract labor system, a century old structure of transnational migration. Neighboring states became labor reservoirs to feed the demands of SA mining magnates for cheap, unskilled black labor. The economies of SA's neighbors became dependent on the migrant labor system for foreign exchange. As a result, foreign laborers were engaged on a contractual basis. Employers undertook to pay the foreign workers a fixed remuneration and the contract laborers worked for these employers for a certain period, after which they were expected to return to their country of origin. Due to mismanagement a contract for Airbuses was cancelled. The funds allocated to this project, was the funds re-allocated to the Social Development Fund to enhance social upliftment. It is obvious that the Social Department is already overstretched regarding resources, which has been the reason for receiving the additional funds. The SA government is not able to comment on how many of the citizens entitled to receive social security are SA born citizens, because of the disjointed system between the agencies tasked with the handling of illegal migration.

Political Factors

SA's government has been struggling to develop a coherent response to migration for more than a decade. Ever since the transition to democratic rule in 1994, "illegal migration" from neighboring countries has been viewed as a major challenge to the country's ambitious agendas of political transformation and economic development. Civil strife is one of the anchors that have displaced thousands of people. This also

underlines the central role which political factors play in the movement of people. Hunger and fear are driving forces which are much stronger than even the most sophisticated control measures to protect the national borders; South Africa has become the safety-valve for many. All being said, “poverty and inequality, at some of the highest levels in the world, were not diminished under Mandela’s or Mbeki’s governments.”²⁹ The economy did not grow fast enough to make a significant change in one of the world’s highest unemployment rates. The staggering unemployment has in turn fueled ugly xenophobia, resulting in deadly actions against refugees and migrant workers from Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

“South Africa is at a crossroad, with forces pulling towards this direction and whereto you can travel in the future. In the long term, it poses a challenge for the peoples of those regions as migrants do not leave the country at the time planned. The migrants’ interest lay in gaining from the economy, having a better standard of living and greater business opportunities.”³⁰ South Africa’s identity is clear. South Africa has joined the world’s democracies and it is, for better or for worse, a part of ‘the West’ – that dominant global political and economic enterprise that has brought both wealth and freedom to more people than any other arrangement for society that mankind has devised. SA and the neighboring countries should prevent rampant corruption and nepotism within the region, and furthermore improve poor economic infrastructure, foreign investment flows, lack of technical skills and political instability in combination to result in the growing poverty in Southern Africa.

Effects of Population Movement on South Africa

“The word “migration” is one of those terms which are common use in every day speech, and which convey a certain general impression of the hearer, but which need to

be given a limited and specific meaning when used in a scientific study.”³¹ The presence of illegal migrants has an adverse effect on the capacity of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP); to improve the life for ordinary South Africans. Illegal migrants place a tremendous burden on the inadequate health services of the country. The current health service institutions are to serve the needs of South African citizens. It is now overstretched due to the demands placed on them by thousands of illegal migrants in the country. Since most of the migrants are mostly destitute or come from strife-ravaged areas, they usually need much more attention than local people; implication is that health care comes at the expense of South Africa’s own citizens. The vast majority of these illegal immigrants arrive in poor health and may be severely malnourished, and thus have little resistance to illness and disease.³² Furthermore illegal immigrants strain the country’s social services and exacerbate SA’s spiraling crime rates with evidence suggesting that some illegal immigrants bring drugs and arms such as the ubiquitous AK-47 assault rifle.³³ The increasing influx of illegal migrants also contributes to unlawful squatting in South Africa. Most of the migrants in South Africa are destitute, jobless and homeless. The result is that the majority find their way to squatter areas and reside in the informal housing settlements and squatter camps. The invasion of illegal migrants could lead to disaster. The unwelcome feeling and failure to accommodate them, could lead to acts of terrorism against South Africa. It was against this background that 11 September 2001 dawned a blue and crystal-clear day in New York. By the time that day had ended and the Twin Towers had fallen, it seemed as if the arrival of unconditional jihadist terrorism, perpetrated by al-Qaeda, was set to become the dominant strategic concern of the early 21st century. The US Department

of Homeland Security and intelligence agencies' watch lists available to our frontline border and aviation operators is the most important tool for SA to curtail attempted "legitimate" terrorist travel who seek to use South Africa and its aviation system to enter the United States. The possibility of this tragedy occurring in South Africa is something that the nation needs to be aware of, considering the issue of illegal migrants and how they are affected by it.

Conclusion

South Africa is in an important strategic position due to its geographic location and its long established industries. "Governments on both sides of borders need to work together in dealing with border area population as single effort."³⁴ With stable democracy in place and other party support for the ruling party, South Africa's economy has a chance to strengthen and recover from its current fragile position and also play a supporting role in assisting neighboring countries. According to Loren Landau, director of the African Centre for Migration and Society at the University of Witwatersrand, as long as regional economic inequalities remain so stark, South Africa will continue to be a primary (if temporary) destination."³⁵

The quicker the SA government realizes that the time for paying back to neighboring countries, because of their support during earlier years, should come to an end, the better. Lacking clear direction from above, government agencies, offices, and officials have developed immigration policies and practices "as time passes. Stricter policy and border control measures dealing with illegal migration, will allow SA to respond to the country's ambitious agendas of political transformation, and economic development. Widespread xenophobia, between local population and foreigners, only has a negative impact on the country's economic development.

“The capacity to identify, detain and return irregular migrants is limited in all countries.”³⁶ South Africa's defense force remains the most advanced on the continent and operates with a consistent focus on training and redevelopment, despite budget constraints which limits its expansion. Involvement with neighboring countries in joint security operations provides further scope for the country to maintain a strong power base. In the first instance, the resources and manpower of the SANDF will be stretched in the attempt protect the territorial integrity of the South Africa. The SANDF is the only lawful military force in South Africa, and has the obligation to ensure internal, as well as external security.

Engagement within the neighboring countries will create opportunities to initiate dialogues to promote developmental stability for sharing best practices in areas such as, capability development, exercise participation, and public-private partnerships. Further, the development of burden sharing arrangements can play to each nation's core strengths and capabilities; this will bolster areas where partners are less proficient, increase capacity, and strengthen collective defense security.

South Africa and the neighboring countries need to engage in collaborative agreements and bilateral relationships to build capacity in order to compile policy and put measures in place to control the migration challenge. The challenge for policymakers is to ensure that a balance is retained between safeguarding the positive benefits of migration and minimizing any negative consequences for SA and individuals. Yet failing to meet the very real challenges of illegal migration creates the risk of increasing conflict, violence, poverty and social exclusion in ways that negatively affect the economy and defense security of SA.

Southern African leaders need to understand that until they address the sources of insecurity that give rise to illegal immigration, they are not going to resolve the problem and will continue dealing with symptoms.

Endnotes

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⁴ Simon, Julian L, *The Economic Consequences of Immigration* (New York; Blackwell, 1989), 67.

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⁶ For a convenient summary, see Crush, Williams, and Peberdy (2005). For more detailed accounts, classic sources include Crush, Jeeves, and Yudelman (1991) and Wilson and Ramphela (1989).

⁷ Hussain Solomon, *Of Myths and Migration, Illegal Immigration into South Africa* (Pretoria, University of South Africa, 2003), 11.

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¹⁰ African Studies Centre, *Xenophobia in South Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, June 3, 1998).

¹¹ For well-researched summary studies see Polzer (2010a: 2010b), Landau and Segatti (2009), and Crush (2008). *Strategy and Tactics (2010)* provides both analysis and original research, prominently featuring the response by civil society. Two other prominent works, of less consistent quality, are Neocosmos 2010 and Hassim, Kupe, and Worby 2008.

¹² Solomon, *Of Myths and Migration, Illegal Immigration into South Africa*, 110.

¹³ World Migration Report 2010, “*The Future of Migration*”, 138.

¹⁴ Hussain Solomon, “Strategic Perspective on Illegal Immigration into South Africa”, *African Security Review* 5 no. 4, 10 August 1996: <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/asr/5no4/StrategicPerspectives.html> (accessed March 15, 2012).

¹⁵ Loren B. Landau and Aurelia Segatti with Jean Pierre Misago, *Governing Migration and Urbanization in South Africa Municipalities*, January 2011. [http://www.migration.org.za/sites/default/files/publications/2011/salga booklet pdf - printed final.pdf](http://www.migration.org.za/sites/default/files/publications/2011/salga%20booklet%20pdf-printed%20final.pdf) (accessed March 15, 2012).

¹⁶ The Department of Homeland Security uses the ACS to estimate the size of the illegal-immigrant population. They found that 25 percent of those in the ACS were illegal immigrants in 2009. See “*Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2010*”, at http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois_ill_pe_2010.pdf (accessed March 1, 2012).

¹⁷ The ACS is a July 1st estimate of the U.S. population, while the Census is for April 1. This means that the arrival data in the 2010 ACS is for January 2000 to July 2010 and arrival data for the decade prior to 2000 in the Census is from January 1990 to April 2000. Those three additional months in the ACS would tend to add slightly to the number of new arrivals. However, they cannot account for the higher number from the 2010 data because three extra months could only add perhaps 300,000-400,000 new arrivals to the 2010 ACS compared to the 2000 Census. The margin of error for 13.9 million arrivals from 2000-2010 in the new ACS is only $\pm 99,000$. Thus, even if 400,000 is added to the 1990-2000 arrivals found in the 2000 Census, the difference between the two decades would still be statistically significant.

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²³ *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁴ The 287(g) figures come from the “US Immigration and Customs Enforcement. 40pp.”, <http://www.iccwbo.org/uploadedFiles/BASCAP/Pages/ICE%20Fiscal%20Report%2007.pdf>

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²⁶ Rotberg and Mills, *War and Peace in Southern Africa*, 2.

²⁷ Ian Shapiro, *After Apartheid, Reinventing South Africa* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, June 2011), 12.

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³¹ Rotberg and Mills, *War and Peace in Southern Africa*, 2.

³² Solomon, *Of Myths and Migration, Illegal Immigration into South Africa*, 107.

³³ Ibid., 33.

³⁴ World Migration Report 2010, “*The Future of Migration*”, 69.

³⁵ News24, “SA Begins Shutting Doors to Rest of Africa”, Reuters, July 16, 2011.
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³⁶ World Migration Report, “*The Future of Migration*”, 36.