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Transnational public goods provision: the increasing role of rising powers and the case of South Africa

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ABSTRACT

The paper delineates three debates, which will be conflated. One line of discussion relates to public goods at a transnational level. Here, the referencing of debates regarding the characteristics of 'a common good' will be of significance. A second strand addresses the group of countries known as the 'rising powers' and the role these countries could play towards a globalised common good. A third discussion thread analyses South Africa as a case study for the main rising power on the African continent. By creating connections between the lines of discussion, this paper drives forward the debates on how the role of rising powers can be conceptually repositioned in the light of a changing global context, and explores how these countries can respond to global challenges.

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1. Introduction

Academic and political debate centres frequently on the search for ways in which to approach global challenges. Viewed overall, recent decades have been marked by enormous surges in globalisation. In the light of sweeping trends towards the dissolution of boundaries, the contours of policy areas focused primarily on 'community' (*Gemeinwesen*) within nation-state borders are becoming increasingly nebulous.[1] As a result, very few areas in which governments are not obliged to reach, or at least seek, a global consensus continue to exist in political practice. Today, this not only applies to security and foreign trade policy, for example, but similarly also to health care, education and science policy, to name but a few pertinent fields.

These upswings in globalisation bring advantages, which become visible in enhanced foreign trade potential or globally accessible knowledge, for instance Potter (2016). Simultaneously, however, globalised risks and challenges are growing increasingly apparent. Examples of this include new forms of cross-border security threats, upsurges in migration and refugee movements – which had not been observed, at least in Europe, on the immense scale of 2015 and 2016 for many decades – and local deficiencies in health care, which may

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lead to pandemics such as the Ebola crisis and the Zika virus. Other significant factors include the natural limits of the earth system, which not only bring us closer to the planetary frontiers in various areas, but also allow us to successfully transcend them.[2]

In recent years, the aforementioned trends have been reinforced, and their progress has accelerated. Three decades ago, Ulrich Beck developed the concept of a 'risk society', in which he systematically addressed the impact of globalisation.[3] In this respect, although an awareness of the fundamental characteristics of many phenomena has been in evidence for many years, these appear in a new light in terms of their current manifestations and levels of urgency.

The challenge thrown up by the current debate is to recognise and admit that political stakeholders are not equipped with suitable concepts and approaches to problem-solving. Many response strategies to the challenges of globalisation continue to emanate from a nation-state context. This applies, for example, to discourses on the subject of 'a common good' (*Gemeinwohl*).[4] Dimensions exceeding nation-state borders and national spheres of influence impact on sociological concepts only gradually. Questions, such as that of the extent of the transferability to a global context of action, arise in the process. This applies, for instance, to economic concepts designed to generate private and public goods: can these approaches also be employed in a global context?

A further dimension is the question of cooperation and political power. It is common knowledge that the international system has abandoned a bipolar world order in favour of a phase of pluralism or multipolarity. A broad consensus also exists as regards how a viable multipolar system, in which emerging countries should receive increased responsibility and greater co-determination on the basis of normative considerations and the constraints of *Realpolitik*, should look.[5] However, the actual form such an arrangement could take remains rather vague. If we look at more recent club formats, such as the group of the so-called 20 most important countries (G20), for instance, it becomes clear that we are still in a phase of experimentation.

The new international context is not only a question of traditional power politics as defined by Hans Morgenthau.[6] On the contrary, it is possible to recognise a synchronicity with 'soft' factors, which even exceed the areas specified by Joseph Nye.[7] This applies, for example, to the role played by knowledge generation and diffusion, or that played by transnational networks.

Against this background, the present paper delineates three debates which will be conflated.

One line of discussion relates to the nature of public goods at a transnational level. Here, the referencing of debates regarding the characteristics of a common good and those discussing how this phenomenon emerges initially will be of significance. On this basis, the discussion will progress to outline the specific character of collective goods, the supply of which is fundamental to a common good. A focal point of this discussion will ultimately be whether these concepts can offer reasonable approaches beyond nation-state borders.

A second strand of the discussion will address the issues surrounding the group of countries known as the *rising powers*. On the one hand, the definition of the same will be considered: what is the nature of the emerging rising powers in the context of current international relations? Is this country group merely the latest generation of medium-sized powers or secondary states, as experienced in earlier phases? Or do the current characteristics differ from those of the rising powers seen in the past? On the other hand, it is important to address

the role these countries play, or could play, as regards a globalised common good, in order to provide collective goods.[8]

A third and final discussion thread analyses South Africa as a case study illustrating the paper's conceptual questions. In 1994, the country was transformed, shedding its skin of a pariah state and emerging as a ray of hope in the third wave of democratisation, in the sense of Samuel Huntington, which concomitantly remains, nonetheless, an increasingly fragile example of democratic governance.[9] South Africa is a particularly fascinating example precisely as a result of the special nexus and interactions of domestic and foreign policy aspects. How does the country participate in a globalised common good via the provision of collective goods?

By creating connections between the three lines of discussion, this paper strives to drive forward the debates on how the role of *rising powers* can be conceptually repositioned in the light of a markedly altered global context, and to explore how these countries can help to respond to global challenges.

2. Global common good and collective goods

The concept of a common good is indispensable to human well-being. Here, common good should be interpreted as a counter-concept to the welfare of the individual or of groups of individuals. In this respect, the concept of a common good is by no means outdated, but of high topical relevance for societies. In the eyes of Herfried Münkler and Harald Bluhm, the concept of a common good assumes a normative dimension which includes concrete expectations of social cooperation and solidarity-related demands.[10] However, the term also offers a tangible analytical benefit in the sense of an empirical theory, this as regards decision-making and participatory processes. In the words of Robert Dahl, this is the succinct question of "Who governs?" The subject of a common good permits access to fundamental issues surrounding political processes and decisions.[11]

It is difficult to provide a precise definition of the term common good. Pluralism debates conducted from the perspective of political science have demonstrated that common good cannot be defined a priori in open societies.[12] The social negotiation process produces the decisive distinction between such societies and totalitarian systems.

Although the idea of a global common good seems natural in the light of the dissolution of political, economic and social boundaries, the achievement of this at global level is extremely difficult for several reasons. In the first instance, compelling participants to commit to the goal of creating a common good at a global level is hardly a matter of course, at least if an obligation as regards the required behavioural changes is involved.

Moreover, the question of how such goals can be achieved must be posed. In addition, further restrictive factors must also be taken into consideration, such as the non-existence of effective structures for global governance, inadequate jurisdiction at global level, a lack of accountability and the limited legitimacy of international structures, resulting, for instance, from club approaches.[13,14]

Two different types of goods must be differentiated as far as the creation of a common good is concerned: private or individual goods on the one hand, and public or collective goods on the other.[15]

Two additional aspects are relevant when it comes to the classification of these types of goods. The first of these is whether the goods' usage influences other consumers or

Table 1. Types of goods: individual vs. collective goods.

	Excludability	Non-excludability
Rivalry pertaining to use	*Private or individual goods (clothing, food etc.)*	*Common-pool resources*[a]
Non-rivalry pertaining to use	*Club goods (trips to the swimming pool, pay-TV, etc.)*	*Public or collective goods*[b]

[a]Impure public goods. *(fish stocks in freely-accessible waters, overcrowded streets, etc.)*
[b]Pure public goods. *(street lighting, security, etc.)*
Source: after Kaul, Grunberg, and Stern (1999).

stakeholders. In Table 1, this is summarised by the dimension of rivalry pertaining to the use of the goods. Participating in road traffic with a vehicle makes a road more congested and perhaps even causes a traffic jam. I use the street as a collective commodity, but this can be overused resulting in gridlocks.

If, on the other hand, I use public street lighting as a pedestrian, this will probably have little influence on others' use of the same resource. I do not 'consume' street lighting and, as a rule, no one else should be prevented from using this as a result of my own use.

The second aspect is the possibility of exclusion. A typical private commodity comes with a price tag, i.e. it can only be used by those individuals who are capable of and prepared to pay the amount of money demanded. This principle occurs, for example, during the daily purchase of any given product (such as the price of a litre of milk). By contrast, exclusion is generally not possible in the case of collective goods (the unrestricted use of street lighting is available to all, for instance).

Elinor Ostrom's research on common-pool resources has shown that the perspective on the types of goods is essential in order to respond to issues surrounding the usage and governance of collective goods.[16] She made a significant contribution to the realisation that common-pool resources are structurally exposed to the danger of overexploitation. This applies, for example, to the fish stocks in the world's oceans or the groundwater supply in California. In these cases, it can be seen that unregulated incentive structures lead to the overexploitation of these collective goods as opposed to their sustainable cultivation.

Mancur Olson identified a further important aspect related to collective goods.[17] He recognised that the logic of collective activities does not lie in optimising the benefits of groups, but in the maximisation of individual benefit. In this context, it is important to stress that users have no incentive to participate in the provision of public goods, as they can enjoy a share in the commodity without making any such contribution. This 'free rider phenomenon' results in the tendency to fail to provide sufficient amounts of collective goods, which are thus characterised by a supply deficit.

Over the past 20 years or so, various attempts have been made to shift the discussion on the diverse nature of collective goods to a transnational level.[18] Kaul, Blondin and Nahtigal define global collective goods as commodities which enjoy global application in terms of use, cost or both aspects.[19] A commodity is deemed global if it provides a benefit beyond nation-state borders or if the provision of the said commodity is cross-border financed or otherwise supplied. Although the definition sounds precise and simple, the underlying aspects are both complex and frequently contentious.

The question of the public nature of a commodity at global level is also difficult to answer. Does the 'public' nature lie in the fact that the commodity is provided by public stakeholders, such as governments, or is it a matter of the beneficiaries who should be public stakeholders? Or must both prerequisites be met?

Differences exist between various types of transnational collective goods, including those relating to the question of whether users can be excluded from their utilisation, or if the use of a transnational collective commodity takes place at the expense of other users. We know that many transnational collective goods are subject to inadequate provision (when the physical safety of individuals is at stake, for example), and that cross-border common-pool resources are overexploited. The supply shortage of transnational collective goods and the overexploitation of common-pool resources can be largely explained by the fact that 'free riding' and the excessive use of resources can also constitute a rational pattern for stakeholders participating in cross-border activities. In this respect, the perspective of a transnational collective commodity offers an interesting politico-economic analytical and explanatory model, particularly in cases in which the corresponding goods are not supplied in sufficient amounts or are characterised by overexploitation.

Overall, then, the perspective of a transnational collective commodity constitutes a promising and innovative academic point of view. In recent decades, the increasingly cross-border nature of many spheres of life and policies has resulted in an enormous surge in globalisation.[20] Many public goods can no longer be placed at national disposal, or only on a very limited scale; this applies, for instance, to security or to the protection and preservation of the natural environment.

If the available empirical studies relating to public collective goods are counted, in-depth analyses are available for over 25 sectors and sub-sectors.[21] These range from agricultural research to cyber and energy security and financial stability. All these examples demonstrate that the concept has served already important empirical applications.

The empirical studies also help us better understand the 'beyond state border' character of many public goods. If health services, for instance, are not sufficiently available within a country, the consequences might have an impact on a regional or even global scale (the Ebola crisis was an example in this regard). The same applies to security issues which can escalate in ways that challenge whole regions, such as the fallout from the Libyan civil conflict for the Sahel.

3. Rising powers

Like other attempts at country classification, the term *rising powers* is controversial, competing partly with designations including emerging economies, middle-income countries, medium-sized powers or regional powers.[22] The continuing definitional controversy is justified, going hand in hand, as it does, with core underlying concepts and assumptions about international relations (IR). For the purposes of the present paper, finding a suitable term to describe the dynamic of country types and their demarcation from traditional country classifications is paramount.[23]

In this respect, past IR discourse has been shaped by the following time-honoured debates, according to which the international system is dominated by one or a few superpowers and, in parts, by further big powers. Depending on the school of theory to which one adheres, there were, or are, various ways of classifying countries and the options for controlling the same above and beyond this very small group of states. Traditional realist approaches, developed by Hans Morgenthau or Kenneth Waltz, for instance, would describe the medium-sized powers as a category beneath the super- and big-powers in the hierarchy of nations, which are unable to trigger processes of change of any great import within

international relations.[24] According to this view, medium-sized powers are not proactive but reactive stakeholders within the international system.

States in the sense of liberal, neoliberal or institutionalist theories, including, in particular, those developed by Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye and Stephen Krasner, display a different profile.[25] According to these concepts, medium-sized powers certainly are able to shape international relations, be it via niche diplomacy, norm-setting roles, the use and expansion of multilateral channels or the establishment of international regimes to pursue rule-making within specific policy domains.

These two briefly-outlined tendencies naturally do not encompass all schools of thought. Here, it is initially merely important to demonstrate that the new and dynamic medium-sized powers constitute a new type of power which differs significantly from the earlier discourses. In this respect, the term rising powers creates a meaningful distinction to and demarcation from medium-sized powers such as Australia and Canada, which continue to exist and which are also subjected to a new set of circumstances.[26]

Broadly speaking, states which have predominantly experienced a dynamic economic development in the last two decades, which make a pronounced claim to the shaping of the international system, be this primarily at a regional or at a global level, and whose claim is fundamentally accepted by other stakeholders, should, in the sense of the present paper, be described as rising powers. In addition, countries falling into this category are anxious to pursue group interests as rising powers on a global scale by means of new associations.[27]

According to this characterisation, Brazil, China, India and, to a certain extent, Russia, form the core of a group identity of this nature. These countries are joined by Argentina, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Turkey, South Africa and South Korea.

Despite the similarities, the heterogeneity of such a group is naturally undeniable. The vast absolute economic powers of China in comparison with those of South Africa, or the populations of the two countries, display enormous differences alone. In terms of economic potential, a ratio of 27:1 exists between the two countries, while the population ratio is 25:1.[28]

Interestingly, a plethora of new 'country clubs', such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) and MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, Australia) have formed in recent years, which are based on similarly implicit understandings. The rising powers group is also a significant element of a comparatively new club model, together with the traditional G7/G8 (group of 7/8), namely the G20 (group of 20).

Here it is important to outline two aspects of these dynamic club concepts. Firstly, the question of whether some club approaches are based on a membership profile which includes domestic democratic governance in respective rising powers. If such a governance feature of specific clubs might exist the question whether these clubs are striving to pursue external policies which are facilitating democratic norms is highly relevant. In this respect, several observers anticipate that IBSA and MIKTA displays potential[29]; however, such an intention is virtually impossible to confirm as far as the policies promoted by these clubs are concerned. In addition, the internal democratic model, particularly in the case of Turkey, is currently under massive pressure,[30] with the result that it appears less plausible for this country to systematically promote a foreign relations policy aligned to democratic values.

A second aspect is the new-found heterogeneity of these clubs, and the permeability in terms of their membership structure. As far as membership is concerned, these clubs do not exclusively include rising powers from the Global South. On the contrary, the examples of

Russia and Australia demonstrate that a former superpower and a traditional middle-sized power can certainly find a place within the collective strategic promotion of interests.[31]

Against this background, it is possible to draw two initial conclusions for the present paper from the rising powers debate. It must be stressed that rising powers have a significant potential to shape processes and trigger change, something which differs significantly from traditional discourses relating to medium-sized powers. This sphere of influence is related to shifts in political influence, as the comparative authority of the remaining superpower, the USA, is experiencing ever greater restrictions, and big- and medium-sized powers are also suffering a relative loss of importance. At the same time, the power potential of rising powers – as far as China's foreign exchange reserves are concerned, for example, or Turkey's role in the Near and Middle East crisis zones – is increasing.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that global challenges can only be solved by developing and implementing international networks which are not only as large as possible, but often also transnational in nature. This applies, *inter alia*, to security and climate protection-related topics. There is little point in setting CO_2-related global targets without including China, for example, as the rising powers have evinced tremendous increases in emissions in recent years.[32]

Rising powers have the strong incentive that their roles as global or at least regional stakeholders are acknowledged.[33] At the same time, the discussion regarding the question of which norms and standards could be applied by this group of countries as far as their contribution to a global common good or, more specifically, to the provision of transnational collective goods is concerned, requires further elaboration. In recent years, a debate around whether the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' (CBDR) could serve as a road map has developed.[34] This principle, which derives from the environment economy, would, if only abstractly, determine a fundamental shared responsibility of rising powers in the solving of global problems, yet simultaneously recognise the differing capacities available in terms of addressing these topics, particularly as far as the OECD world is concerned. The establishment of such a principle would improve the development, diffusion and implementation of activities related to the provision of transnational public goods in at least two ways: firstly, rising powers would accept a basic responsibility; secondly, the principal would recognise the limited capacity (in terms of financial resources, technical capacity, for instance, to sharpen norms and standards developed by international regimes) of rising powers to contribute to the actual provision of transnational public goods compared to high-income countries. With a few notable exceptions, intergovernmental negotiations have been unable to draw on such a principle as a point of reference to date. A more detailed examination of the principles surrounding the international involvement of this country group is still pending.

4. South Africa: a case study for what?

What is the significance of these debates for South Africa? Conversely, what role does South Africa play within these debates? Is it even possible to determine an affiliation by South Africa to the rising powers group? What of South Africa's capacity and potential to contribute to the provision of transnational collective goods?

There are several substantial arguments in favour of viewing South Africa as a rising power; simultaneously, however, the nature of the country is such that an inclusion within this category is problematic in various respects. The most important aspects are as follows:

1. South Africa has pursued a clear international leadership strategy since overcoming the apartheid system. This applies, in parts, to global debates, and even more so to regional and continental discussions.

Over the past 20 years and more, this claim to leadership has been linked to a strongly normative approach: even before Nelson Mandela became the first president in the post-apartheid era, he set out the principles of a new South African foreign policy in late 1993 in the journal *Foreign Affairs*.[35] His article makes it abundantly clear that South Africa feels bound by a moral obligation to uphold human rights and to promote democracy and international law on a global scale. Mandela also places South African foreign policy within a framework which should reflect continental interests. After South Africa's decades as a pariah state, he saw one of the country's new roles as an advocate and catalyst for the entire African continent.[36]

Indeed, the default values stipulated by Mandela for South African politics were long deemed immutable. The majority of his successors adhered to this rhetoric, even though the persuasive power of such avowals has dwindled under President Mbeki and, in particular, under Zuma, in many cases now clearly conflicting with the actual politics pursued in the country.[37] South Africa's position towards the pronouncedly authoritarian leadership structures in Zimbabwe, and its failure to transfer the Sudanese ruler Omar al-Bashir, sought by the International Criminal Court, during his visit to South Africa in 2015, are just two examples.[38]

Moreover, political stakeholders in South Africa are giving increasing thought to implementing a change of course aligned more strongly to South Africa's supposedly national interests in foreign policy.[39]

2. South Africa's claim to leadership is acknowledged and supported by non-African stakeholders. The country is deemed a continental point of access for the USA and for European stakeholders anxious to involve an African representative in dialogue processes. The G7/G8 outreach activities traditionally included the South African president, for instance. South Africa was also accorded membership of the G20. Through the Committee of Ten African Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors (C-10) there is a platform for the strategic engagement with the G20. In late 2010, South Africa was accepted into the BRIC group at China's invitation; this event also accentuates the view of South Africa's role outside the African continent.[40]

No other BRICS or G20 country is expected to play such a representative role for other countries; China, India and Russia as quasi legitimate delegates of an entire region or even an entire continent are not involved in dialogue formats in this manner. In the case of South Africa, this is, by contrast, a significant factor. It remains to be seen how South Africa could formally consult and involve other African stakeholders.

3. South Africa's claim to leadership is not recognised by many of its fellow African stakeholders and, in many cases, openly rejected.[41] Indeed, Nigeria has viewed itself as Africa's most important representative for many years. This country has several strong arguments able to substantiate such a claim, at least as far as economic power and momentum and population size are concerned. Governments in other African states regularly publicly oppose South Africa receiving a permanent quasi-regional seat on the United Nations Security Council, as demanded by the South African government.[42]

Further aspects account for South Africa's limited acceptance on the continent: in the eyes of many African representatives, the country is displaying less and less moral authority. The xenophobic incidents in South Africa in 2015 were of considerable interest to many African states.[43] Added to this are limitations in terms of the quality of South African democracy; here, relevant analyses were submitted both in South Africa and internationally.[44]

South Africa's integrity has also been dented as a result of the inadequate economic and social access by the black majority of the population to the country's available wealth. This is underlined by both the Gini coefficient and other indicators.[45] With this, the insufficient progress in terms of wealth distribution to the benefit of the majority of the population is rapidly becoming a source of intense social volatility, despite the African National Congress (ANC) governing for over 20 years.

4. South Africa has only a limited capacity to implement suitable policies as a rising power. The country's large military capacity, once feared by the neighbouring states under the mantle of apartheid, has decreased perceptibly, and is overburdened as a result of various participations in United Nations and African Union peace missions.[46] Although the creation of a development agency under the South African foreign ministry was announced many years ago,[47] intended ostensibly as a source of support to the other African states in the sense of a South–South cooperation, its actual realisation has foundered as a result of political infighting, a problem in many of the country's policy areas. Similar, often extremely simple bottlenecks (e.g. the significant underfunding of the South Africa National Defence Force) obstruct more systematic and effective international commitment by the country in many areas.

There are justifiable reasons for including South Africa in the group of rising powers. However, some distinctive features must be noted. South Africa partially views itself as being obliged to adhere to a rhetoric advocating a value-oriented global common good. Nevertheless, flagrant discrepancies can increasingly be noted between the hyperbole and the political realities of the ANC government.

This is compounded by a serious dilemma appositely described by Chris Alden and Maxi Schoeman as 'symbolic hegemony'.[48] The expectation to play an outstanding role on the African continent was and still is encouraged by South Africa's leadership. The country's claim to leadership and the role the European and North American stakeholders hope it will play conflict markedly with the country's actual available capacity to implement far-reaching foreign policy changes in all pertinent areas. This dilemma is increasingly becoming a problem in itself.

As a result, the role of South Africa is, in many respects, not oriented towards the provision of global collective goods, but rather to that of regional collective goods (e.g. the African Peace and Security Architecture, the African Peer Review Mechanism, regional infrastructure initiatives).[49] This, too, is a singular feature of South Africa. What can be deemed a rather typical regional power role relates to the African continent via the African Union, for example, and also draws heavily on regional mechanisms in southern Africa.

5. Conclusions: rising powers as essential stakeholders in the global policy of a common good

Which overarching conclusions can now be drawn from the debates I have outlined in the three lines of discussion presented in this paper? An initial conclusion relates to the required

synchronicity of normative postulates and empirical theories. This becomes apparent as far as the theme of this paper is concerned: without normative postulates, the concepts surrounding community cannot be organised in a practicable manner. This applies both to domestic issues and to those displaying a more external slant. Equity and political involvement are indispensable fundamental values, for instance, and are as relevant to a social order within a country as they are to a global social order, although this can at best be described as rudimentary.

In this sense, the debate on a common good appears both pertinent and current in a value-oriented and empirical respect. The changes in context witnessed in recent decades make a reference to the global level mandatory. Lothar Brock created the term 'global policy of the common good', which may be of great benefit to such a debate.[50]

Secondly, the discourse on transnational collective goods is helpful on this basis. The blockade conditions in various areas of international relations, the supply shortage as regards essential collective goods and the overexploitation of collective goods allows us to better understand the rationales applied by the participating stakeholders, and provides insights into how incentives must be conceived in order to improve the provision of collective goods.

Thirdly, more effectively articulated principles relating to how rising powers can use their increased spheres of influence within the international system in order to participate in the provision of collective goods are required. The claim by such states to be included in global decision-making processes more equitably is fundamentally legitimate, as many existing structures derive from completely different contextual conditions; this applies, for instance, to the composition of the UN Security Council. Likewise, it is equally as important to be able to specify the resulting obligations on the basis of criteria and benchmarks. Here, the principle of CDBR performs a pioneering role as an important element of new norms in the shaping of international relations.

Fourthly, there is a considerable need for the African continent, in particular, to redouble its efforts in terms of the provision of transnational collective goods. The continent as a whole lacks the type of distinct hegemonic constellation present in other regions of the world, although sub-regions do experience this to a certain extent in the sense of regional powers. This hampers the search for strong partners who could perform a recognised leadership role as far as the provision of collective goods is concerned.

South Africa's privileged position, conferred upon it by non-African stakeholders, could even encourage friction on the continent in the long term. Simultaneously, the country has also been experiencing a noticeable decline in authority for many years: the overwhelming moral and democratic legitimacy of the immediate aftermath of apartheid has now been exhausted and could endanger South Africa's long-term stability. Not only would this have an enormous impact on the country itself, but on the overall state of the continent as a whole.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Note on Contributor

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Notes

1. Barrett, *Why Cooperate?*; Hale and Held, *Handbook of Transnational Governance*; Hale, Held, and Young, *Gridlock*; Potter, "Globalisation, Interdependence, and Major Power Accomodation."
2. Schellnhuber et al., *World in Transition*.
3. Beck, *Risikogesellschaft*.
4. Münkler and Bluhm, *Gemeinwohl und Gemeinsinn*.
5. Paul, *Accommodating Rising Powers*; Gilley and O'Neil, *Middle Powers and the Rise of China*.
6. Morgenthau, *Macht und Frieden*.
7. Nye, "Soft Power."
8. Culp, "How Irresponsible are Rising Powers?"
9. Huntington, "Democracy for the Long Haul."
10. Münkler and Bluhm, *Gemeinwohl und Gemeinsinn*.
11. Dahl, *Who Governs?*
12. Fraenkel, *Deutschland und die westlichen Demokratien;* Oberreuter, *Pluralismus*; Nuscheler and Steffani, *Pluralismus*.
13. Kaul, *Global Public Goods*; Zürn, "Jenseits der Anarchie."
14. The agreement reached at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in late 2015 (global warming will be limited to less than 2°C) is generally deemed to be a breakthrough. In this sense, the results of the conference constituted a concrete step towards creating a relatively specific definition of a globalised common good. However, as far as international negotiation processes are concerned, this result is not representative of the many other problem areas which are frequently characterised by stasis.
15. Kaul, *Global Public Goods*; Kaul, Grunberg, and Stern, "Defining Global Public Goods"; Nordhaus, *Paul Samuelson and Global Public Goods*.
16. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*.
17. Olson, *Logic of Collective Action*.
18. Kaul, *Global Public Goods*; Nordhaus, *Paul Samuelson and Global Public Goods*; Sandler, *Global Collective Action*; Holzinger, *Transnational Common Goods*.
19. Kaul, Blondin, and Nahtigal, "Understanding Global Public Goods."
20. Holzinger, *Transnational Common Goods*; Sandler, *Global Collective Action*; Nordhaus, *Paul Samuelson and Global Public Goods*.
21. Kaul, Blondin, and Nahtigal, "Understanding Global Public Goods."
22. Paul, *Accommodating Rising Powers*; Scholvin, *Geopolitics of Regional Power*; Manicom and Reeves, "Locating Middle Powers in International Relations Theory."
23. Paul, *Accommodating Rising Powers*.
24. Morgenthau, *Macht und Frieden*; Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.
25. Keohane, *After Hegemony*; Nye, "Soft Power"; Krasner, *International Regimes*.
26. Cooper, "Squeezed or Revitalised?"
27. Paul, *Accommodating Rising Powers*; Prys, *Redefining Regional Power in International Relations*; Flemes, "Regional Power South Africa."

28. Several calculations regarding data for 2015, based on: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sn.html, accessed 21 June 2016.
29. Husar, *Framing Foreign Policy in India*.
30. http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/12/turkey-has-given-up-on-democracy-outside-its-borders-too/, accessed 21 June 2016.
31. It should also be noted that the membership structures in some of the old club formats are undergoing significant changes. This applies, above all, to the rigorous shifts in membership of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which no longer constitutes an unadulterated group of Western industrial nations, taking the comparatively new members South Korea and Chile as examples.
32. Schellnhuber et al., *World in Transition*.
33. Culp, "How Irresponsible are Rising Powers?"; Manicom and Reeves, "Locating Middle Powers in International Relations Theory"; Paul, *Accommodating Rising Powers*.
34. Pauw et al., *Different Perspectives on Differentiated Responsibilities*; Besharati, *Common Goals and Differential Commitments*.
35. Mandela, "South Africa's Future Foreign Policy."
36. Grobbelaar, *Rising Powers in International Development*.
37. Geldenhuys, "Weak Domestic Base of South Africa"; van der Westhuizen and Grimm, "South Africa's Middle Power Ambitions."
38. http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/jun/24/south-africas-failure-arrest-al-bashir-not-in-keeping-mandelas-ideals, accessed 21 June 2016.
39. http://theconversation.com/why-its-time-south-africas-foreign-policy-was-driven-by-ideas-again-50407, accessed 21 June 2016.
40. Stuenkel, "South Africa's BRICS Membership"; Grobbelaar, *Rising Powers in International Development*; Schoeman, "South Africa as an Emerging Power"; Scholvin, *Geopolitics of Regional Power*.
41. Cilliers, Schünemann, and Moyer, "Power and Influence in Africa."
42. http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2015-09-22-analysis-can-south-africa-win-a-seat-on-the-un-security-council/#.V2k686JrhaQ; accessed 21 June 2016.
43. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/17/xenophobia-south-africa-brothers-violence-foreigners, accessed 21 June 2016.
44. Herbst and Mills, *How South Africa Works*; Beresford, *South Africa's Political Crisis*.
45. Herbst and Mills, *How South Africa Works*; Beresford, *South Africa's Political Crisis*.
46. Schoeman, "South Africa as an Emerging Power"; Landsberg and Georghiou, "Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Attributes."
47. Grobbelaar, *Rising Powers in International Development*; Sidiropoulos, "Emerging 'Donor', Geopolitical Actor"; Vickers, "Towards a New Aid Paradigm."
48. Alden and Schoeman, "South Africa's Symbolic Hegemony."
49. Alden and Schoeman, "South Africa in the Company of Giants"; Prys, *Redefining Regional Power in International Relations*.
50. Brock, "Globale Verantwortung von der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit zur Weltgemeinwohlpolitik."

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