



Security Challenges for Small Island Developing States: The Case of Cape Verde*

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Abstract: This article is an exploratory, descriptive study, with a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach. It integrates concepts and perspectives of contemporary history, international relations, and security studies. Its main aim is to analyse security issues in Africa, taking as a reference the Cape Verde archipelago, which is part of the group of Small Island Developing States. This matter suggests a wider multidimensional approach that prioritizes the intersection of data obtained from a critical analysis in order to deepen regional cooperation and integration mechanisms. This can provide the Cape Verdean state with strategic options to prevent and mitigate potential security threats.

Keywords: Africa; Cape Verde; Small Island Developing States; development and security.

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Desafíos de seguridad para los pequeños Estados insulares en desarrollo: el caso de Cabo Verde

Resumen: el presente artículo es un estudio exploratorio-descriptivo de enfoque cualitativo e interdisciplinario, que integra conceptos y perspectivas de la historia contemporánea, las relaciones internacionales y los estudios de seguridad. Tiene como objetivo principal analizar los problemas de seguridad en África, tomando como referencia el archipiélago de Cabo Verde, que forma parte del grupo de pequeños Estados insulares en desarrollo. Este tema sugiere un enfoque multidimensional más amplio que priorice el cruce de los datos obtenidos a partir de un análisis crítico con el fin de profundizar los mecanismos de cooperación e integración regional, lo que puede brindar opciones estratégicas al Estado de Cabo Verde para prevenir y mitigar amenazas potenciales de seguridad.

Palabras clave: África; Cabo Verde; pequeños Estados insulares en desarrollo; desarrollo y seguridad.

Desafios de segurança para os pequenos Estados insulares em desenvolvimento: o caso de Cabo Verde

Resumo: Este artigo é um estudo exploratório-descriptivo de abordagem qualitativa e interdisciplinar, que integra conceitos e perspectivas da história contemporânea, das relações internacionais e dos estudos de segurança. Tem como objetivo principal analisar os problemas de segurança na África, tomando como referência o arquipélago de Cabo Verde, que faz parte do grupo de pequenos Estados insulares em desenvolvimento. Esse tema sugere uma abordagem multidimensional mais ampla que priorize o cruzamento dos dados obtidos a partir de uma análise crítica a fim de aprofundar os mecanismos de cooperação e integração regional, o que pode oferecer opções estratégicas ao Estado de Cabo Verde para prevenir e mitigar ameaças potenciais de segurança.

Palavras-chave: África; Cabo Verde; pequenos Estados insulares em desenvolvimento; desenvolvimento e segurança.

Introduction

Studies on insular territories have gained prominence since the 1990s, insofar as institutions and international organizations have been focusing on their systematization and consolidation (Baldacchino, 2007). In this context, Cape Verde is no exception to the rule for its paradigmatic position in the African region, which makes it worthy of study. We analyse Small Island Developing States (SIDS), especially the Cape Verde archipelago, regarding security challenges in Africa based on its geographical features. In addition, we intend to dissect to what extent the socio-economic and territorial structure of African SIDS can help them get greater comparative advantages in the international panorama.

In order to delimit the subject matter, we propose the following questions which will constitute the starting point for this research: How will Cape Verde fight the proliferation of phenomena that threaten its security? The archipelago and the other SIDS have daily limitations and structural constraints resulting from insularity and their vulnerability. In this regard, what model for regional integration would be more appropriate to mitigate these threats? Taking into account the cost-benefit ratio of high amounts spent on the modernization of information and communication systems, can these investments be a viable solution to environmental and security problems?

To answer these questions, we suggest a flexible and interdisciplinary approach (Graça, 2014, p. 70), prioritizing the intersection of environmental sustainability, contemporary history, international relations and security studies. The method is based on the triangulation of data obtained from a critical view. For this purpose, a systematic review of scientific literature has been undertaken through searches in different databases, thus allowing a selection of articles to characterize African SIDS. This also entailed the identification of environmental, economic and social vulnerabilities in order to evaluate knowledge of the subject. The analysis of results is mainly concerned with carrying out all the necessary actions to achieve the goals of the research. This is justified since there is not only one approach, nor a 'theory of small states' able to explain their behaviour (Freire, 2007, p. 73).

Another reason for this methodological choice is that there are few studies that relate SIDS security implications with environmental challenges on the African continent. The works of Adebajo and Rashid (2004) and Sharamo and Mestin (2011) present a broad view of security in Africa, but little about the role of SIDS; therefore, we seek to open new perspectives, particularly in relation to the case of Cape Verde.

This research allows us to analyse the impact of the environmental security of African SIDS on the geopolitical de-

sign. Regarding the lack of theoretical evidence that relates SIDS and environmental mismanagement, natural resource depletion, and lack of adequate security controls on the African continent, we try to provide researchers and experts on the subject with a contribution that can be of public interest.

Integration of island territories in the international context

Since the 1990s, there has been a clear evolution of studies on island territories because, besides being an empirical basis for the application of different scientific theories ranging from biology to biophysics, and from geography to political science and international relations, they have also promoted intense debate within the academic community. Other specialized research centres and international academic institutions have sought to invest in this area and, therefore, safeguard the research nature of the maritime and terrestrial territory.

In 1989, UNESCO created the International Scientific Council for Island Development (INSULA), a non-governmental organization that promotes cultural, technical and scientific cooperation among island states towards sustainable development.

It was during the 2nd World Climate Conference held in 1990 in Geneva, Switzerland, that coastal islands and small island territories established, with the support of the United Nations (UN), the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a coalition of states sharing

similar concerns about their territorial development. These countries are particularly vulnerable to the negative consequences of climate change such as rising sea levels, tropical storms, and long periods of drought like those frequently occurring in Cape Verde or, on the contrary, of abundant rainfall like in the São Tomé and Príncipe archipelago. These were some of the reasons why island territories gained, through AOSIS, voice and visibility at different meetings that have been held since the 1990s.

The concern of these territories is justified insofar as it is conjectured that, over the next century, the sea level may rise by an average of 6 cm per decade (Swain, 2016). As it represents a real threat to island states and coastal zones, the AOSIS, whose members are engaged in regional groups such as the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), required concerted actions in order to promote the development of these territories. Despite not having a formal structure and a status like that of other international organizations, the AOSIS has an office in New York that advises its members to work on major current issues in a coordinated way in order to better prepare their negotiating positions.

In June 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro to discuss environmental issues, believing that, when organized, it is possible to achieve sustainable development. Agenda 21, which

was established as the UNCED strategic action plan, is the first to officially recognize SIDS and emphasize the importance of putting into effect National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDSS) that seek to, firstly, find the best solutions and mechanisms for development and, secondly, outline policies, programs and real actions in this regard (UNCED, 1992).

To reaffirm these commitments, the UN held in May 1994, in Barbados, a conference intended to guide SIDS in adopting strategies, programs and plans that would respect the right to development. It was recommended that these countries, according to their specific characteristics and priorities, used all efforts for regional development taking into account the objectives of sustainable development and strengthened national institutions in the mobilization of available resources, so as to promote better living conditions for their inhabitants (UN, 1994). Through strategic coordination and international lobbying, the AOSIS has promoted SIDS, establishing cooperative relations with developing countries, in particular those belonging to G77.

The 2nd UN Conference on SIDS took place in Mauritius on 10-14 March 2005, resulting in the review of the Barbados Programme of Action, whose aim was to outline strategies for its implementation around five new core themes: trade, globalization and liberalization, strengthening of education for deve-

lopment, production and sustainable consumption, health and culture.

On 20-22 June 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) was held, where representatives of 193 countries adopted the final declaration entitled *The Future We Want*, which envisages the launch of a process to establish Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Regarding SIDS, they reaffirmed the development commitment which takes into account their regional specificities, in view of global environmental problems, including climate change, natural disasters and rising sea levels.

On 1-4 September 2014, the UN organized in Samoa the 3rd Conference on SIDS, where they discussed the thematic lines for the establishment of partnerships, namely, sustainable economic development, climate change and disaster and risk management, social development, health and prevention of non-communicable diseases, contribution to sustainable energies, the role of the oceans and seas in the preservation of biodiversity, water and sanitation, food security and waste management. The final declaration of the Conference had as its motto *The Way Forward* and focused on the need to establish partnerships 'with' and 'for' SIDS.

SIDS are recognized as a group of island developing countries that are located in different regions of the world (Figure 1) and which face specific social, economic and environmental problems.



Figure 1. Geographical Location of SIDS. Source: SCIDEV (2014).

Located mainly in the intertropical zone, the SIDS are predominantly concentrated in the Caribbean region, Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean (Faizal, 1996). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) recognizes that, currently, 58 small states and insular territories are part of the SIDS, of which 38 (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belize, Cape Verde, Comoros, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Singapore, Suriname, Samoa, São Tomé e Príncipe, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu) are members of the United Nations and 20 (Ameri-

can Samoa, Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, Cook Islands, Curacao, French Polynesia, Guadeloupe, Guam, Martinique, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Niue, Puerto Rico, St Maarten, Turks and Caicos Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands) non-members that are often associated with regional commissions.

In the definition of SIDS, we use a set of elements such as geographic area, population size, economic and environmental characteristics (Pantin, 1994). It is difficult, however, to present a consensual definition due to the heterogeneous characteristics of these territories.

The expression *small island state* can be defined as a state which usually covers less than 1,000 km², with a population below 1 million inhabitants. But there are territories with more than 27,000

km² such as the Solomon Islands and others with less than 22 km² as in the case of Nauru. With regard to demographic variables, the same scenario sometimes seems hard to be operationalized, since in some states like Singapore and Mauritius the number of inhabitants exceeds 1 million (Bass & Dalal-Clayton, 1995, p. 5). There is a disagreement about the quantifiable quantitative or qualitative criteria to be considered in order to define a small state (Neumann & Gstöhl, 2006), taking into account material, military and scientific resources, territorial space, demographic weight, and/or institutional, political and moral factors (Maass, 2009).

The definition of small state varies depending on the criteria that each entity uses, which can be quantitative or qualitative (Tolentino, 2007). We should bear in mind that when applying a precise and rigorous definition, numerous exceptions could emerge (Hey, 2003). Considering the territorial dimension as the main criterion, although it is not consensually crucial, a small state is usually presented as a tiny territory, which has a relatively small population with limited resources (Fox, 2006).

To characterize a state as to its dimension, one should take into consideration both quantitative and qualitative aspects. So, one should apply a definition that avoids rigid and exclusionary specifications, rather than a global definition (Vital, 1971). The UN, for example, even presents various criteria, such as a population below 2,500,000 inhabitants and an area under 5,000

km². Another characteristic is that the state is regarded as sovereign.

A small state, from the perspective of the UN, corresponds to extremely small identities in territory, population, human and economic resources, which are assigned the characteristic of being small under a criterion of comparison, without being absolute (Rapaport, Muteba, & Therattil, 1971). Small states—*islands* in this case—meet different criteria according to the UN: population of less than 1.5 million inhabitants, political sovereignty or autonomy recognized by the UN, and an area under 5,000 km² (Tolentino, 2007).

The SIDS are considered vulnerable and insular territories that have a reduced population and territorial dimension, combined with the isolation, vulnerability to the occurrence of natural disasters, scarcity of natural resources, excessive dependence on international trade, lack of economy of scale, and high costs of transport and administration infrastructures. These characteristics require investment in infrastructure, communication, transport and energy. In addition, “the resolution capacity of the existing institutions is equally meaningful” (Swain, 2016, p. 152).

The geographical dispersion of SIDS constrains the geopolitical and geo-economic context of the region in which they are inserted, having direct implications on political stability, economic growth, development and cooperation with other states (Sanguin,

1981). The UN has organized several meetings in order to discuss these issues, aware that SIDS, on the one hand, face various problems and, on the other, play a particularly important role in the global balance. Sustainability and development of these island territories necessarily include mobilizing public and private capital, promoting good governance, political stability, and macroeconomic policies directed to the development of human capital (Boto & Biasca, 2012).

To mitigate or recover from structuring, environmental, economic and geographic impacts, which are usually beyond the control of states (Taglioni, 2010), several insular territories invest in resiliency from the interaction between structural forces, for example, through the efforts of agencies and fundamental institutions and the participation in community organizations. They usually opt for certain lifestyles in order to find adaptation strategies to safeguard themselves from the negative consequences of climate change (Swain, 2016, p. 152).

Although island territories have played a very important role in the world economy, in which some have stood out — major powers like Japan and the United Kingdom—, the SIDS are often identified as ‘unfeasible’ since they are characterized as vulnerable and economically dependent territories that continuously face several economic, social, environmental, and security challenges.

Security challenges for Small Island Developing States

African SIDS face a set of challenges since the traditional armed conflict —corruption, transnational organized crime, maritime piracy and environmental problems such as climate change, natural disasters and development problems— with negative effects on the maintenance of peace and international security (Payne & Sutton, 1993).

They are both interconnected and interdependent. The same applies to the concepts of security and defence. They have been evolving over the years. If security is characterized by a set of measures that seeks to ensure peace among the states when applied to different contexts, defence highlights a set of goals including to prepare deterrent means of aggression or those that are able to stop it (Moreira, 1988). Concerning the concept of defence, it focuses on the application of several methods, including the use of force or dissuasive actions aiming at confronting threats or aggression. In this context, we include, for example, the Armed Forces’ direct action, integrated activities with other units of the state, and the information policy with preventive and repressive purposes.

This study pertains to today’s geopolitics, seeking to help politics in the definition of its objectives and to contribute to “the strategic method, particularly in building credible and sustainable scenarios” (Dias, 2005, p. 59). Since threats are complex and unevenly distributed by coastal developing states,

as well as by the least developed states and island developing states, this research aims to analyse and highlight “the study of the constants and variables of the space accessible to the man who, by objectifying himself in building assessment and employment models, or the threat of using forms of coercion, projects the geographic knowledge of strategic action” (IAEM, 1993, p. 11).

In fact, these are real problems, which, however, should not be generalized. Each case should be carefully analysed. Threats should be identified, assessed and properly neutralized through appropriate measures for each case. This should also extend to all that is likely to create conflict or impede the protection of a right.

Security is a feeling of protection against threats of any kind that is necessary for and indispensable to a society and every individual, group or organization. From the realist perspective, the state is the main actor and almost the exclusive security reference. This was the perspective until mid-1980's. Since the 1990's, other dimensions have arisen around the concept of security, also comprising military, political, economic, societal and environmental components (Buzan, 1991). This view aroused the interest for other theoretical and methodological approaches to security, covering human groups (Buzan, 1991), societies (Buzan, Weaver, & Wilde, 1997), communities (Alagappa, 1998), and individuals (Alkire, 2003).

Several researchers like Barnett and Adler (2007), Brown, Hammill, and McLe-

man (2007), Raleigh and Urdal (2007), Detraz and Batsill (2009) and Trombetta (2008) have been working on security and environmental issues, considering that there is a causal relation between the scarcity of natural resources and interstate and intrastate conflicts. This research does not seek to delve into these issues, but we believe that geographical and environmental features intervene and influence the security of African SIDS (Zaki & Parakh, 2008) (Figure 2).

Due to the high cost that investment in the sector of security may imply, one believes that cross-sectoral strategies and coordinated actions should be outlined in order to empower African SIDS to better cope with their space and geostrategic and geopolitical position. With the purpose of ensuring strength and internal cohesion and, consequently, external security, it is necessary to work on populations' ability of resilience to better deal with the problems that affect their territory. When the sense of area for African island territories was discussed, the sea was one of the central elements for presenting two geopolitical sides, depending on the relationship with it, “either it is an open door to the World, or an unprotected flank from where the greatest threats may come” (Nogueira, 2011, p. 261). In having low capacity for efficient surveillance of their maritime borders, some island states, particularly in West Africa (for example, Guinea-Bissau), have been making room for the multiplication of transnational organized crime (Chabal & Green, 2016).



Figure 2. Geographic Location of African SIDs. Source: undp (2018).

In the last decade, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) official data indicates that large amounts of cocaine are stored in West African countries. Its origin is mainly South America and is carried to Western Africa by sea. Three main routes are used, namely, the Northern route, from the Caribbean via the Azores to Portugal and Spain; the South America Central route via Cape Verde or Madeira and the Canary Islands to Europe; and more recently, the South America African route to West Africa and, then, to Spain and Portugal (UNODC, 2018a; 2018b) (Figure 3).

In this context, we should recall that, on 31 January 2019, Cape Verde Judicial Police (PJ) seized, at the port of Praia, a cargo ship with a Panamanian flag named *ESER*, which contained 260 bales of cocaine, weighing 9,570 kg. Eleven Russian citizens were arrested.

The ship from South America had as destination the port of Tangier in Morocco. The stopover at the port of Praia was to follow legal procedures related to the death, on board, of one of the crew members. This operation was developed because of an ongoing investigation, resulting from the exchange of operational information with MAOC-N (the Maritime Analysis and Operation Centre – Narcotics) whose headquarters are in Lisbon. In this operation of search, unloading, packaging, transport and custody of the seized product, the PJ had the cooperation of the Portuguese Judicial Police, the French National Police and national security forces (Armed Forces and Maritime Police), the Cape Verdean (ENAPOR) and Port of Praia port authorities. On February 2, 2019, the PJ incinerated the 9,570 kg of seized drugs at Praia's waste disposal (Inforpress, 2019).



Figure 3. The Flow of Cocaine through West Africa. Source: unodc (2018a)

Traffickers’ boats have been, in many cases, registered in Panama, Liberia or Togo. This is because they do not pay taxes for it. Most have as destination the ports of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain), Tangier or Dakhla (Morocco) in order to reach Europe (CENOZO, 2019). Furthermore, it is worth noting that illegal migration and other types of organized crime, such as terrorist bases, have been growing in the region of West Africa (World Bank, 2011). It is focusing on these threats that security issues have taken on greater prominence worldwide (Bernardino, 2008; Bernardino & Leal, 2011), in particular for African SIDS (Stuart, 2014).

In order to ensure interstate and intrastate peace (Moreira, 1988), security for African SIDS should be established as an action field for other strategic sectors,

taking into account their characteristics (Table 1). But this should not exclusively rely on the state; focus should be placed above all on human security (Tadjbakhsk & Chenoy, 2009) since states themselves, particularly non-democratic ones, can be a threat to their citizens and those of other member states (Hasen & Buzan, 2009).

Because of the smallness of their territories, reduced population size, isolation and scarcity of natural resources, as well as the exposure to environmental challenges, it is for African SIDS to act in several strategic sectors, which necessarily implies the making of policies on governance, human rights, the fight against transnational organized crime, and the bet on sustainable and inclusive growth.

Table 1. Characterization of African SIDS

African SIDS	Land area (km ²)	Population (thousands of inhabitants)	Gross domestic product	Strategic location
Cape Verde	4,030	546,388	1,754 billion USD	Approximately 500 km off the African West Coast (off the coast of Senegal)
Comoros	1,861	813,912	648,9 million USD	Off the African East coast and 230 km from Mozambique
Guinea-Bissau	28,120	1,861,000	1,347 billion USD	West Africa, bordering Senegal (to the North), Guinea Conakry (to the South and East)
Mauritius	2,030	1,265,000	13,34 billion USD	In the Tropic of Capricorn and 855 km east of Madagascar
São Tomé and Príncipe	960	204,327	390,9 million USD	In the region of the Gulf of Guinea and 250 km from the northwest coast of Gabon
Seychelles	455	95,843	1,486 billion USD	1,100 km northeast of Madagascar and 1,600 km east of Kenya

Source: Compiled by the author based on the websites: <https://data.worldbank.org/> and <http://unctadstat.unctad.org/EN/>. Accessed on 22 February 2019.

The evolution of political processes on the African continent—especially the issue of the construction of African nations (Graça, 2005)—which are adversely affected by the proliferation of forms of conflict, has contributed to the emergence of a set of fragile states that threaten peace, stability and international security (Collier, 2007). We are facing what Castells (1997) defines as a network society. This has enabled globalization of various types of crimes that are increasingly interdependent, which requires precautions in order to trigger all the mechanisms for the mobilization of resources to fight them (Keohane & Nye, 2001).

Some states lack the necessary capacity to be resilient since they are structu-

rally vulnerable and fragile; therefore, the implementation of said reforms should be in accordance with an international integration and cooperation plan that makes it possible to mitigate national security threats.

Cape Verde: From security issues to development strategies

Discovered between 1460 and 1462 by navigators serving the Portuguese crown, Cape Verde is in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean between Africa, Europe and the Americas. Being a small island state, consisting of ten islands and several islets of volcanic origin, the archipelago has a reduced geographic dimension, a land surface of 4,030 km² and a population of 539,560 inhabitants (World Bank, 2016).

Cape Verde is a vulnerable, isolated state that lies off Senegal approximately 500 km from the West African coast, situated between parallels 17° 12' and 14° 48' N and meridians 22° 41' and 25° 22' W. These features involve additional costs to finance its development, making this a country dependent on direct foreign investment flows.

Independence in 1975 allowed Cape Verde to earn “a statute of full member of the international community and acquire several compromises in order to promote its economic and social development, as well as to defend its territorial integrity” (Madeira, 2015, p. 68). This landmark allowed the country to get respect and recognition from international institutions and organizations. It was able, through the creation of conditions and resilience strategies, to alleviate the negative effects of insularity, taking opportunities for growth and socio-economic development.

Cape Verde occupies a privileged position between the Atlantic shores and, for this reason, has raised interest in the establishment of different partnerships (Amante da Rosa, 2007; Matos, 2012). It should be noted that the country's integration in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been important in the fight against transnational organized crime, with a particular focus on drug trafficking and the strengthening of bilateral cooperation with other states outside the Community (Évora, 2014) (Figure 4).

Aware of the efforts that Cape Verde has made to promote consistent and sustainable development, we underline that socio-economic evolution is subject to various structural characteristics and intrinsic weaknesses, which are major challenges. Insularity itself constitutes one of the limitations, which implies a negative impact on the development process of the country; therefore, this should not be set aside on the policy options for the sector. The situation has been getting worse for two decades since the archipelago does not have enough resources for the surveillance of its vast maritime territory, especially in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which results in the fragility of its borders. Cape Verde is, in the context of West Africa, referred to as one of the main routes from South America to Europe. Given the proliferation of these forms of transnational organized crime, the archipelago, by its privileged geographic position, has been chosen for illegal activities (Garcia, 2017).

Considering this scenario, there is an urgent need to think about strategies involving Cape Verde's current geopolitical value; however, it is necessary to clarify that there are two main divergent lines of analysis that should be considered with regard to this value (Tavares, 2016). The first argues that Cape Verde's geographical importance is due, above all, to its important location in the Middle Atlantic. The second line of analysis, which is opposite, devalues the geopolitical positioning.



Figure 4. Map of State Members of the ECOWAS. Source: zif (2016)

The archipelago strategic value should comply with political variabilities and economic dynamics. Further, it is also possible to realize that the whole discursive analysis around specific island characteristics of Cape Verde is a mere appropriation of history. Both geopolitical dynamics and historical conjunctures condition and activate “the valences that, in a particular time, make a particular place or space be more or less conducive to the coordination of boards and relational flows with other spaces” (Tavares, 2016, p. 13). The author presents a more detailed and in-depth analysis, considering that the archipelago currently has “a great strategic value to the transnational criminal networks, which have proliferated with regard

to the international geopolitical and geostrategic dynamics” (Tavares, 2016, p. 13), although it keeps the importance that distinguishes it from other spaces for their particularities, one being the geographical proximity to different geopolitical and geoeconomic dynamic spaces that will hardly stop being a place of intense international traffic.

Given this context, Cape Verde should profit from its position within regional organizations to enable the expression of a new international identity, especially marked by the idea that it can act conscious of its geographical dimension and the scarcity of natural and economic resources. The country will be able to strengthen its position of security and credibility through geopolitics, seeking, above all, to cultivate

national unity from the internal point of view with repercussions in promoting dialogue and international peace (Madeira, 2015). The Cape Verde-NATO partnership is of extreme importance to both, regarding costs and benefits (Varela, 2007). Balanced partnerships should be established for both entities, with mutual obligations and counterparts, aware of the fact that within the framework of international politics and diplomatic relations there are neither winners, nor losers.

As a small state that, by default, is considered a “security net importer” (Freire, 2007, p. 73), Cape Verde is, in the international context, a unit that tends to get more help than that it can effectively offer. To compensate for its limitations, Cape Verde needs to associate and ally with other states, whether small or large, thus benefiting from international institutions and organizations (Almeida, 2012). Furthermore, strategic coordination between Cape Verde and African Small Island States is necessary, in the adoption of mechanisms that ensure security, mainly for environmental preservation, communication technologies and maritime development. It was in these sectors that interests converged, as evidenced at various international meetings held in Praia in 2004 and 2015. The last one took place on 16-17 December 2016, within the framework of the 1st Ministerial Conference of African Developing Island States and Madagascar also held in this town, which resulted in the Declaration of Praia (MNEC, 2016).

At this Conference, the name of the group of African Small Island States was changed to group of Small Island Developing States and Madagascar, which includes Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Seychelles. The Conference aimed at providing an agreement platform to promote, among international organizations—starting with the African Union (AU)—, ways for African Island States to overcome difficulties, thus making effective the recommendations and existing commitments at regional and global levels. To this end, topics were scheduled according to the dynamics of the implementation of the 2063 African Agenda, the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA Pathway), and the 2030 Agenda of the SDGs.

At the 72nd UN General Assembly (22 September 2017), the current Prime Minister of Cape Verde, Ulisses Correia e Silva—corroborating the visions of other attending states’ representatives— argued that among the member states of the group, there is the political will to join forces and share development experiences, interacting with regional and international organizations (LUSA, 2016). The major challenges faced by African Small Island States require joint and assertive actions effectively allowing a better integration in development core themes. The empowerment of institutions and human resources is demanded from small island states in order to build partnerships, taking advantage

of their potential. The Prime Minister also drew attention to climate change, among other things, to fund adaptation measures in the most vulnerable countries and regions since Cape Verde prioritizes the implementation of the Paris Agreement (UN NEWS, 2018). Together, they will be stronger and provide the necessary conditions to tackle their vulnerabilities and create forms of resilience, as the scarce natural resources and the effects of climate change are major concerns.

The issue of vulnerability should become a priority for global sustainability because for island states the big challenge is to outline a strategy compatible with the international agenda so that they can, within the AU and other international forums, present joint programs under different global agendas. To Ulrika Richardson, resident coordinator of the UN System in Cape Verde from March 2016 to June 2018, climate change is one of the central problems of small states and, therefore, she calls for international political commitment, believing that the UN will continue to support member states in order to achieve sustainable development (Expresso das Ilhas, 2016).

For the sustainable development of Cape Verde, it is desirable that joint coordination mechanisms are developed around fundraising, job creation and the bet on the improvement of the inhabitants' living conditions because, besides overcoming the issue of insularity and its vulnerabilities, the coun-

try needs to fight the phenomena that threaten its security.

Recognizing its limitations as a small state with scarce resources and which excels in terms of aid mobilization for development, Cape Verde should continue to promote a culture of social peace reflected on internal and external policies and bet on a diplomacy of modesty and closeness based on the principles of peace in order to resolve or circumvent socioeconomic constraints. It is necessary to invest in the projection of Cape Verde at the regional level since the country occupies a privileged geographic position in the West African region, and this can allow fundraising through international cooperation.

We have as a recent example Cape Verde's participation in the Conference for International Donors and Investors in Paris under the motto *Building New Partnerships for the Sustainable Development of Cape Verde*. On 11-12 December 2018, the Government made it clear it intends to continue to make the archipelago a Middle Atlantic circulation economy based on the recognition of human capital. This involves taking decisive measures in order to enhance the geographic location for connectivity among Africa, Europe and the Americas.

The country has political, institutional, social and economic stability based on the importance of its human capital and the confidence in its relations with investors, particularly development

partners. These are some of the elements that will enable:

to place Cape Verde as a platform for tourism, air transport, port operations, trade and investment operations, in the digital economy and in financial services; to promote a positive inclusion of Cape Verde in the collective and cooperative security systems, in particular, maritime security and the fight against border transnational crime [...] turning the integration of Cape Verde in ECOWAS into opportunities for investors, to enhance the integration of Cape Verde in Macaronesia as first neighborhood space with the EU and a privileged space for triangular cooperation" (Expresso das Ilhas, 2018).

Conclusions

When one analyses the issues of security and development taking into account the geographical characteristics and configuration of African Small Island States, we should highlight the remarkable course of Cape Verde within the framework of regional integration and the international panorama. An aspect to consider is that the archipelago has a privileged geostrategic position in the Middle Atlantic and political stability and good governance. The country has been prioritizing, since its independence in July 1975, its territorial security and excelling in peace policies and international solidarity.

It is not by chance that international institutions and organizations, as well

as several world powers, have given particular importance to these aspects not only due to their pragmatic position, but also because of their efforts in fulfilling the SDGs. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe, through a look-back, that the gains achieved so far and that the great challenge faced by Cape Verde is related to external security without neglecting the efforts it has made in promoting internal security and citizens' fundamental rights. Although it is a small state that suffers due to its insularity and the consequences of social vulnerability prevent it from having more balanced socio-economic development, these features are not necessarily an insuperable barrier to economic performance (Armstrong et al., 1998).

The establishment of alliances with other states, regional and international institutions and organizations should be strategic options for Cape Verde to mitigate threats to its national security. With scarcity of natural resources and the need for external support, the archipelago should be aware of the need to deepen relations with its international partners, especially in the African region where it is inserted, and to reinforce its role in international trade by betting on strategic sectors such as tourism and in the development of the small island economies.

In comparison with other African Small Island States, including São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles and Mauritius, Cape Verde, by its geopolitical and geostrategic position, is one of the

most wanted territories by transnational organized crime networks. Located in the Gulf of Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe is less preferred by these networks, which does not mean that the country is immune to these problems. Seychelles and Mauritius, in spite of being in the Indian Ocean, are also affected by the conflicts in Sudan and by the phenomena of maritime piracy in the Persian Gulf.

Insularity and the vast maritime space bring constraints that defy the Cape Verdean state in the search for best strategic alternatives. The geostrategic position of Cabo Verde also has potential and vulnerabilities to project the country at an international level since it can play an extremely important role both in the North and South Atlantic and thus constitutes an important platform to create a peace and cooperation system in the West African region. Over time, insularity and geopolitical positioning have given the archipelago a set of potentialities, in particular its importance as intercontinental point of connection for trade, economic and cultural relations. However, it is urgent that the state of Cape Verde invests in an integrated computer system for surveilling and monitoring the coastal zone that is adequate to its reality and combines, in a balanced way, its characteristics and needs.

Participation in multilateral mechanisms is fundamental in the framework of mutual assistance, cooperation, and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. The majority of researchers

dealing with this issue consider that island states such as Cape Verde need to form external partnerships in order to obtain human, material, logistical and technological resources through an integrated effort that ensures the safety of their citizens, hoping that they result in positive long-term effects. The forms of cooperation should be adapted to the reality of Cape Verde in order to effectively respond to the threats arising in this subregion, as these go beyond the state's capabilities and, therefore, the country cannot act on its own.

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