

Sports Diplomacy and Apartheid South Africa

Sport as a tool of diplomacy came of age in the post-World War I world when it caught the attention of politicians and governments as a channel through which to conduct international relations. From Nazi Germany to Communist Russia, from capitalistic United States to apartheid South Africa, sports have personified the ideologies of political policies in the 20th century. As we enter the 21st century, sports are no longer framed in the East vs West, Authoritarian vs Democracy battles lines that made for compelling stories in the past century. Instead, sports are becoming an essential part of the toolbox of a country's public diplomacy. Sport events that host numerous foreign visitors have impacts on a country's relationship with foreign publics on scales that public diplomats could only hope to reach through their own strategies and projects. The fact that sport reaches such a wide audience is part of the broad public appeal, but also the reason why organizations and governments seek to attach themselves to popular figures, teams, and events that enhance their standing in the eyes of others.

Developed nations have used sports as a representation of their might and power for nearly 100 years. Triumphs at Olympic games, holding the title as fastest man, or victories over rivals on the football pitch were all used for propaganda purposes in the last century to strengthen a nation's image. But what of the developing nations? Is there a role for sports as a tool of public diplomacy? Can sports be used as a development tool, to encourage foreign investment and good governance? This paper seeks the answers to these pressing questions because sports competitions continue despite the lack of resources and infrastructure that many other developmental programs require for their success. For example, football diplomacy only

requires that a round object and two sticks at opposite ends of a field to be conducted. Sports Diplomacy does not require investments in education, the building of roads, or the training of nurses. While all those pieces are required for development, sport is played in countries all over the world despite poor education, lack of paved roads, and underfunded healthcare systems. Thus, Sports Diplomacy could be conducted straight away with little need for new funding.

Notable examples of sports and politics colliding can be seen at work in the Olympics boycotts of the 1970s and 1980s, the Football War between Honduras and El Salvador, and Ping Pong Diplomacy between the US and China in the 1970s. However, first we must understand how sports diplomacy can be used to carry out the foreign policy of a country. How is the tool used and what lessons can be drawn from its successful use? Findings for these answers will come from the focus of this paper. The following work will examine how sports diplomacy was used in Southern Africa during apartheid in South Africa and how it contributed to the dismantling of the apartheid regime. The Republic of South Africa currently sits at a unique crossroads in world affairs. Claiming to be a representative of the South but with strong industrial ties to the North, it can be a development bridge for the African continent, attracting investment through its brand. Acting as a gateway for the African continent, South Africa can be the representative for the African South as it seeks to accomplish foreign policy goals related to good governance and development. Understanding how South Africa can move forward with a sports public diplomacy strategy, we must examine its past and the first hand experience South Africans have with negative and positive Sports Diplomacy.

Sports Diplomacy: A Brief History

A reading of the historiography of Sports Diplomacy generally finds agreement that sports and its usage in foreign policy originally stemmed from a nation building effort by individual countries to foster a sense of nation through competition against the ‘other’. However, it was not until after the First World War, when national competitions came to be seen as the “arena of ‘revenge’”¹.

Pierre Arnaud contributes greatly to the historiography by presenting two ways of government interaction with sport and three ways for sports diplomacy to be used. He outlines an ‘engaged’ government, one that forms a ‘sports policy’ and actively uses it in the action taken by the foreign ministry. It would also give directives to national federations that are members in international sporting associations. Conversely, Arnaud shows the other form of engagement with sport would occur only in ‘extraordinary circumstances’ where a political crisis deems an escalation of pressure or retaliation against an opposing force. These events are numerous following 1919, and the first use where sports policy is demanded by public opinion occurs at meetings between the two warring sides of the Great War and thus force governments to act. With international sporting events making for attractive (and provocative) stories for newspapers to cover in the post-war years, the national character came to be seen on the line when rival countries met in the arena. Thus the fusion of sports and foreign policy began. Since then, sports have been used in political crisis between two states as a tool to meet a state’s foreign policy objectives.

The first method is the use of sporting victories and triumphs as propaganda. Through the reinforcement of a positive image of “respect..., strength, and vitality” political regimes could

¹ Arnaud and Riordan 1998, 6.

gain legitimacy from athletic success.² Second, the boycott, banning, or freezing of sports competitions between national teams could be used as a way of reprisal against an policy or regime that the sending country wished to impact. This action used the receiving country's public to pressure their government to change the offending domestic or foreign policy.³ This can be seen as a preliminary level of the political foreign policy apparatus, obviously coming before economic and political sanctions, but we will see that used in concert negative sports diplomacy gains importance as a tool in foreign policy. Finally, popular discontent expressed in disorder and/or violence at a sporting event can showcase the 'anti' feelings, whether nationalistic or xenophobic, and can stem from political or sporting motives.⁴ We will see the three uses of sport as described by Arnaud, propaganda, exclusion, and retaliation, be prominent during apartheid in South Africa and central to some organizations and countries dealings with the pariah state.

Sports Diplomacy Usages

One deployment of sports diplomacy that is prominent in the history of the 20th century is the Summit Series between Canada and the Soviet Union in 1972. This came to be the prominent feature of Canada's 'hockey diplomacy', as coined by Macintosh and Hawes in their review of Canadian public diplomacy through the use of sports. The development of hockey diplomacy was due to the downfall of the preeminence of Canadian hockey on the global stage. While the Canadian Government's Department of External Affairs was little concerned with the

² Arnaud and Riodoran 1998, 11

³ *ibid*, 13

⁴ *ibid*, 13

national team's wins and losses in international play, it was the *way* Canada was losing that brought government involvement.⁵

Public concern about the state of hockey began with the Canadian's finish of second at the World Hockey Championship in 1954, behind the Soviet Union. When Canadian ambassadors began to write reports to the Department of External Affairs that relations with Nordic and Eastern European countries were deteriorating due to the "'brutish' and 'reprehensible' conduct of many Canadian hockey players", External Affairs took note, but had no plan of action.⁶ Due to the link between hockey and Canada in many of these countries, the actions taken by the national team when they played these countries impacted the public perception these countries held about Canada and Canadians as a whole. When the Canadian Government finally became involved, the formation of Hockey Canada was the result. A non-profit organization, not directly linked with the government, Hockey Canada was charged with developing and managing the national hockey team of Canada.⁷

As diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union warmed, the idea of a sports exchange was discussed during meetings between the two governments. The bond that both countries shared due to hockey was seen as a way to strengthen mutual ties, and thus sustain the foundations created through economic and political protocols. The 1972 Canada-Soviet Hockey Series, referred to in popular culture as the Summit Series, was the result of these discussions. The announcement was greeted with joy in Canada, and the media proclaimed that the series was a

⁵ Macintosh and Hawes 1994, 25

⁶ *ibid*, 28

⁷ *ibid*, 28

way for Canada to regain its mantle as the dominant force in international hockey. Thus the reputation of the nation was on the line in this sporting event.

When Canada won the series with a goal in the last minute of play in the eighth and final game, held in Moscow, the Series immediately entered Canadian sports lore, and to this day is still regarded as a landmark in Canadian cultural history. However, the lessons for public diplomats today are of greater significance. Before this time, the link between sport and foreign relations was little understood, as seen by External Affairs's belated response to their ambassador's warnings about the tarnishing of the nation's brand. The series fully exposed the enormous potential in sports diplomacy, not just in North America, but also in the Scandinavian countries who had watched the Summit Series with interest. The series had also captured the interest and passion of Canadians and the media. Sport began to be seen as a novel tool for diplomacy. However, the next two decades saw sport be used to make overt political statements in the form of boycotts and threats of boycotts. Hockey diplomacy as cultural exchange was thus ahead of its time in terms of being part of the public diplomacy tool box, and sport was to become more intertwined with politics in other nations over the next 20 years.

In terms of government changes, the Summit Series led to the creation of a desk officer in External Affairs at the International Sports Relations desk, to "formalize the department's bureaucratic involvement in sport".⁸ However, the usage of sport in Canadian diplomacy was concentrated on preventing boycotts of the Montreal Olympics (unsuccessfully) and of the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton (successfully). It was not until 1987 when the Secretary of

⁸ Macintosh and Hawes 1994, 35

State for External Affairs announced that sport would be a greater part of Canada's branding abroad and a larger part in the country's foreign relations.

Negative Sports Diplomacy attracted wide scale coverage in the form of the Olympic Games boycotts of the 20th Century:

- 1976 by black African countries to rebuke New Zealand's continued sporting ties with South Africa
- 1980 by Western aligned countries protesting the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan
- 1984 by the Soviet bloc in retaliation

Despite the media attention paid to these boycotts, for the United States, its first experience with sports diplomacy was a smaller scale event that former US President Nixon called "the week that changed the world"⁹. This week became the most famous use of sports diplomacy, which came in the form of a visit by a ping pong team to a Cold War rival.

Following an invitation from the Chinese ping pong team at a Japanese tournament, the American ping pong team became the first Americans invited to China since the communist takeover in 1949. In the spring of 1972, with international media (including five Americans) reporting their every move and interaction while in China, there was a notable thaw in relations between the two countries. On the day the Americans were received at a banquet in the Great Hall of the People and toasted by the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai, the United States announced that the 20-year trade embargo with China would be removed¹⁰. The Premier was quoted as saying, "Never before in history has a sport been used so effectively as a tool of international diplomacy."¹¹

⁹ DeVoss 2002

¹⁰ Ping-Pong Diplomacy PBS

¹¹ DeVoss 2002

Usage of Mega Sporting Events for Public Diplomacy

While the modern Olympics served as a way to bring world nations together through international sport competition, the Berlin Olympics served as a blueprint for propaganda usage of future sporting events. The build up to the games caused greatly controversy once Hitler came to power as the Weimar Republic with Brüning as Chancellor had been in power when the games were awarded. The Germans then went on to use the games as a publicity show for National Socialism. Despite all the doubts and accusations of discrimination in the lead up to the games, when visiting dignitaries were entertained at the Berlin opera held at the Pergamon Museum, with a exemplary collection of Hellenistic art, and followed by wining and dining by Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda, they took away a “vague impression that National Socialism was not as dreadful as they had thought”¹². Though Jesse Owens subsequently stole the spotlight and seemingly the storyline of the superiority of the Ayran race, the treatment given by the German media and propaganda offices of Owens’ success was surprisingly unbiased and was in fact a deliberate policy of the Ministry of Propaganda to not offend black athletes at the game. German historian, Hans Joachim Teichler, notes that there was a suspension, temporarily, of core ideology of National Socialism. Ironically, Owens was profiled extensively in the Ministry’s film chronicling the games despite protests from Goebbels, while in the most liberal newspaper in the American South no photographs of Owens or other black athletes were published. Thus, the great extent that Nazi Germany went to suppress their discriminatory ideology was directly for public diplomacy, or propaganda.

¹² Arnaud and Riordn 1998, 44

More recently at the beginning of the millennium, Japan and South Korea hosted the FIFA World Cup in 2002. Victor Cha explains that the desire to host sporting events has long been viewed as the validation of the development of Asian countries¹³. This began with Japan's announcement of itself as a world player with the 1964 Olympics and South Korea following suit 24 years later with its own Olympiad. China continued this in 2008 with its extravagant hosting of the Olympic Games. The FIFA World Cup was co-hosted between Japan and Korea despite a vigorous and often terse campaign by each country to be the sole host. FIFA compromised in its awarding of co-hosting responsibilities to both nations to avoid straining relations with the losing country. Cha concludes that the outcome of the FIFA World Cup on Japanese-Korean relations was null, but that luster had been added to the games due to both countries already being at a level of modernity that allowed them to show off their democratic, tech-savvy, and globalized societies. The perception of Japanese-Korean cooperation to host a success tournament overshadowed the lack of real change in the diplomatic relationships between the two countries.

Mega sporting events as a tool of a nation's public diplomacy are not just the purview of sporting associations and the desire to host is beginning to grow in popularity as nations see that the ideological battles of the Cold War fought through megaevents can now be used in the 21st century to promote a country's brand and thus encourage further engagement, often in the form of economic benefits, through participation and hosting of mega sporting events.

African Sports Diplomacy

¹³ Cha, 4

Of the many images of African sport there are many instances of brand creation through sporting figures and achievements, but the instance of traditional diplomacy using sports does immediately spring to mind when thinking of Africa. However, Tanzania provides us an excellent case to examine as the newly liberated country used sport in policy implementation. Both domestically and externally, the socialist state that the ruling power sought to create in the East African nation used sport to unify its population and target objectives abroad. Tanzania used many measures to support other liberation movements on the continent, through economic sanctions, aid to liberation movements and even direct military involvement. The use of international organizations such as the United Nations and Organization of African Unity also played a part in Tanzania's goal of political liberation in southern Africa, notably in apartheid South Africa and Rhodesia.

The use of sport internationally as a policy tool originates in local diplomacy first between Tanganyika and Zanzibar before the union between the two that formed Tanzania. Two sports clubs had developed in parallel to one another in the inter-war years, one in Dar es Salaam and the other on the islands of Zanzibar. It was during these formative years that exchanges between the two clubs began to take place. It was these cultural exchanges that involved initially football teams from each club and eventually these exchanges evolved into annual broad-sport festivals between the islands and the mainland. As these ties developed, politicians came to handle these exchanges to ensure their continuation when funding became a hinderance. As the links between ruling parties and their respective sports clubs developed, the exchanges through sports came to represent the strengthening ties between the two liberation movements of each

country. Governments sought to “create a temporary sense of togetherness and... [these] governments ... see this as an important reason for supporting sport.”¹⁴

Though Tanzania was a new participant on the world stage in 1964, and thus played no part in excluding South Africa from the Tokyo Games, when South Africa was allowed to participate at the 1968 Games in Mexico, Tanzania was part of the strong reaction against the International Olympic Committee’s (IOC) decision, and withdrew from the Olympics in protest. They resubmitted their application once South Africa was again barred. Tanzania then turned their sights on excluding Rhodesia from the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. While Rhodesia had participated in the 1964 Games under the Union Jack, the Universal Declaration of Independence (UDI) came the following year and led to a UN resolution, which allowed Mexico to legally bar Rhodesia from participating. When Rhodesia sought to participate in Munich under ‘1964 conditions’ the IOC reacted positively as this was viewed by some African nations as a repudiation of the UDI. Tanzania protested Rhodesia’s inclusion and again removed their athletes from participating. Other African nations joined Tanzania, and when the UN Secretary General intervened and alerted the German government that Rhodesia’s participation would violate the UN resolution, the IOC reversed its position and barred Rhodesian involvement. With it’s success in building coalitions and solidarity with other nations in organizing sports boycotts, Tanzania took the lead of the black African boycott of the Montreal Games in 1976 in protest of New Zealand’s continued sporting relationship with apartheid South Africa¹⁵.

Not only was Tanzania effective in using sport as a negative diplomatic tool, it also used sport positively, to foster and promote African unity among the newly independent nations on the

¹⁴ Majumdar & Hong 2007, 174

¹⁵ Majumdar & Hong 2007, 180

continent. Regional and continental competitions such as the East and Central Africa Challenge Cup, the All Africa Cup of Nations, and the All Africa Games saw Tanzania as one of the most prominent supporters of these tournaments, and helped create the belief that these competitions brought Africans together in harmony. Not surprisingly, political policies that brought disagreement between nations often led to the interruption of sporting ties and when sporting competitions led to confrontations on the pitch, this could also translate to the cooling of relations (like what was seen between Scandinavian countries and Canada). A fight which erupted during a football match between Tanzania and Mozambique to celebrate the Lusophone country's independence, led to sporting and political links deteriorating despite close political ties before the match. Thus, the inherent competitive nature of sport can backfire on politicians who seek to use sports as policy implementation. However, the success that Tanzania had in using sport in its Front Line policy against Rhodesia and South Africa should serve as examples of how the negative use of sport can impact policy. We will see later in the paper that the loss of sporting links for South Africans played a significant part in the pressure brought down on the Apartheid regime.

Apartheid and Sport

Apartheid South Africa is a well researched entity and how apartheid reached into every aspect of life is generally accepted as one of the most penetrative political policies of the 20th century. The Dönges Declaration, by Minister of the Interior Dr. TE Dönges, spelled out sport policy under apartheid: it was to be conducted in accordance with the principle of 'separate

development', meaning apartheid.¹⁶ Internally, sport as it fit into South African culture and the struggle can be divided into two reasons for importance. First, the state used sport to promote superficial change in South Africa to the rest of the world. Second, the struggle for equal rights incorporated sport as a central theme because of its predominant place in South African culture.¹⁷ To understand how sport and apartheid functioned, we must briefly examine the two opposing forces in the country and their respective popular sports: for blacks, football, for whites, rugby.

The emergence of football post World War II as the “leviathan of black sport” meant that the liberation movement would be inevitably linked to football in South Africa.¹⁸ The political mobilization and mounting government repression as a response began as football took hold across the country. The diffusion of soccer around Southern Africa meant that the social meetings that took place at matches could be used by the liberation movements to convey ideas. This social gathering took on new meaning when football was the last refuge of mass gathering during institutionalized apartheid. The flow of ideas back and forth between sport and struggle politics can be seen in the proliferation of local sporting clubs in response to the nationalist policies promoted by black liberation groups. Non-racial sport associations arose at the same time as non-racial anti-apartheid movements began. The earliest prominent crossover between black football organizations and politics was the appointment of Albert Luthuli, the former head of the the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board to the head of the ANC in 1952.¹⁹ Luthuli saw the possibilities

¹⁶ Alegi 2010, 113

¹⁷ Jarvi 1985, 75

¹⁸ Alegi 2010, 63

¹⁹ Alegi 2010, 108

soccer gave in terms of political and community mobilization. In Luthuli's autobiography he writes, "I think what has attracted me as much as the game has been the opportunity to meet all sorts of people, from the loftiest to the most disreputable".²⁰ Though there is no evidence to connect the two, in the same year that Luthuli joined the ANC, 1944, the first football match with political implications took place and was used to raise funds for the ANC.²¹ The community connections that football could create in response to apartheid are best seen in the example of the community of Mangaung in Bloemfontein in the 1960s. After the community was denied use of the sporting grounds for the local soccer association, the community decided to stage their matches on open field that they cleared and leveled for their use. In response, the city council sent their bulldozers to the site to foul the pitch after the end of each week. Every Saturday morning the community would come together to clean and level the pitch so it was ready for that day's matches.²²

The links that soccer created to the outside world are also of interest, because the first international visit by a delegation to address apartheid related issues was the 1956 FIFA commission of inquiry.²³ Their findings that the representation of South Africans in the national football association was not all inclusive led to the eventual suspension of South African soccer from FIFA in 1961, the first international sanction of the apartheid regime.²⁴

²⁰ Latakomo 2010, 43

²¹ Alegi 2010, 62

²² Latakomo 2010, 44

²³ Alegi 2010, 112

²⁴ *ibid* 112, 117

With the first international rugby tour by South Africa in 1906, white South Africa had their international representative: the Springboks. The name was given to the South African team during the tests in England that year and so was born the most visible face of Afrikanerdom. The study of sport development, both soccer and rugby take up numerous books and scholarly articles on South Africa. The reason behind this interest is because unlike other white settler populations of the British Empire such as Australia and North America, white Europeans did not come to be the majority population in South Africa. Thus surrounded by the black masses, white South Africans attached themselves to those traditions of culture that represented their society²⁵. Though white British settler populations were generally ‘sports mad’, South Africa stood out with their subsequent success on the rugby pitch²⁶. With rugby playing a vital part in the construction of male identity, and as a result, national identity, rugby has a special significance in the cultural of South Africa.

For an understanding of what sporting sanctions meant for white South Africa, a comprehension of the importance of sport is needed. Some scholars call rugby ‘the Chosen Sport of a Chosen People’, which is an adapt description not only because of the religious-like support it engendered among Afrikaners, but also the importance the sport played in society.²⁷ The overt skills required to be a good rugby player, strength and determination, were synonymous with the history of the Afrikaner and The Great Trek from the Cape to the interior that Afrikanerdom had undertaken in the 1830s. The link between sporting superiority and white South African culture

²⁵ Black and Nauright 1998, 35

²⁶ *ibid*, 66

²⁷ Archer and Bouillon 1982, 56-78

spread to the social relationship between blacks and white, where rugby represented the dominance of the white minority.²⁸

The connection between Afrikaners and rugby meant that the suspension from FIFA in 1961 and the exclusion from the 1964 Tokyo Olympics had little impact on white South Africa. It was explained away as a communist plot engineered by developing nations and the Eastern European bloc.²⁹ In fact, rugby links between England and New Zealand continued to the end of the decade until the anti-apartheid movement targeted both countries with protests. South Africa even changed sporting policy under a new Prime Minister in order to sustain these traditional links in the 1970s, when it was announced that South Africa would have only one team from the Republic be its representative abroad per IOC requirements (before this South Africa had white, black, coloured, and Indian ‘national teams’). The policy also stated that South Africa would not dictate the ethnic make up of foreign teams visiting South Africa. This would not win IOC re-admittance and cricket links were also severed by 1970. The white minority’s importance of using sport to show the world that change was underway is significant in that it shows us what the Afrikaner government and its citizens valued as the national brand.³⁰ However, the facade put up by Pretoria did not fool anyone. The United Kingdom’s Prime Minister at the time summed it up when responding to South Africa banning of the tour by the English cricket team because it contained a coloured person (ironically a coloured from South Africa, Basil D'Oliveira). Harold Wilson described the new sentiment: “Once the South Africans had said that they were not taking

²⁸ Jarvie 1985, 47

²⁹ Black and Nauright 1998, 67

³⁰ Jarvie 1985, 44

a player [d'Oliveira] we wanted to send, I would have rather thought that put them beyond the pale of civilized cricket".³¹

The last tour by the Springboks in Australia took place in 1971, but it was the infamous tour of New Zealand in 1981, the first to be broadcast in South Africa, where demonstrations on unseen levels took place. This led to the full isolation of rugby South Africa, and sport in totality, but more importantly it brought home images of the anti-apartheid movement to white South Africans in stark detail. The fact that South Africa had now been cut off by its traditional, white, allies caused ramifications and eventually a change in policy. Deep divisions in the ruling National Party (NP) had begun to surface with the first change in sporting policy in 1967. It caused the government to call early elections in 1970 to head off the right wing part of the NP that had seceded in protest. The next significant fissure in the NP coincidentally occurs after the New Zealand tour when the state president, PW Botha, proposed a Tricameral parliament to give representation to Coloureds and Indians.³² While it would be too simple and narrow-minded to say that sporting, and in particular rugby, incidents caused the change in NP policy, the coincidence of the timing of two major policy changes in Apartheid framework cannot be overlooked. It would be justified to say that sporting policy was impacted by rugby's links and their deterioration abroad, but the fact that rugby was seen as the last bastion of 'civilization' by conservative white South Africa made it very difficult to implement changes that would bring about reintegration. This place in limbo realistically had only one solution: the dismantling of apartheid.

³¹ Booth 1998, 99

³² Black and Nauright 1998, 70

Sports Diplomacy in the Anti-Apartheid Movement

The fact that both the South African government and Anti-Apartheid protesters targeted rugby as the link to the world that South Africa would be most sensitive to losing, shows how important sporting relationships were to the regime, the white citizens of South Africa, and the liberation movement outside of the country. While each type of sanction had its own supporters, economic measures were given top billing as the reason for the dismantling of the apartheid state. Sport analysts show that those who supported harsher economic sanctions concluded in 1989 that “to be politically effective, sanctions would need to cut world-wide purchases from South Africa by at least one quarter” in order to get the desired change in policy.³³ These scholars point out that this finding came just months before the process of the negotiated settlement began with the release of Nelson Mandela in February of 1990. Black and Nauright, writing about the effects of sport on apartheid, conclude that despite the relatively stable security and high standard of living most white South Africans enjoyed, the world had underestimated the strong-willed attitude South Africans would show in the face of cultural (sporting) and economic isolation. This was a likelier explanation for the ‘earlier’ change in policy.³⁴ The longing of South Africans to be accepted as part of the world community is an underestimated factor in the fall of apartheid. Further evidence that sporting diplomacy played a part in South Africa’s foreign policy is the appointment of one of the Republic’s most experienced diplomats to the post of Consul-General in New Zealand. Despite New Zealand having little strategic or economic importance in South Africa’s international relations, the sporting link was

³³ Black and Nauright 1998, 78

³⁴ Black and Nauright 1998, 79

such that the National Party obviously deemed it of enough importance to send one of its most senior diplomats to the island nation to try to maintain the rugby link.³⁵

The fact that rugby had been the first and last linkage to the world by white South Africans should stand as reasonable evidence that the sport boycott, negative sports diplomacy, had a recognizable impact. This is reinforced by evidence in the 1992 referendum where the government used the return of sports relations to secure a ‘yes’ vote on continuing the constitutional talks with the ANC about the transfer to majority rule. Black and Nauright point out that the head of New Zealand rugby was in South Africa immediately preceding the vote to discuss dates for a tour of South Africa later that year.³⁶

Externally, sport diplomacy came to be used to large effect by the anti-apartheid movement. When suspension from FIFA and the IOC had little effect, it was the boycotts and protests that followed the Springboks during the overseas tours of 1970 that started the critical part of South Africa’s isolation. This is because it was also in 1970 that the United Nations, the Commonwealth, and the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa all issued condemnations of the racist policies of the National Party and of apartheid sport.³⁷ The convergence of anti-apartheid political policies and sporting isolation took literal form in the agreement signed by Commonwealth leaders at Gleneagles, Scotland in 1977. The Gleneagles Agreement declared that sporting contact by their associations and sportsmen would cease and the agreement became one of the pillars of the international opposition to apartheid in South Africa. This spelled out in clear regard that South Africa’s traditional white capitalist allies, the Commonwealth in

³⁵ *ibid*, 82-83

³⁶ *ibid*, 79

³⁷ *Javie* 1985, 54

particular, were rejecting South African sports as an ‘abomination’ due to its apartheid policies.³⁸ As outlined before, when rugby ties were finally cut off with New Zealand, South Africa’s isolation in world sport was finally comprehensive.

The Return of International Sport

When FW de Klerk committed his government to negotiation with the banned African National Congress and released Nelson Mandela, he put in motion events that eventually led to majority rule being established in South Africa, and thus reintegration with the international sporting community. Sports Diplomacy comes to play an important part in welcoming the new South Africa into existence and how South Africa reintroduced itself to the world. Sports played a part in the celebration of the inauguration of Nelson Mandela with South Africa hosting a match in Johannesburg against Zambia, a key ally of the ANC’s during apartheid. The hosting of two mega sporting events, the Rugby World Cup and the African Cup of Nations allowed South Africa to use Sports Diplomacy to promote itself as a vibrant, integrated culture, a rainbow nation, and as a new democracy.

The story of Nelson Mandela trotting out in front of 50,000 white South Africans at Ellis Park while wearing a green Springbok jersey is a well known story, but what went under appreciated in the Hollywood movie was the political maneuvers that Mandela and the South African Rugby Union (SARU) undertook to ensure that the event was in fact a nation-building moment. To this day the event is recognized by South Africans as *the* moment the rainbow nation was born in the hearts and minds of both black and white South Africans. What is less known are

³⁸ Templeton 1998, 149

the behind the scenes moves by SARU to make sure that the correct pieces were in place to allow a nation-building and public display of unity shown to the world possible. The choosing of an outsider, a Rhodesian immigrant turned sports reporter, as the CEO of SARU, the selection of a coach who was a former Springbok and widely thought of as one of the most perceptive rugby players in terms of understanding the motives behind the boycott, and the picking of a captain who was media accessible and articulate were all strategic moves made by SARU to make sure that the event broadcast the face of 'new rugby'.³⁹ This broad ranging public relations preparation came on the back of racist behavior being outwardly shown at South Africa's first game back on the international scene in 1992. There was fear that the Rugby World Cup would show a South Africa that had not progressed socially and racially. Finally, a piece of the preparation that Clint Eastwood got terribly wrong in his film *Invictus*, the teaching of the new national anthem was of such importance to the coach, Morné de Plessis, that he hired an African language instructor from the University of Stellenbosch to teach the players the correct way to pronounce the Xhosa and Zulu parts of the national anthem⁴⁰. In John Carlin's *Playing the Enemy*, he writes that during one of these sessions, some of the Springboks actually broke down in tears when they learned what the song actually meant, and that their singing of the new anthem in turn brought tears to their instructor. The Africanization of the team, a multi-faceted strategy, was a concerted effort to represent the new South Africa of which Africans were now truly apart of. While the World Cup allowed South Africa to present a new, unified face to the world, it could not have achieved this rebranding of the Springboks and of South Africa had the team not triumphed in spectacular fashion that day at Ellis Park. The carefully created 'new'

³⁹ Thomas 2006, 85-86

⁴⁰ Thomas 2006, 87

Springboks were able to successfully coalesce support from both blacks and whites for a variety of reasons, but it was the presentation of this new unity that made for good public diplomacy.

Black South Africa had their moment to reach out to Afrikaners and whites, to incorporate the 'other' into 'their' sport with the hosting of the 1996 African Cup of Nations (ACN). While it has not garnered the same accolades as the Rugby World Cup, the ACN saw a mixing of black and white on the sporting field that the Springboks have yet to attain. There was no need for pressure to be exerted on the national team, who earned the name Bafana Bafana at this tournament, to be racially inclusive as the coach and the captain were white South Africans, while the man who scored the brace to win the Cup for South Africa, Mark Williams, was coloured. The scenes at Soccer City, located in Soweto across the Rand from Ellis Park, were very similar to the winning day in 1995, but with an even more diverse racial make up. The standard that the 'white' sport had set put pressure on Bafana Bafana, but when Williams delivered the winning goals against Tunisia, it earned him the nickname 'Nation Builder'.⁴¹

Conclusion

This case study of Sports Diplomacy and how it played a part in South Africa's dismantling of apartheid shows that sports has a vital role to play in public diplomacy strategies. The effects of both the successful hosting of the Rugby World Cup in 1995, and the African Cup of Nations in 1996, both mega sporting events in their own right, led to FIFA granting South Africa the World Cup for 2010. No doubt there are many factors of the campaign that led to the Republic gaining the right to stage the football World Cup that were not covered in this analysis.

⁴¹ Bloomfield 2010, 267

While that analysis will be for another paper, we can see how sport's impact on global perceptions and internal policies suggest that South Africa's World Cup will serve as its crowning achievement since the advent of majority rule in 1994.

During apartheid, those South Africans that sought to compete abroad often did so under false names and passports, and on occasion intentionally lost, or placed lower, in competitions so as not to draw attention to themselves or their citizenship⁴². Black South Africans often used sport as a way to emigrate or carve out a place of stability in the chaos that was apartheid. Sport in South Africa came to be a divisive social fracture that kept the multiple races and cultures that make up South Africa apart for nearly a century. Sport was used by the apartheid regime to explain that there was no segregation as blacks simply liked 'their' soccer and Afrikaner's preferred 'their' rugby. Through the international sports boycott, South Africa was isolated culturally from their traditional allies, which brought home the realities of the world's perception of the apartheid regime to ordinary white South Africans. Not being able compete in the sport of their religion, rugby, took a mental toll on South Africans that played a larger part in the victory of the anti-apartheid movement than it is often credited.

The pictures that were beamed to the world during the Rugby World Cup have been argued as one of the key moments in shaping the world's impression of the new South Africa. This re-attracted the world in terms of engagement, not just on sporting levels, but political and economic as well. With this view it is not unreasonable to say that the public diplomacy created by staging the Rugby World Cup contributed significantly to the return of foreign investment in South Africa and strengthening of trade and other economic links that had been destroyed

⁴² Booth 1998, 144

through the policies of apartheid and the subsequent boycotts and embargoes. Further study is needed to directly ascertain the public diplomacy effects of hosting sporting events and how it impacts economic growth, but the recently finished soccer World Cup makes this an ongoing and exciting research field.

The impact of mega sporting events such as the rugby and soccer tournaments that South African hosted in 1995 and 1996 shaped perception of the Republic in the eyes of the world that little else could. We have seen that mega sporting events focus the world's attention like little else, and that a country's performance as host often has dramatic ramifications in effecting the nation's brand abroad. It was only because South Africa was able to project a brand of reconciliation and unity that it was able to gain re-acceptance into the international sporting community and later be chosen to host the event that brings together people from around the world for an entire month in celebration: the FIFA World Cup.