

# Africa:

## SALVATION OR DESPAIR?

A study of the post-apartheid South African government's use of the military tool in its foreign policy conduct from 1994 to 2006

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## **Abstract**

South Africa is no ordinary state. Its history has moved it from being internationally considered an outcast to now being an internationally acclaimed success story. Since 1994, the South African government has actively sought to create a new image for itself, from “pariah state” to “peacemaker”, a change that was also expected and demanded by the international community. As a consequence of this change, South Africa is now trying to lead by example, trying to export particular values and norms to the rest of the continent, while at the same time carrying Africa’s banner on the international stage. A state wanting to be recognized and perceived as a benign “peacemaker” cannot use military power in the same way as a pariah state. To cultivate a reputation as a benign power, it must use force in a way that is acceptable to its neighbours and the international community at large.

The purpose of this dissertation is to demonstrate that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has played a particular and until now relatively unnoticed important role in this transition from “pariah state” to “peacemaker”. The dissertation furthermore investigate if the SANDF has the capacity to fill out that role.

In Part 1 the dissertation shows how the role of the armed forces in South Africa changed from being the main provider of security for the regime under apartheid to having a reduced role in society with a relatively low government priority after 1994. Part 1 also discusses the consequences of this lower priority for the SANDF’s capabilities in general, and therefore its ability to support the government’s diplomatic efforts and role in Africa.

In Part 2, three case studies, the South African military deployment into Lesotho, Burundi and in the DR. Congo, are discussed to show the consequences of the lower priority given to defence for the SANDF’s operational capabilities while on deployment. It is argued that although the SANDF has played a pivotal role in supporting the South African government’s attempt to change its image from a pariah state to an emerging benign regional leader, it has had severe problems in fulfilling this role, to an extent that in certain instances this has become an embarrassment for South Africa. This will have negative consequences for South Africa’s international role if it is left unremedied.

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## Abbreviations

ACRI	African Crisis Response Initiative African Crisis Response Initiative'
ADFL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
AMIB	African Mission in Burundi
ANC	African National Congress
APC	Armoured Personnel Carrier
APLA	Azanian People's Liberation Army
ASF	African Stand-by Force
AU	African Union
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging
Azapo	Azanian People's Organisation
Boleas	Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa
CCB	Civil Co-operation Bureau
Codesa	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
CTF	Combined Task Force
DA	Democratic Alliance
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation
DDRRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Resettlement, and Reintegration
DPKO	Department for Peace Keeping Operations
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DOD	Department of Defence
DP	Democratic Party
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRWG	Defence Review Work Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
ES	English School
FSS	Flexible Service System
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FF	Freedom Front
FLS	Front Line States
FNL	Front National Liberation



FNLA	Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HST	Hegemonic Stability Theory
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICD	Inter Congolese Dialogue
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IPE	International political Economy
ISDSC	Inter State Defence and Security Committee
JCD	Joint Committee on Defence
JSCD	Joint Standing Committee on Defence
MDP	Mutual Defence Pact
MK	Umkhonto We Sizwe (ANC's armed wing)
MONUC	United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MSDS	Military Skills Development System
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCOP	National Council of Provinces
NCP	National Conservative Party
NEPAD	New Plan for Africa's Development
NOD	Non-offensive Defence
NP	National Party
NRA	New Regionlism Approach
NSMS	National Security Management Scheme
NSS	New Service System
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONUB	United Nations Operation in Burundi
OPDSC	Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PFP	Partnership for Peace
PKO	Peace Keeping Operations
PSAP	Public Service Act Personnel
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PSO	Peace Support Operation
RCD	Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie
RDF	Rapid Deployment Force
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
ROE	Rules of Engagement

RPTC	Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre
RSC	Regional Security Complex
SAA	South African Army
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADCC	Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAF	South African Air force
SAIIA	South African Institute of International Affairs
SAN	South African Navy
SANDF	South Africa National Defence Force
SAPS	South African Protection Support
SAPSD	South African Protection Support Detachment
SDP	Strategic Defence Package
SIPO	Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ
SSA	Sub-Sahara Africa
SSC	State Security Council
SWAPO	South West African People's Organisation
TBVC	Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei
UDI	Universal Declaration of Independence
UN	United Nation
UNITA	União National Para Independência Total de Angola
UNMIS	United Nation Mission in Sudan
UNSC	United Nation Security Council
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## **Preface**

Today, you, South Africans, are for the world, for Africa, for France, a model. A model for harmony between communities with such different roots. A model for good governance. A model for cultural diversity.... (Dominique De Villepin, 2003)

This dissertation demonstrates that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has played a critical and until now relatively unnoticed role in South Africa's transition from international isolation as a "pariah" state and a source of instability to "peacemaker". This will be explored by means of a comparative qualitative case-based analysis of the armed forces and its changing role in South African foreign policy. The dissertation will investigate to what extent the SANDF has got the capacity to undertake this role of supporting the transition, and to take up what is for the transition considered necessary role as lead nation in African Peace Support Operation's (PSOs).

Since 1994, the South African government has actively sought to create a new image for South Africa, changing from an international outcast to peacemaker, a change that was also expected and demanded by the international community. The SANDF has increasingly become a central instrument in the South African government's foreign policy drive in Africa. However, the new foreign policy role requires the SANDF to use its coercive instrument in a way that is acceptable to its neighbours and the international community at large. This new role is, of course, in stark contrast to the role played by the old South African Defence Force (SADF) during the apartheid era.

The transition to peacemaker has imposed constraints on the use of force and required fundamental changes to the way military force is employed. South Africa's transition has therefore transformed the international role of the SANDF. The destabilizing operations into neighbouring states – the primary role of the SADF from primarily 1975, that is, the year of independence in Angola and Mozambique, until the end of apartheid – has been replaced domestically by "support to the people" and internationally by "peace" missions aimed at stabilizing the "neighbourhood" and help implementing peace agreements.

The primary objective of this dissertation is to demonstrate that post-apartheid South Africa has transformed and employed its military power in ways that have promoted the transition from a position of international isolation to a position as a benign peacemaker, and to examine whether the SANDF has capacity and will to conduct the new types of operations that is required to cultivate and sustain the country's reputation as a benign peacemaker in the near and medium term.

The research in the dissertation is based upon two underpinning major claims and one linked question:

1) Post-apartheid SA foreign policy is characterized by efforts to change South Africa's image from "pariah" to "peacemaker".

2) The SANDF has played an important and somewhat overlooked role in this transition. Its transformation and involvement in peace operations has been necessary to support this transition, and it will remain necessary to sustain it in the foreseeable future

3) It is unclear to what extent SANDF will be able to continue to play this role because of a gap between goals and objectives, and the impact of this for South African foreign policy role. This will indirectly also have an impact on the African Union's crisis management ambitions and West Africa policy.

These three claims and questions will be investigated with the use of the following three research questions:

Ad 1) Has the foreign policy transition from "pariah" to "peacemaker" been a key foreign policy objective?

Ad 2) Has the SANDF played a crucial role in supporting this transition?

Ad 3) Has the SANDF the capacity to continue playing this role?

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## Introduction

Around the globe new conflicts and divides are surfacing. The chasm between the industrialised North and the underdeveloped South is deepening. If there is to be global harmony, the international community will have to discover mechanisms to bridge the divide between the rich and the poor. South Africa can play an important role in this regard because it is situated at a particular confluence of world affairs.<sup>1</sup>

Without peace and stability, Africa will never achieve harmonious and sustainable development. This is how President Mbeki's priorities were described in a July 2003 issue of *Africa Confidential*.<sup>2</sup> The creation of peace and stability is seen as the cardinal task in creating a basis for future development in Africa. The South African government has accepted that South Africa must play an influential role in the attempt to create and secure peace and stability in Africa, something that will also benefit South Africa. This policy sees a pivotal role for the South African armed forces in creating the peace and stability in Africa that are seen as fundamental conditions for promoting development on the continent.<sup>3</sup> Former Chief of Defence General Nyanda argued in that regard:

We have to put as much muscle as words into the African renaissance.... There can be no African renaissance without the military.<sup>4</sup>

Current South African President Thabo Mbeki in 1997 advanced the idea of an African Renaissance, based on five fundamental elements; 1. cultural exchange; 2. emancipation of African women; 3. mobilization of young people; 4. the broadening and deepening of democracy; and 5. the promotion of sustainable development on the African continent.<sup>5</sup> This idea was to become an integral part of future South African foreign policy strategy, leading the former Chief of Defence General Nyanda to make the above statement. Peace and security are increasingly seen as integral

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<sup>1</sup> Mandela, Speech, "The Future of South Africa", *The Asian Age*, 1 March 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Mbeki in *Africa Confidential*, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2003.

<sup>3</sup> It goes without saying that the same applies the other way around, namely that peace and stability require economic development.

<sup>4</sup> South African Chief of Staff Gen. Nyanda, quoted in the newspaper, *Mail and Guardian*, 20/8 /2003.

<sup>5</sup> Vale and Maseko, *South Africa and the Renaissance*, p. 274. Vale and Maseko rightly argue that at least two contesting interpretations and critiques of the Renaissance ambition exist, the modernist and post-structuralist. However, it is outside the scope of this dissertation to go any further into these divisions and the fundamentally different perceptions and critiques of the ANC-governments foreign policy relating to that.

parts of these ambitions for a renaissance. In the strategic plan for 2004, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) placed the priority on the promotion of international peace and security. Among other things, this pointed to an increasingly international role for the country's security institutions, and the SANDF in particular.<sup>6</sup> This was later confirmed by the Cabinet and by Foreign Minister Zuma in her 2004 budget speech in parliament.<sup>7</sup> However, serious question marks have been placed on the South African National Defence Force's (SANDF) capacity to fulfil this challenge, which Habib et al. argue is important to assess because

If it [South Africa] is to remain committed to economic rejuvenation and democracy in Africa, stability is required. South Africa as an economic and military power must assume that leading role.<sup>8</sup>

As part of its general foreign policy strategy, South Africa has assumed a benign leading role in attempting to solve conflict, and has been very active as a peace-broker, especially in Africa. In a very idealistic speech to Parliament in 2001, Foreign Minister Zuma explained:

Our foreign policy, therefore, is not only anchored in our domestic policy, but on this very fact and responsibility...that South Africa offers hope for all humanity. Thus, we cannot only strive for a better life for South Africans, but we have to contribute to the ongoing struggle for a better world. That is what gives us a degree of moral authority in the world.<sup>9</sup>

One of the main reasons why South Africa has been accepted as a mediator internationally is because it has chosen to comply with and accept the international rules, laws and policies that regulate the international system. However, acceptance is related to the African National Congress (ANC) government's ability to deliver the required results –an important element in being accepted as a mediator. Charles King, for instance, writes of the role of mediator:

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<sup>6</sup> Nathan, Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy, p. 362, Bischoff, External and domestic sources of foreign policy ambiguity, p. 186

<sup>7</sup> Budget speech by Foreign Minister Zuma in parliament 3 June 2004

<sup>8</sup> Habib & Selinyane, in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004, p. 59

<sup>9</sup> Statement by Foreign Minister Zuma to Parliament, 8 May 2001.



The local acceptance of third party assistance is, to a great degree, reflexive: the performance of mediators depends on their legitimacy, while their legitimacy waxes and wanes according to their ability to perform.<sup>10</sup>

South Africa's capacity to function as a benign leader and mediator is therefore dependent on its ability to perform. The experience of the last couple of years shows that South Africa has been confronted with increasing external expectations, but also domestic ambitions, to function as a regional leader trying to stabilise Africa. In a number of ways, this is a revival of the so-called Nixon doctrine.<sup>11</sup> It is not clear whether any of the regional powers in Africa, including South Africa, have the capacity to take on this responsibility. This has also resulted in increased calls for South African military contributions for Peace Support Operations (PSOs), often as part of the implementation of South African-brokered peace agreements. As Waltz pointed out in 1979, the leadership role requires that

States...have to use their combined capabilities in order to serve their interests. The economic, military, and other capabilities of nations cannot be sectorised and separately weighed. States are not placed in the top rank because they excel in one way or another. Their rank depends on how they score on all the following items: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capabilities, military strength, political stability and competence.<sup>12</sup>

In line with this, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger argued that, to be able to act like a superpower, a state needs to have capabilities in three broadly defined sectors: political, economic and military.<sup>13</sup> This means that South Africa's leadership ambitions are dependent on the capabilities of the state, including the military. Joseph Nye has developed this and argues that in fact the capacity of state can be seen to consist of economic and military power as hard power, combined with a broad spectrum of 'soft power'.<sup>14</sup> Buzan et al. also take this further and argues that

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<sup>10</sup> King, *Ending Civil Wars*, pp. 78f.

<sup>11</sup> This way of conceptualising the international system was seen in the so-called Guam–Nixon doctrine of 1969, which was based on a notion of the world as being divided into sub-systems dominated by regional powers. The new US strategy required those states that were directly threatened to provide the primary manpower for its defence. In Africa, South Africa, Zaire and Nigeria were seen as strategic partners of the US, though South Africa was a 'tar-baby', which meant that official relations were kept to a minimum. One of the problems that South Africa faces in its relations with the continent is this past role as a piece in the Nixon jigsaw puzzle. See, for instance, Nixon's speech, 'Peace Through Partnership: The Nixon Doctrine', 3 November 1969.

<sup>12</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 131

<sup>13</sup> See Waltz's discussion on Kissinger in Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 130.

<sup>14</sup> Nye, *The Paradox of American Power*, p. 8f

material capabilities are not enough to be considered a great power, because this will need the acceptance of other states as well.<sup>15</sup> Bull argues in relation to this that

The great powers are powers recognized by others to have, and conceived by their own leaders and peoples to have, certain special rights and duties...in determining issues that effect the peace and security of the international system as a whole.... They accept the duty, and are thought by others to have the duty, of modifying their policies in the light of the managerial responsibilities they bear.<sup>16</sup>

However, as Little argues, the behaviour of a state cannot be understood without including the norms, institutions, rules and customs that constitute the international society as a whole.<sup>17</sup> The consequence of this is that South Africa cannot successfully function as a leader and mediator in Africa without having the acceptance by others, a result amongst other things secured by its ability to perform as a mediator, and its ability to implement these mediated deals with military means if need be. In this context, Gilpin once argued that

Empires and dominant states supply public goods (security, economic order, etc.) that give other states an interest in following their lead. ....Ultimately, however, the hierarchy of prestige in an international system rests on economic and military power. Prestige is the reputation for power, and military power in particular.<sup>18</sup>

This means that South Africa has to “supply public goods” to Africa, including security, to be able to succeed in its role as peacemaker,<sup>19</sup> and thus with its reformist foreign policy ambitions. Former Chief of Defence Nyanda stressed this fact in the above statement. According to Gilpin, it is success in “war” that determines the prestige of a state, and thus which states will in effect govern in the system.<sup>20</sup> In the

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<sup>15</sup> Buzan et al., *Regions and Powers*, p. 32

<sup>16</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p.196.

<sup>17</sup> Little, *Neorealism and the English School*, p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, p. 30f

<sup>19</sup> In the dissertation the term “peacemaker” covers the broad approach of peace initiatives, i.e. political mediation and peace brokering, post-conflict reconstructing and the military and police efforts. The term is furthermore widely used in the academic literature on South African foreign policy see Chapter 2, and also for instance Westhuizen, *South Africa’s emergence as a middle power*; Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation* Peacekeeping deals with UN Chapter VI type missions, Peace enforcement with UN Chapter VII type operations, Peace Support Operations is used to describe both types of operations.

<sup>20</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, p. 33

case of post-apartheid South Africa, it could be argued PSOs have become a substitute for this.

### ***South Africa and its Role as a Regional Power and Mediator***

While the Mandela administration claimed it would be a partner, the international community, for its part, called for South African leadership in Africa.<sup>21</sup> Leadership should here be understood as giving direction by setting an example for others to follow.<sup>22</sup> In relation to this, the then Vice-President Thabo Mbeki<sup>23</sup> stated in a September 1995 address to South African ambassadors that:

...the strength and persistence of the international focus on South Africa puts the South African Government of National Unity under pressure to contribute positively and constructively to the global community. The Southern African region expects a positive contribution from South Africa in terms of their own development. They expect that we interact with them as a partner and ally, not as a regional super power....<sup>24</sup>

The new ANC government has on several occasions stated that it believes that South Africa's destiny to be tied to Africa, and South Africa therefore has attempted to take on the role of a benign regional leader and mediator to help stabilise and create the fundamental foundations for development in Africa, for the sake of South Africa as well.<sup>25</sup> Its active international role since 1994 is an example and a consequence of this. It has, for instance, created alliances with other dominant third-world states in an attempt to reform the international system, including the WTO and the UN Security Council. It was also taken to court by 39 international pharmaceutical companies to establish its right to provide cheap HIV/AIDS medicine for its population.<sup>26</sup> These are issues that have wider ramifications for the whole of the Third World and show South Africa taking on the responsibility of protecting the smaller states from what it perceives to be an unjust international system. Certainly

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<sup>21</sup> See, for instance, the statement by McNamara further down, and the statement by Villepin above.

<sup>22</sup> Schwarzenberger, *Hegemonic Intervention*, p. 250.

<sup>23</sup> Thabo Mbeki was Vice-president of South Africa from 1994 to 1999 and has been President since 1999.

<sup>24</sup> SA Foreign Relations Discussion Document, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> See Introduction and Chapter 2 for further reading on South Africa's new role

<sup>26</sup> A group of 39 pharmaceutical companies filed a law suit against the South African government 18 February 1998, and dropped its lawsuit against the government of South Africa on 19 April 2001 after significant international pressure. The companies had taken South Africa to court over its 1997 Medicines and Related Substances Act. The main issue was Amendment 15(c) which would allow TRIPS-compliant compulsory licensing and parallel imports of medicines in South Africa. The case was very principled in nature and was seen as an important victory for the poorer states and their right to produce cheap medicine.

there are limits to South Africa's activist role and capacity, and some authors consider it to be just another country.<sup>27</sup> However, the government has put forward an idealistic and ambitious objective in relation to the new world order was outlined in the Foreign Relations discussion document from 1996, in which it was argued that:

South Africa should remain actively engaged in efforts to secure world-wide peace, promote disarmament, prevent genocide, restrict proliferation of nuclear and other arms of mass destruction and achieve a new world security regime.<sup>28</sup>

In Africa the signing of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mutual Defence Pact (MDP)<sup>29</sup> is an example of this: by signing this collective defence agreement, South Africa, as the strongest power in the region, guarantees the security of the other signatories against outside threats and thus attempts to create a new sub-regional security regime. The ANC government has therefore changed South Africa's behaviour and thus its status from being a pariah state<sup>30</sup> to a rather benign one, this being an important parameter in creating an acceptance of its new role.

At the international level, the ANC leadership has deliberately tried to use its non-aligned position to create a role for itself as a broker in international disputes between the centre and the periphery. This was the case in the negotiations following the dispute between the EU and UK on the one hand and Libya on the other following the Lockerbie bombing, leading to a financial settlement in 2003.<sup>31</sup> There was also South Africa's attempt to broker a deal between the warring parties in East Timor in 1999, and South Africa has also been involved in the Northern Ireland peace process. Furthermore, the government continuously held talks with the Iraqi regime until the coalition attack in March 2003, and it also brought the parties in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict together by facilitating talks between them.<sup>32</sup> The ANC leadership

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<sup>27</sup> See Chapter 2 for further reading.

<sup>28</sup> SA Foreign Relations Discussion Document, p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> The MDP is a collective defence agreement signed by the SADC members in 2003. By April 2005 seven SADC members, including South Africa, had ratified the agreement.

<sup>30</sup> The term pariah is widely used in the literature and will in the dissertation be used when dealing with South Africa's international role during the apartheid era, in particularly after 1977, See for instance Vale and Taylor, *South Africa's Post Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On – From Pariah State to 'Just Another Country'?*; Alden and Le Pere, *South Africa's Post- Apartheid Foreign Policy – From Reconciliation to Revival*.

<sup>31</sup> See for instance Henwood, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: Principles and Problems*, p. 6.; Vale and Taylor, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*.

<sup>32</sup> This attempt has not been very successful, partly due to the ANC's critical approach towards Israel, which in its turn sees the ANC leadership as being supportive of the Palestinian cause. The situation was exacerbated in 2004 when central ANC figures compared Israeli policies in the occupied territories to those of the apartheid

has also tried to mediate between the Democratic Republic of Korea and the international community and in 2003 was involved in an attempt to reconcile the parties to the conflict in Sri Lanka. These are just a few examples that underline the image of a South Africa in trying to place itself within the international anarchical system of states<sup>33</sup> in order to secure a better bargaining position for itself, both internationally and regionally.

It is not only internationally, but also continentally, that the government has been actively involved as a mediator. As will be shown in Chapter 2, South Africa was involved in the dialogue with the military regime in Nigeria, as well as the SADC<sup>34</sup> task group that mediated in Lesotho following the 1993 constitutional crisis. South Africa has been a successful mediator in the negotiations in, for instance, Burundi and DRC, and it was recently called in to assist during the last, critical part of the Darfur negotiations in May 2006 and has been involved in mediation in the Comoro Islands and the Ivory Coast.

By doing so, South Africa has also come to be seen, from a Western point of view, as an example to an otherwise generally unstable Africa as to how the other states on the continent should behave. It is therefore able to use its comparative disadvantage in being geographically located in Africa by being useful to both the dominant states and the states of the periphery of the international system, a bridge-builder between the two spheres. Its comparative advantage is also its strict adherence to international laws and regulations, which makes it a trustworthy partner. The mediation strategy has also been useful for South Africa in its relations with the continent, which have, it seems, accepted South Africa's transition from pariah to peacemaker. The benign strategy used during its mediation initiatives has been relatively acceptable to its African partners, i.e. it has not acted as a bully, to use Mbeki's phrase, but as a partner and respecting the principles of African solidarity. South Africa's quiet diplomacy<sup>35</sup> must be understood within this framework. In this way it has attempted to comply with the long list of criteria mentioned above to be a respected and responsible regional power.

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regime. Relations between South Africa and Israel have been strained by Israel's close co-operation with the former apartheid regime, especially in the field of military technology. Visit and briefings at ARMSCOR, October 2004.

<sup>33</sup> See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 114-116, for further details about the relationship between 'hierarchy' and 'anarchy'.

<sup>34</sup> See Appendix 4 for an overview of the structure of SADC.

<sup>35</sup> The term "diplomacy" should here be understood as argued by Bull as "*The conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means.*" Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p. 156. The term quiet diplomacy here make reference to name given by the media and the academic society to primarily South Africa's diplomatic approach towards Zimbabwe. See Chapter 2 for further reading

## **Peacemaker and Lead Nation Capability**

The SANDF has become an increasingly important instrument in the government's peace diplomacy strategy. Defence Minister Lekota argued in his Defence Budget Speech in June 2004 that the SANDF would increasingly support the government's diplomatic drive in Africa<sup>36</sup>, a role that President Mbeki has called being the "midwives" of peace.<sup>37</sup> It is unclear, however, to what extent the SANDF has the capacity to carry out this role of supporting South Africa's regional diplomatic efforts by acting as a lead nation and therefore the criteria for being a successful mediator and peacemaker.

The South African government's benign ambition also means that there are limits and international laws that determine how the South African government can use its coercive tool internationally. The use of force must therefore be considered legitimate and have the appropriate mandate, that is, come mostly from the UN or be by the invitation from a legitimate government. The linkage between the South African government's ambition to be considered a benign peacemaker and the role of the coercive tool therefore has to be found within the framework of these mandated missions, that is, different types of PSOs. This is, of course, linked to the Gilpin-inspired claim that it is success in war, and in the contemporary South Africa PSOs, that determines a state's prestige. As King argued above, the success of a peacemaker is tied to its ability to perform, including securing the successful implementation of signed peace agreements. In Sub-Saharan Africa, where most states only have a limited military capacity, the international community, including, for instance, the African Union, that determines the responsibility of the regional powers to act as lead nations in PSOs.<sup>38</sup> This means that, for South Africa to be considered a respected peacemaker and regional power, it must have the military capacity and capabilities to function as a lead nation. A failure on its part to do so will undermine its foreign policy ambitions to transform itself into a peacemaker, and furthermore negatively affect its great power status.

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<sup>36</sup> Defence Minister Lekota's Defence Budget Speech in Parliament, June 2004.

<sup>37</sup> President Mbeki in his State of the Nation Address 2005.

<sup>38</sup> See Chapter 2 for further discussion on the expectations towards South Africa, See also appendix 5 for an overview of the roadmap for operationalisation of the ASF and the expectations towards the regional powers and their role.

But what is a lead nation, and how can this be measured? Independently of each other, the UN and NATO alliance have produced a list of criteria of what military requirements are needed in PSOs in general as an indication of what is required as a lead nation in PSOs. On the basis of the criteria extracted from both of these, three levels of lead nation criteria are produced in Chapter 4, and are tested against the general capacity of the SANDF, as well as during its deployment in three particular cases. The lead nation requirement is therefore a way to measure the SANDF's ability to perform, and at the same time to test the correlation between South Africa's foreign policy ambitions and its armed forces' capacity to prop up this ambition.

### ***The New Role for the SANDF and South Africa in Africa***

The many years of military counter-insurgency operations in southern Africa meant that South Africa was perceived as possessing, in relative terms, a significant military capability. It was therefore supposed that it would be able to play a central part in the resolution of future conflicts in southern Africa.<sup>39</sup> However, the first post-apartheid decade showed South Africa to be very reluctant to undertake this particular international military role for both practical and political reasons. Politically it proved difficult to deploy the new SANDF in international missions in Africa, just a few years after its predecessor, the SADF,<sup>40</sup> had itself been a main source of conflict. The SANDF has also undergone a far-reaching transformation and reduction process following the transition to democracy in 1994. The defence budget has been reduced to 1.6% of GDP, one of the lowest percentages in southern Africa. However, the Pretoria government has slowly come to acknowledge that the military tool is instrumental in its attempt to fulfil the country's post-1994 foreign-policy ambitions. This resembles what Adrian Hyde-Price argues of the EU, that it can only function as a "civilising power" if it is also a "Centaur"<sup>41</sup> – half man and half beast – willing and able to use force as part of a comprehensive security strategy.<sup>42</sup> South Africa cannot achieve its diplomatic goals in Africa without being willing to use its coercive tool: that is, there can be no effective South African engagement with the African Renaissance without the support of the SANDF.

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<sup>39</sup> For instance expressed in US Ambassador Thomas N. McNamara's speech and in Johannesburg, 20th February 1996, on The US approach to Regional Security; Speech by Julius Nyerere cited by Vale and Maseko, *South Africa and the Renaissance*, p. 283

<sup>40</sup> The name of the South African armed forces was changed in 1994 from SADF to SANDF to mark the transition.

<sup>41</sup> The term "Centaur" originates from Machiavelli's description on how politicians should be able to deal with two ways of fighting, law and force; see Fyrsten, Chapter 18.

<sup>42</sup> Hyde-Price, *The EU, Power and Coercion*, p. 4.

That said, the international role being played by the current government is somewhat different from that of the white regime during the apartheid era. The perception of threat differs significantly from the P.W. Botha era especially, when the National Party government saw South Africa as the target of a total communist onslaught. At that time, the SADF had to deter this threat and redirect the confrontation away from South African soil. Today Foreign Minister D. Zuma has claimed that the SANDF is an integral part of South Africa's new foreign-policy ambition of creating an African renaissance.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, until 1998 and the South African-led military intervention in Lesotho, the ANC-led government was reluctant to commit troops to PSOs.<sup>44</sup>

In 1996 the government produced a White Paper on Defence, followed in 1998 by a Defence Review that attempted to implement the White Paper's recommendations, but in general it lacked a policy on the deployment of the SANDF in international operations. Another problem for the government was that the SANDF was in the middle of a transformation, integrating and training a large number of former non-statutory members so that they could function in a conventional army. At the same time the statutory members had to learn how to be a civilian-controlled armed force in a democratic society. Then, in 1999, the ANC government issued a White Paper on South African participation in peace missions that was supposed to set the guidelines for the country's commitment to international missions. The first real test of the new guidelines was the South African-led African force sent into Burundi, in which South Africa acted as the lead nation in a mission tasked to monitor the peace agreement that had been brokered by South Africa itself. Shortly afterwards a large contribution was also made to the UN mission in DR Congo with the French acronym MONUC. This was the first time that South Africa had participated actively in a peace process beyond the negotiations or deployed a military force in an attempt to implement and monitor an African-negotiated peace deal.<sup>45</sup>

The implications of this development for South Africa and the SANDF have been that international expectations concerning the country have now been expanded to include significant participation and acting as the lead nation in future African peace

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<sup>43</sup> Speech by Foreign Minister Zuma at SAIIA, 1 November 1999.

<sup>44</sup> See Chapter 6 for further reading on the Lesotho intervention, the so-called Operation Boleas.

<sup>45</sup> The author recognises that South Africa at the time had committed a limited force to MONUC and that a South African protection force was deployed in Burundi in 2001 to protect returning Hutu politicians after the signing of the Arusha agreement. However, the deployment of the African force in Burundi and the DRC in 2003 was the first time that South Africa committed a major military contingency to a PSO operation. Moreover, as the first time it was the result of and in support of a South African-brokered deal.



missions. The first example of this was seen in Burundi, where the SANDF was deployed together with troops from Mozambique and Ethiopia. The international community was looking to South Africa because it seemed to be the only state in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with the necessary military capacity and will to act as the lead nation in these types of operation. The question that remained was to establish whether, both politically and militarily, South Africa had the capability to undertake this kind of task.

The SANDF (and before that the SADF) had a reputation within military circles of having high military standards equivalent to those of most first-world countries. South Africa has been very active in the formation of the so-called African Standby Force (ASF), which, according to the plan, by 2010 should be able to provide the African Union (AU) with a rapid reaction capability consisting of five regionally based brigades.<sup>46</sup> The responsibility for PSOs in SSA and the creation of the ASF structures have to a large extent been placed upon the regionally dominant states, for instance South Africa in southern Africa and Nigeria in West Africa.<sup>47</sup>

The Department of Defence's (DOD) strategic plan stresses that military co-operation with the region is being prioritised. However, South Africa is geographically situated in what Holsti defines as a "zone of conflict",<sup>48</sup> thus placing it in a delicate dilemma, namely how to function as a democratic state in a "rough neighbourhood", but also how to cooperate militarily with states that do not necessarily comply with the same democratic principles as your own?<sup>49</sup> On the more practical side, and through its security cooperation in SADC and the AU, the South African government has tried to create a strategy for how it will deal with the SANDF's future co-operation with some of the ill-disciplined and low-capability forces of a majority of its African partners, but also how to deal with other African military forces when on deployment in joint missions. This includes, for instance, standards of accommodation and facilities in the camps while deployed.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> See SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05 for further details of the South African involvement in the process of ASF formation. See Appendix 5 for the plan for operationalisation of the ASF and Appendix 9 for an overview of the five regions in AU.

<sup>47</sup> AU, Roadmap for the Operationalization of the ASF, Annex a, section II 1a.

<sup>48</sup> Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War*, pp. 141–149.

<sup>49</sup> This is not to say that all the states in southern Africa are undemocratic, but simply to underline those diplomatic rules that the South African government has to handle are significantly dissimilar internationally and regionally. Term used by Chester Crocker in his 1993 book entitled *High Noon in Southern Africa, Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood*.

<sup>50</sup> This has for instance been a major issue for the Danish Defence Force in its cooperation with other forces primarily from the former eastern bloc countries. There have been problems because the Danish soldiers had better facilities and received higher pay. These are therefore issues that need being taken care off before deployment.

Military co-operation in SADC is, after some years of internal struggle, beginning to take shape and seems today more than just a long-term ambition. For the SANDF, this poses some concrete challenges because its existing strategies and doctrines have turned out to be insufficient: that is, its 1996 White Paper on Defence and the subsequent 1998 Defence Review do not match the tasks that the SANDF is being required to undertake. Internally, it will have to continue its process of reform and transformation, shaping it to the task which lies ahead by making the best use of the limited resources available and enabling it to serve the interests of the republic. It will always be debated in a society like South Africa's, where a third of the population live in poverty, whether these resources might have been better used elsewhere. This is especially the case with a technologically relatively advanced force, which, as Gilpin points out, tends to become increasingly expensive.<sup>51</sup>

### **Transformation and the New Defence Posture**

In 1994, the SANDF had to create a new 'raison d'être', especially following the years of destabilisation through the SADF, and, as part of the transformation process from apartheid, it had to transform itself into a civilian-controlled armed force operating in a democratic society. The new Defence White Paper from 1996 and the subsequent 1998 Defence Review were inspired by the principles of non-offensive defence in an attempt to create a force that was not considered a threat by South Africa's neighbours, but still had the capacity to deter any potential aggressor. Since 1994, the force's "offensive" capability, that is, its ability to strike first, has therefore largely been removed, according to the SANDF and the ANC government.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, Defence Minister Lekota has on several occasions stressed that the primary objective of the SANDF is still to protect the integrity and sovereignty of the state, and the SANDF is therefore not going to be transformed into just a peacekeeping force, despite the increased demands on the force for its participation in international PSOs.

However, assistance to the government's foreign policy, primarily in the form of PSOs, has become an increasingly important day-to-day task for the SANDF. During the first deployments in 1998, the force had only limited experience of international

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<sup>51</sup> For further discussion on the cost of war, see for instance Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, p. 66.

<sup>52</sup> The ANC government has claimed adherence to the concept of non-offensive defence (NOD). However, several critics have in the last couple of years pointed out that the government has only followed the principles of NOD in words, not in practise. For further discussion of this topic, see Chapters 3 and 4. For further details see for instance, Jordaan and Esterhuyse, *South African Defence Since 1994*; Mandrup Jørgensen in Buur et al., *The Security-Development Nexus*; Also interview with Colonel in the SANDF Chris Serfontein, spring 2000.

PSOs. Today it is an integral part of South Africa's foreign policy and has increasingly been asked to participate in robust peace-keeping and even peace-making, that is, operations under either UN Chapter VI with robust elements added or Chapter VII mandates. UN and African-led PSOs in the 1990s generally suffered from insufficient mandates and resources and open-ended commitments. The South African government seems to have acknowledged this insufficiency and has in several instances chosen to overrule its own conditions for the commitment of South African troops put forward in the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions by committing troops to open-ended missions without clear exit strategies, mandates, or rules of engagement (RoE).<sup>53</sup> The alternative would have been not to deploy SANDF in these operations. This has increased the demands and challenges for the SANDF when deployed. South Africa's commitment of troops to the Burundi mission, despite the lack of a peace agreement with one rebel group, is instructive in that respect. Deployment into such a situation increases the risks to the force significantly, and it needs to be able to defend itself and act proactively if need be, for example, using force to pre-empt military takeovers, or even imposing consent. For such operations, the SANDF will therefore need flexibility and sophisticated military equipment, as well as being a well-trained and disciplined military force.

The government's involvement in Africa as a whole, as well as internationally as a mediator and African peacemaker, means that increasing expectations will be placed on South Africa to commit troops. There is a proverbial sentence which illustrates this situation nicely: if you give an inch, they are likely to take a mile.<sup>54</sup> South Africa has reached out to Africa and the international community, which have responded with demands and expectations that are exceeding its capacity. South African decision-makers need to decide if, and if so how, South Africa is going to respond to this challenge. For the politicians, this could be a slippery slope to move on to because the proclaimed defence requirements could easily turn out to be insufficient.

One of the objectives of this dissertation is to answer whether and what extent the international community can realistically rely on South Africa to act as both mediator and lead nation in peace missions in future conflict zones in southern Africa. This will give a clearer indication as to what extent South Africa will be able to participate in and lead future African led PSOs, and thus to what extent there still will be a need for

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<sup>53</sup> See Chapter 5 for further reading on the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph Nye correctly points to the fact that contribution to multilateral military operations increases a states 'political clout' and gives them more influence than there capacity might suggest. For further details see Nye, *The Paradox of American Power*, p. 10.

international military involvement in African PSOs. The more or less simultaneous government decisions to expand South African participation in the missions in the DRC and Burundi were taken, despite the fact that the SANDF was already overstretched. Whether, as Malan et al. argue, the reason for this is to be found in the political prestige invested by the South African political leadership in the peace settlements, with their concomitant need for a military commitment, remains to be seen.<sup>55</sup>

### ***The Claims, the Question, and the Structure***

As outlined in the preface, the research in the dissertation is based upon two major claims and one question, closely connected to the three research questions. The first claim is that post-apartheid South African foreign policy is characterized by efforts to change South Africa's image from "pariah" to "peacemaker". This has already partly been demonstrated above in this introduction and will be further demonstrated in Chapter 2, which is a comprehensive literature review that presents the findings in the existing academic literature on South Africa's foreign policy. This will also be illustrated in Chapter 5, which outlines the basic principles in the government's White Paper on Participation in Peace Mission's. Seven basic criteria for deploying the SANDF in PSOs are highlighted and will be used to form part of the analytical framework for investigating the government's criteria for deploying military force as part of its strategy of being a benign peacemaker.

The second claim put forward in the preface was that the SANDF has played an important and somewhat overlooked role in this transition. Its transformation and its involvement in peace operations have been necessary to support this transition, and it will remain necessary to sustain it in the foreseeable future. This will be demonstrated partly in the literature review in Chapter 2, but primarily through a relatively detailed description in Chapter 3 of the transformation of the armed forces in South Africa, including a demonstration of the former and contemporary social role of the defence force. By using theoretical insights from securitisation theory, Chapter 3 will demonstrate how changing government priorities in post-apartheid South Africa have meant that the defence objectives and tasks have been widened to include soft security elements. Finally this claim will also be demonstrated through the three case studies presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, that is, South Africa's military involvement in Lesotho, Burundi and the DR Congo respectively.

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<sup>55</sup> Malan et. al., *Decisions, Decisions South Africa's foray into regional peace operations*, p. 5.

Finally, the question asked in the preface was to what extent the SANDF will be able to continue to play this role because of a gap between goals and objectives, and the impact of this for South Africa's foreign policy role. This question is investigated first in Chapter 3, which demonstrates that the defence force in contemporary South Africa is no longer high on the list of government priorities and also means that other government departments have easier access to economic resources. The question is also a consequence of several statements from academics and officials in the DOD, as will be shown in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, stating that the SANDF generally has a capacity problem. The question is further investigated in Chapter 4, where I analyse to what extent the SANDF has the specific capabilities to function as a "lead nation" in PSOs. The findings in Chapter 4, combined with the role of the seven criteria produced by government in 1999 for the deployment of the SANDF into international PSOs presented in Chapter 5, will be further investigated in the three case studies. This will examine the ability of the SANDF to function as a lead nation in actual operations, while also demonstrating to what extent the criteria presented by government have also been instructive in the decision to employ the SANDF in PSOs.

### ***Contribution of the Dissertation***

There is an extensive international and domestic South African academic literature on South African foreign policy since 1994. To a certain extent this is also the case for the South African armed forces, the transformation process since 1994 being especially well covered.<sup>56</sup> The main purpose of this dissertation, as noted in the preface, is to investigate the role of the SANDF in South Africa's attempt to transform itself from "pariah" to benign "peacemaker", and to establish to what extent the SANDF has the required capacity to undertake that role. Linked to this, the dissertation also investigates to what extent the SANDF has the capacity to act as a lead nation in international PSOs. It is therefore not a foreign-policy analysis focusing foreign policy formation and ambitions, but an investigation focused on the role of the armed forces as part of South Africa's overall foreign policy. It focuses on the context in which South Africa, and in particular the SANDF, will have to function in the years to come. It attempts to link the foreign-policy level with the role of armed forces in South African society, especially as a foreign-policy tool. This linking of the two

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<sup>56</sup> See Chapter 2 for further reading on the existing literature.

different levels has not been sufficiently covered academically, especially in relation to the special requirements that are tied to PSOs. The dissertation starts by conducting a literature review establishing the nature of South Africa's foreign policy role, and what that means for the foreign-policy role of the armed forces. This context needs to be defined before examining the foreign-policy tasks given to the SANDF and its capacity to deal with them, which in broad terms are called "Defence Diplomacy" by the DOD itself.

The primary contribution of this dissertation is to demonstrate that the SANDF has played a central, but until now relatively unnoticed role in South Africa's attempted transition from "pariah" to "peacemaker". The dissertation shows that the military tool in South Africa's case has turned out to be a necessary tool for the government to succeed in its ambitions to transform itself into an effective peacemaker.

This dissertation also attempts to create a better understanding of the criteria applied by the South African government for using the SANDF in African PSOs.<sup>57</sup> It seeks to describe the SANDF's capabilities to undertake this type of operation and how it has conducted itself when so deployed.

A further aim of the dissertation is to scrutinise the capability primarily of South Africa, and thus indirectly the AU/SADC, to conduct African-led PSOs. This is crucial in casting some light on the South African capacity to deploy and engage its forces in international PSOs. To what extent can South Africa be expected to function as "lead nation" in future PSOs, and how does this affect the capability of SADC and to a lesser extent the AU to deploy forces and perhaps prevent future conflicts? This dissertation also provides an indication of how great the need will be for, for instance, the deployment of a future European Union (EU) force into African conflict zones, that is, what role will the international community have to play in Africa in the field of conflict resolution in the years to come? The reason for this is that, as the lead nation investigation illustrates, a capacity as a lead nation is both a requirement for realising South Africa's own foreign policy ambitions, and also reflects the expectations from especially the western powers towards South Africa in respect of its role as a regional power in creating peace and stability in Africa. The SANDF's lead nation capacity should in many ways be considered a proxy for its foreign policy ambitions and great power status. A failure to meet these lead nation requirements will jeopardise its foreign policy in general.

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<sup>57</sup> See appendix 10 for an overview over South African participation in PSOs in Africa.

## **Answers**

The title of this dissertation, *Africa: Salvation or Despair? A Study of the Post-Apartheid South African Government's Use of the Military Tool in the Conduct of its Foreign Policy 1994-2006*, derives from the ANC government's emphasis on the correlation between development on the one hand and peace and stability on the other. This is also a way of stressing that South Africa's destiny is bound up with Africa's. This dissertation will show that, after the initial years of transformation and uncertainty, the Mbeki government has become increasingly aware of the importance and usefulness of the military tool. However, the dissertation will also show that South Africa's new benign role means that stricter frameworks have been established for how and when the SANDF can be used, that is, the change of the SANDF's role as a source of regional destabilisation to one as a peacemaker as part of the government's wider peace diplomacy. The SANDF has become a pivotal instrument in propping up the reshaping of South Africa's new international image, as well as an integrated part of the ANC government's attempt to fulfil its overall target of creating the basis for economic growth and political stability on the continent in general and in South Africa in particular. Despite these limitations, the dissertation will demonstrate how the South African government has been overtaken by global events and how its strategy for participation in international peace missions has proved insufficient. In short, its deployments have been the result of an *ad hoc* process, and in both the DRC and particularly Burundi they have even run counter to the very principles outlined in the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions. Therefore, South Africa needs to adopt an ongoing process of rewriting and adjusting its strategy in this field.

In addition, there is a discrepancy between the actual capacity of the SANDF and the magnitude of the task it has been given by the politicians. This is mainly because the resources made available to the SANDF are inadequate. This is creating problems for South Africa in taking on the role of a benign regional leader. These include problems in recovering the costs of its international deployments, meaning that these funds must be found elsewhere. In the summer of 2003, the estimated unfinanced cost of these operations was more than one billion Rand, or approximately US\$ 160 million.<sup>58</sup> The South African DOD had to compete with other sections of government

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<sup>58</sup> Interview in the DOD, 26 November 2003, with SANDF Chief Director Strategy and Planning, Rear Admiral Hauter, and Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General DOD Defence Secretariat Mr Motumi.

for these funds, and it seems very unlikely that it will receive any reimbursement of them. In the future the DOD will be forced to extract the costs from a budget that is already insufficient. Another problem concerning the lack of capacity is the question of the sheer number of tasks being placed on the SANDF by the government. Since 1994, the SANDF has been deeply involved in what may be seen as predominantly national policing tasks, such as border patrols, search and rescue missions, and also ordinary police operations. The politicians will have to prioritise the use of the SANDF's resources to avoid overstretching. At present, the force operates in a vacuum between an insufficient political strategy and prioritisation for defence on the one hand, and an ambitious foreign policy on the other. It seems highly unlikely whether, in the immediate future, the ANC-led government will be willing to increase the DOD's share of the total budget from its present level of approximately 1.6% of GDP.<sup>59</sup> The DOD's share of the total budget reflects overall priorities in South African society, where the focus has been and still is on economic growth and the empowerment of marginalised groups. South Africa's military involvement in Africa will therefore always be subject to the government's general prioritisation of national tasks and concerns, which limits the resources available to the SANDF.

Another problem is the fundamental disbelief within the South African political elite in the military tool, political and economic tools being considered much more effective. One immediate problem for the SANDF will be the handling of this reform process at a time when its capacity is being over-stretched by the politicians. The limitations will also include finding the time and space for training, leave, etc. for personnel. This is linked to the issue of how to reform the force so that it might be able to assign and prepare personnel from other sections of the SANDF in order to participate in international missions. Parts of the DOD's current large weapons acquisition programme, the so-called Strategic Defence Programme (SDP), will help increase the capacity of the SANDF to participate in international missions and function as a lead nation in PSOs.

This dissertation therefore draws attention to a number of implications at both the continental and global levels because it illustrates some of the limitations on South Africa's willingness and capacity to function as a lead nation in future PSOs. This lack of capacity, at least until the AU stand-by force formations are in place, will mean that the main responsibility for conflict resolution on the continent will remain the responsibility of African coalitions of the willing mandated by the UN/AU, perhaps

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<sup>59</sup> The 2003 budget of the South African Ministry of Finance.



modelled on the South African-led African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) or major actors in the international system like the EU, France or the US. South Africa will not and cannot take on the whole responsibility by itself. Furthermore, it is highly doubtful whether South Africa will become involved in enforcement-type operations such as we saw in Lesotho, which means that, even though the SANDF is already involved in robust PSOs, there is no apparent capacity in Africa to stop future Rwanda-like confrontations. This is because the political will, financial means and institutional structures are not yet in place.

The dissertation shows that, although the first phase of the SDP already has provided, and will increasingly in the future provide the SANDF with high-tech equipment that will improve the capabilities of the SANDF, this will not solve a whole range of the capability problems experienced in the South African Army, which is responsible for the bulk part of the international deployment. According to the plans outlined by the defence planners, major acquisitions for the army will only happen in phase two, which is to be initiated after 2011/12. With the controversy of the scale and cost of phase 1, the promised but questionable spin-off in the domestic South African industry, and the corruption scandal involving the former vice-president, and perhaps future president of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, it is at least questionable whether government and parliament will release the funds needed for phase 2. In short, it means that the sequencing of the SDP phases has resulted in the acquisition of defence equipment for a defence structure that the politicians for a large part no longer want, and it is now questionable whether they will release funds for the creation of the force they want. This may undermine South Africa's new role as a mediator and peacemaker.

### ***Structure of the Dissertation***

The dissertation is divided into two main parts and ten chapters. In the introduction a short presentation is made of the requirement tied to the roles of great power and mediator. Secondly a short introduction is provided to South Africa's foreign policy role and the SANDF's role in this respect. Chapter 1 deals with the methodological aspects of the dissertation. Chapter 2 discusses the existing literature on South Africa's foreign policy and thus situates the dissertation within the existing literature.

Chapter 3, which is also the beginning of Part 1, focuses on the historical and contemporary roles played by the armed forces in South African society. The

historical presentation is seen as a necessary frame in understanding where the SANDF came from and what it is today. Chapter 4 focuses on the capabilities needed to function as a lead nation, and investigates the capacity of the SANDF to undertake the role of supporting the government's diplomatic efforts in Africa and to function as a lead nation in PSOs. Chapter 5, which is the first chapter in Part 2, discusses the criteria the South African government is following in deploying troops in international PSOs. Chapter 6 describes how the SANDF was used during Operation Boleas in Lesotho in 1998. Chapter 7 is an analysis of South Africa's involvement in the peace process in Burundi, while Chapter 8 focuses on her involvement in the DR Congo peace process. Chapter 9 concludes Part 2 in analysing the South African use of the military tool in the three cases. Chapter 10 is the general conclusion, including a focus on the perspectives of the analysis and a critical view of the findings of the dissertation.

## Chapter One

### **1.1 Methodology and Research Design**

The primary research focus of this dissertation is South Africa's use of the military tool in its foreign policy from 1994 until mid-2006, which was the end-date of the research. By using empirical data sets from three case studies, the South African military involvement in Lesotho, Burundi and in the DR Congo, the dissertation considers the three main research questions outlined in the preface: has the foreign policy transition from “pariah” to “peacemaker” been a key foreign policy objective; has the SANDF played a crucial role in supporting this transition; and has the SANDF got the capacity to continue to play this role? This dissertation is therefore not an investigation of South Africa's foreign policy in general, nor of the bureaucratic processes involved in the formation of South African foreign policy. In this chapter I attempt to sketch out the research design with which I am to investigate my to research questions. Then I will address some of the scientific and methodological problems facing me in my investigation, and I will explain how I tried to solve them. Below, I will therefore lay out my research design and strategy, and will furthermore present the reader with the criteria used in selecting the cases and data.

### **1.2: The Theoretical Analytical Framework**

Theory is always for someone and for some purpose. All theories have a perspective. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, specifically social and political time and space. The world is seen from a standpoint definable in terms of nation or social class, of dominance or subordination, of rising or declining power, of a sense of immobility or of present crisis, of past experience, and of hopes and expectations for the future.<sup>60</sup>

As noted already in the introductory chapter, it is the realist-inspired premise that a state needs a broad range of capabilities, including a military capability, to be considered a power that forms the basis for investigation in this dissertation. At the same time, another premise was introduced, namely acceptance by other states, and by itself and its citizens, of this role, something highlighted by, for instance, Buzan et

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<sup>60</sup> Cox, *Social Forces, States and World Orders*, p. 128.

al. and Bull,<sup>61</sup> whose work combined resembles the pluralist school<sup>62</sup> within the English school of thought. The pluralists have a close affiliation with both traditional realism and the structural realist tradition in its support of the sovereignty of states and of cultural diversity within international society. In broad terms, the English school has itself supported the rationalist or Grotian tradition, seeking a middle way between the 'power politics' of realism and the 'utopianism' of revolutionism. This theoretical approach provides the underpinning logic upon which the whole analytical approach is based. However, it is important to stress that, although the objectives of this dissertation are empirical and do not represent an attempt to start a major theoretical debate, the empirical findings reflect on the theoretical claims. An example of this theory-building aspect is the formation of "lead nation" criteria, which are subsequently empirically tested and produce new knowledge about the lead nation concept for other researchers to test.<sup>63</sup> Different theoretical avenues could have been selected, but the realist-inspired English school approach can help explain the actions and choices made by a regional benign power like South Africa that characterise the elements and dynamics in its foreign policy and its role in Africa. But, as Cox argues, a theory is never "value-free", but often developed from a specific assumption and with a specific purpose. Theories are often produced by and for those who prosper under the prevailing order. The implication of this is that "facts" and "values" cannot be separated. For this dissertation, this means that the use as a context of a English school-inspired theoretical approach and reading of the neo-realist approach<sup>64</sup> is highly controversial because it implicitly includes the normative invoking of the Western values<sup>65</sup> of democracy, governance, the role and rights of the individual in his or her dealing with the group etc. as being the superior ideal to strive for. The logic underpinning this relates to the goal that the post-apartheid government is striving for in its foreign policy. However, I do not believe this to be a problem in this dissertation, as the research focus is not the logic and goals of South African foreign policy, but the role of the SANDF in that foreign policy and its capacity to undertake that role.

The dissertation uses elements from securitisation theory to help structure Chapter 3. Because this theoretical approach can help explain the choices and priorities made

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<sup>61</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p. 200; Buzan et al., *Regions and Powers*, p. 32.

<sup>62</sup> For instance by Robert Jackson, *The Global Covenant*; Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*; Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*.

<sup>63</sup> See for instance Eisenhardt, *Building Theories from Case Study Research*.

<sup>64</sup> See for instance, Alden and Soko in *South Africa's Economic Relations with Africa: Hegemony and its Discontents*.

<sup>65</sup> It is, of course, also questionable whether unity in Western values regarding democracy etc. actually exist.

by the government and the dichotomous relationship that exists between the political objectives and the capabilities of the SANDF, this will also be presented in later chapters of the dissertation.

That being said, I believe the interesting theoretical dimension of this dissertation can be found in the analytical framework outlined in Chapters 4 and 5, which are used to investigate systematically the lead nation capacity of the SANDF and the three case studies. In the attempt to investigate the three research questions, two sets of ideal types have been created. The first deals with the capabilities that the armed forces ideally need to be able to function as the lead nation in international PSOs. The second deals with the criteria to be met before troops can be committed to international PSOs, which the South African government laid down in 1999. The function of this theoretical approach is to structure and test the empirical data accumulated by the problem-driven research design. This is done first by testing actual lead nation capacity in Chapter 4, and then again testing this capacity in action in the three case studies.

The dissertation does not in any way claim to provide major new theoretical contributions. Rather, its contribution is on the empirical side, providing new insights into the role and capability of the SANDF itself. The theoretical approach has been chosen on account of its ability to help investigate the three empirically based research questions. The pressure of the social reality that surrounds the academic presents itself as a problem. The main purpose of theory is therefore to understand and become aware of these problems, and thus allow the mind to come to grips with that reality. However, since reality changes, there is a constant need to adjust the concepts.<sup>66</sup> The role of the theoretical aspects is to function in problem-solving. The author thus accepts a number of variables that are viewed as constants in order that the researcher might reduce and focus the number of variables that he wishes to investigate. As highlighted in the introduction, and as will be shown in the literature review, these are that South Africa is attempting to play a leadership role of some kind in Africa, whether as a “regional or continental (great) power”, a “middle power” or a “benign regional hegemonic power”.<sup>67</sup> It is furthermore assumed that to be able to play this leadership role, as well as its role as a peacemaker, South Africa needs both a military capability and the willingness to use it.<sup>68</sup> In this dissertation it is the narrow role of the SANDF in the wider scope of the country’s foreign policy that is at

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<sup>66</sup> Cox, *Social Forces, States and World Orders*, p. 128.

<sup>67</sup> See Chapter 2 for a presentation of the academic debate concerning South Africa’s role in Africa.

<sup>68</sup> See Introduction for further reading of this theoretical argument.

issue. However, this means that the findings of this dissertation can say something about the role of the armed forces, while broader statements concerning the wider foreign-policy role only have value if these *ceteris paribus* assumptions are accepted. The literature review plays an important function here because it situates the findings in the dissertation in relation to the existing literature.<sup>69</sup>

### **1.3: The Qualitative Case Study as a Research Strategy**

...the president, unlike the academic scholar, has to make a decision in which all the variables are at play; the scholar deliberately limits in the number of variables considered in order to develop a parsimonious theory.<sup>70</sup>

Every case is unique, and it is therefore necessary to base one's findings on several different cases in order to reach precise and valid conclusions.<sup>71</sup> This dissertation therefore follows a multiple qualitative case research strategy using a number of representative cases and sub-cases. Consequently, the cases represent a continuum from the proactive military operation in Lesotho, Combined Task Force Boleas, at one extreme, to South Africa's mediation and subsequent PSO involvement in Burundi at the other, to draw a relatively representative picture of the SANDF's deployment into African PSOs as part of the country's wider foreign policy. The chosen cases are significant ones in the time period between 1994 and mid-2006, during which South Africa has been involved in, for instance, large-scale deployments, coordination, operational planning and logistics. This is not to say that the lesser cases in which South Africa has chosen to "show the flag" by contributing smaller contingents, as for instance the UN mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, do not contain interesting data, but merely that they do not provide much information about the SANDF's military capability in general or its lead nation capability in particular.<sup>72</sup>

This dissertation is therefore based on the comparative analysis of three cases, combined with a thorough discussion of South Africa's stated foreign policy and the SANDF's attempts to transform and modernise itself in relation to the tasks that lie ahead. The qualitative case-based approach has been chosen in order to be able to

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<sup>69</sup> George et al., *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, p. 70.

<sup>70</sup> George, *Bridging the Gap*, p. 8.

<sup>71</sup> George, *Bridging the Gap*, pp. 13f.

<sup>72</sup> Other relevant cases that could have been chosen were for instance the SANDF observers in the UN mission in Ethiopia/Eritrea or the humanitarian assistance during the floods in Mozambique in 2000. After the research was ended South Africa has committed troops to the AU mission in Sudan and to support elections on the Comoros. However, the chosen cases represent the most significant cases on which there is data and each represent different dimensions to South Africa's use of the military tool in its foreign policy conduct.

investigate each case in detail and thus create clarity in the analysis. As Yin argues, the case-based research strategy allows the investigator to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as organisational practices and international relations.<sup>73</sup> It would, of course, have been preferable to use more than the three cases, and the inclusion of several more cases would have increased the basis for a more viable conclusion. It is always problematic trying to explain the totality of a situation through the use of designated examples from specific events in history. According to George et al. the case-based explanation and conclusion are only provisional in nature.<sup>74</sup> In this study this means that, as described above, it can only provide indications of the foreign-policy role of the SANDF. However, as Collin argues, the cases are an effective element through which we can investigate and test research problems.<sup>75</sup> To be able to make an equally valid analysis of the research questions, however, one must use as much information from each case as possible. Due to limitations of space, this makes it impossible to use numerous cases.<sup>76</sup> In this study too, the number of potential cases has been limited. King et al. have nevertheless pointed out that, if done appropriately, the qualitative research designs can produce equally sound statistical results as quantitative methodology. They argue that this is because both strategies are based on a common underlying logic of inference and must adhere to the same general rules of solid science, producing as reliable results as possible. These are ensuring consistency and falsifiability in the theoretical approach, eliminating potential bias in the selection of cases, controlling for spurious causal relationships, and reporting the degree of uncertainty. King et al. conclude that difference between the two types of methodology is more a matter of style than substance.<sup>77</sup>

By choosing context-independent data, the researcher might be able to come up with a fact, though it is impossible to explain why this is the case. By choosing the case-based approach, the author is acting with the knowledge he has acquired of a larger number of cases and selecting those he considers representative. This is the only way to reach a higher level of understanding and detail.<sup>78</sup> This will also help the researcher operationalize the variables, as well as provide time and space for

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<sup>73</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, p. 1f.

<sup>74</sup> George et al., *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, p. 90.

<sup>75</sup> Lecture given by Finn Collin on positivism and its research strategies, Institute for Political Science, University of Copenhagen, 2 October 2001.

<sup>76</sup> George, *Bridging the Gap*, p. 17.

<sup>77</sup> King et al., *Designing Social Inquiry*, p. 4f.

<sup>78</sup> Flyvbjerg, *Rationalitet og magt*, pp. 142f.

debating and outlining the concepts and variables used, and explaining the reasons why a specific incident is interpreted in that way.

These advantages are of central importance to the investigation in this study because a detailed and in-depth discussion and investigation of the SANDF's deployment in PSOs is necessary in an attempt to produce an answer to the research questions.

### **1.4: The Research Strategy**

In an attempt to produce as valid inferences as possible, the author has attempted to collect and structure the analysis according to the principles of what George calls a structured focused comparison.<sup>79</sup> This method focuses on a selective examination of the data according to the researcher's goals and ensures that the selected observations are treated in a systematic way and are comparable. The same set of analytical parameters is used in each case. The scientist singles out specific elements in each observation that are believed to be relevant to the goals of the research and deals with them selectively.<sup>80</sup> George et al. argue that

The method is structured in that the researcher writes general questions that reflect the research objective and that these questions are asked of each case in study to guide and standardize data collection, thereby making systematic comparison and cumulation of findings of the cases possible.<sup>81</sup>

They also argue that a study is focused if it only deals with certain aspects in the cases under scrutiny.<sup>82</sup> A comparative study is therefore structured if the data requirements of the case studies are clearly defined and standardized in the research design. This is achieved by formulating theoretically general questions to structure the investigation of each observation, making a systematic comparison possible.<sup>83</sup>

This study is structured because I have chosen empirical data from the cases via the following selection process:

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<sup>79</sup> George, *Bridging the Gap*, pp. 135ff.

<sup>80</sup> Toft, *The Way of the Vanquished*, p. 35.

<sup>81</sup> George et al., *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, p. 67.

<sup>82</sup> George et al., *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, p. 67.

<sup>83</sup> George et al., *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, p. 67.



1. The cases were classified in order to establish whether they were of a comparable nature: e.g. within timeframe of 1994-2005, a foreign deployment of the SANDF and South African civilian political involvement.
2. What type of mission was it?
3. What type of mandate did the mission have?
4. What was the result of the operation?

Three levels of lead nation criteria have been listed in Chapter 4, and combined with seven different analytical criteria, which have been identified in Chapter 5 and which is based on the government's stated criteria for deployment into PSOs. These constitute the analytical framework for investigating the role of the SANDF in joint South African involvement in Lesotho, Burundi and the DRC. In addition to this, the three cases play an important part in investigating the three research questions.

The three research questions play an important role in organising the empirical material and structuring the analysis in the dissertation. Though they were formulated in an a priori, rationalistic manner, they were heavily influenced by the authors' ontological 'baggage' from his prior research on South Africa in general and its foreign policy in particular. This, of course, imposes limitations on the explanatory power of the dissertation's findings because, by choosing this approach, the author risks confirming his own subjective hypotheses. The present author has therefore attempted to "step back" from his previous assumptions. However, this will always constitute a limitation in the findings and reduce the explanatory power of the dissertation.

#### *The selection of Cases*

During the case selection, I have used one independent variable in an attempt to secure an unbiased selection, that is, South African military commitment. Variables can have different values, and the military involvement can take the form of a UN, AU or bilaterally led mission. The author has identified three relevant cases within the set timeframe of 1994 to mid-2006. In selecting the cases for this dissertation, I have attempted to strike a balance between the most similar and the most dissimilar cases to avoid criticism of a lack of representativeness and biased case selection.<sup>84</sup> I have chosen to keep the military contribution constant, though securing a variation in the type of mission. I have chosen to limit the study timeframe from 1994 to mid-2006 for

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<sup>84</sup> See for instance George et al., *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, Chapter 8 and 9 for further reading; Yin, *Case Study Research*, p. 45ff; Eisenhardt, *Building Theories from Case Study Research*.

several reasons. The choice of 1994 was natural in the way that it also signalled the beginning of post-apartheid democratic South Africa, and thus a profound change in the country's foreign relations and the way it uses its military tool. The end date of mid-2006 was chosen for practical reasons, namely because it was there that the research ended. Apart from Burundi and DR Congo, today South Africa has committed troops to, for instance, the AU mission in Sudan, which, of course, it might also have been relevant to investigate.

As King et al. argue, it is problematic to select cases on the basis of dependent variables. By doing this I would have risked predetermining the results of my investigation, and may have selected cases that support the author's hypothesis, e.g. that the SANDF have capacity problems and finds it difficult to manage the tasks given to by the government.<sup>85</sup>

The interviews were used as platforms for gathering information and as a means of choosing the most relevant cases.<sup>86</sup> One of the problems involved in selecting examples of South African military capability is that it is impossible to find ones that have been representative of the entire sphere of South Africa's use of the military tool in its foreign policy since 1994. The three cases have therefore been chosen on account of their relevance for the main topic of this dissertation, namely the role of the SANDF in South Africa's foreign policy, as well as, partly, because of their individual differences, that is, the most dissimilar research approach. This approach was chosen, in accordance with, for instance Eisenhardt, because it enhances the generalisability of the model and the findings.<sup>87</sup> At one end of the continuum, the Lesotho case is an example of the proactive use of the SANDF to prevent a threatened coup d'état. It can also be seen as resulting from a "hegemonic crisis" in which South Africa has had to use force to protect its interests. The second case, the protection of and later peace mission to Burundi, is an example of the SANDF being used in support of the government's diplomatic efforts in a South African-led African peace mission with a robust mandate. The third case is South African participation in the UN PSO in the DRC, which again was a consequence of a South African-brokered peace agreement. The cases have been chosen based on the greatest dissimilarity in order to be able to cover as many of the different aspects as possible and to create a pattern for when and how the SANDF has been used as an

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<sup>85</sup> King et al., *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, p. 129ff.

<sup>86</sup> George, *Bridging the Gap*, p. 17; Kvale, *Interviews*, for further reading the role of interviews.

<sup>87</sup> Eisenhardt, *Building Theories from Case Study Research*, p. 537.

instrument of foreign policy. In accordance with George's suggestion, the same aspect is investigated in all three cases.

### **1.5: Sources and Material**

This section focuses generally on the sources and material used in the dissertation, and in particular how this information was obtained and validated. The first part focuses on the actual interviews and the issues concerning access to information. The second part focuses on the process of classifying the data and triangulating the findings both to validate the data, as well as to ensure comparability between the three case studies. This is done by categorising the data into three groupings, that is: 1. Action Notion sources, for instance archive sources; 2. Representative Notion sources, for instance from official interviews; 3. Action sources, for instance information obtain during field studies including interviews of personnel who are participating or have participated in one of the operations in the three cases.<sup>88</sup>

#### **1.5.1: Interviews and General Access to Information**

The qualitative interviews have been highly dependent on the willingness of the targeted person to be interviewed. The initial strategy was to have two rounds of interviews with relevant central administrative personnel at the medium to top levels of the administration. The first set of interviews was of a general informative nature, the second more analytical and in-depth in nature. In the preliminary part of the research, it proved fairly easy to obtain access to the central actors surrounding and within defence circles. However, it proved much harder during the second round. This was due to several factors, one being that in the latter part of 2004 there was increased pressure on especially white officers of the rank of colonel and above because of the government's contested affirmative action strategy, which made this group more reluctant to express their views because this might jeopardise their careers. This change in access also followed the so-called Parys resolutions of March 2004, which among other things focused on creating a more positive picture of the SANDF in the media and with the public in general. There seemed now to be tighter control over who could speak on behalf of the DOD. Being interviewed risked placing the spotlight on individuals and possibly damaging their careers. A second factor was the intensified negotiations within the AU and SADC concerning the establishment of the ASF, which meant that the central figures in the DOD were unwilling to be interviewed on issues dealing with South Africa's participation in

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<sup>88</sup> See Holy and Stuchlik, *Actions, Norms and Representations* for further reading.

international missions. Thirdly, there seemed to be an increasing discrepancy between what was stated concerning the condition of the SANDF and the realities on the ground.

Nonetheless, despite the highly sensitive nature of the study, access to information has been relatively easy. All reports and briefings presented to the defence committees in Parliament are, for instance, available on the World Wide Web, and they often deal with issues that a country like Denmark would have at least have classified as restricted.<sup>89</sup> Strategic reports on the future structure of the defence force have also been made publicly accessible. Moreover, the author had the opportunity to participate in a hearing in Parliament concerning the re-writing of the Defence Review. Information has therefore been relatively easy to obtain, though certain types of information are not publicly accessible, unsurprisingly given the sensitive nature of defence matters. One of the most controversial is the figure for HIV/AIDS sufferers, the official and unofficial figures for which differ tremendously. Nevertheless, as already mentioned, there seems to be a progressive tendency to make it more difficult to gain access to information. This was evident during my visit to the DR Congo, when I experienced first being allowed doing interviews in the South African camp with all personnel groups, and then later being denied the right to use the information thus obtained by a furious Contingency Commander for the SANDF Force in the DRC.<sup>90</sup> He apparently feared the reaction from the Defence HQ. I have chosen not to include the findings from these interviews because it could create problems for my future work in South Africa and might create an embarrassing situation for the UN personnel who allowed me to accompany them on their trip to Kindu. Nevertheless, the interviews were valuable as they presented important insights into attitudes regarding the issue of deployment and PSOs among different ranks, men and women, and racial and age groups within the SANDF. The interviews also drew my attention to other important areas, places and ways of searching for information.

### **1.5.2: The Sources**

Holy and Stuchlik argue that it is too simple to see differences in data as merely the result of differing data-gathering techniques. In their view it is the connection of data

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<sup>89</sup> The author has for several years worked in the Danish Ministry of Defence and therefore has personal experience with issues of classification.

<sup>90</sup> This happened despite the fact that the South African intelligence officer in the Camp was monitoring all the interviews.

to different levels or domains of social reality that makes them differ. The differences in the data signify an existential difference between levels or domains of reality. Social reality cannot be regarded as a unitary system. A failure to take this into account can lead to misrepresentations in the definition of problems and inferred results.<sup>91</sup> This means that notions expressed by actors during an interview can only be seen as an expression of the actors' own interpretation of their social reality, for instance the notions expressed by a civil servant in the DOD concerning the nature of the SANDF, and cannot be seen as empirical facts in isolation. It unclear to what extent the expressed notions are manifested in social processes.<sup>92</sup> Simultaneously social processes, or the activities of the members of a society, exist, and are therefore equally valid as expressions of social reality and need to be investigated. This could, for instance, be the views of an actor concerning his or her experiences of PSOs. However, it is important to separate the two levels of analysis, that is, to separate the set of ideas from the set of empirical facts.<sup>93</sup> This is also linked to the need to distinguish between expressed notions and actual action. In relation to this dissertation, it could be argued that there is a need to separate the data concerning the admitted capacity problems in SANDF, and then "the actual" problems experienced in action, that is, on mission.<sup>94</sup> It is therefore an illusion to argue that one kind of data can be an adequate substitute for other types of data. The reason why this is so important is that, when interviewed in their professional capacities, actors will represent this function and express notions in general terms concerning the topic. However, this has to be distinguished from real actions, that is, an actor's description of real events. Holy and Stuchlik argue that

Whatever people say their actions are or will be cannot be taken as an equivalent to what actions they might actually be seen to perform, or as a prediction that such an action will actually take place.<sup>95</sup>

They argue furthermore that, whereas actions are observable, notions are not and can only be seen as expressions. This signifies the existence a different social reality between two different domains of social reality, that is, one shaped by the ideas and notions people have, the other formed by the actions they actually perform.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 5

<sup>92</sup> Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 8

<sup>93</sup> Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 10

<sup>94</sup> For further reading see Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 10f and especially their description of Le Pieres investigation in 1930s.

<sup>95</sup> Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 11

<sup>96</sup> Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 14

As mentioned above, the sources have been divided into three categories, based on Holy and Stuchlik's ideas about the distinctions between first "action" and "notions", and secondly representational and operational data.<sup>97</sup> An action should be understood here as being unique and unrepeatable, ceasing to exist once it has been performed. Actions can therefore consist of the actual observation of actions, or verbal statements concerning specific events.<sup>98</sup> A second type of action exists and should be understood as the blueprints, laws, White Papers and models shaping the context in which the first types of action take place and are understood. These types of actions are not observable and are characterised by existing in the minds of people, regardless of whether the corresponding action is at the moment being performed. Furthermore they are, in contrast to the first type of action, perdurable over time. The representational notion of a category concerns the latter type of action. This type of source explains the thinking behind the laws and blueprints. These types of source are again not observable. Based on this, the data is divided into three categories: 1. Action Notion sources; 2. Representative Notion sources and; 3. Action sources.

Using these categories, a process of triangulation has been conducted, known as the between (or across) method.<sup>99</sup> As Jick argues, this is done to improve the accuracy of the assessments produced in the research.<sup>100</sup> The triangulation means that no single category of information is considered more important than any other, that parallel methodological strategies have been initiated in an attempt to investigate the research questions from different angles, and that all information has been validated by cross checking with information from the two other categories.<sup>101</sup> The purpose of this exercise has been produce comparable sets of data between the cases. Ideally I should have conducted field trips to all three case-study countries. As already noted, a trip was organised to the DRC, including a visit to the South African forces taking part in this operation. Given the volatility of the security situation in the DRC, this was an unexpected opportunity. This also moved the investigation away from being a classic library-based study. For both practical and financial reasons, it was not possible to conduct visits to the other case-study countries, which have therefore been examined partly as library studies, and partly by way of interviews with

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<sup>97</sup> Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 18f and 54

<sup>98</sup> Holy & Stuchlik, *Actions, norms and representations*, p. 18

<sup>99</sup> See for instance Jick, *Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action* for further reading

<sup>100</sup> Jick, *Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action*, p. 602

<sup>101</sup> Jick, *Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action*, p. 602 and 607

returning personnel and responsible personnel in the DOD and the SANDF. It would, of course, have been preferable to make field trips to these areas too because such trips allow the researcher to question the reality described in the official documentation.

On top of the three categories mentioned above, a fourth, wide category of “other” sources should be mentioned. These include secondary and tertiary academic sources, newspapers, radio and TV programmes etc. The information obtained through this type of source has not been used without prior validation, and the information has often been used as an additional validation of the other sources of information. Furthermore, this category of sources can often point to elements which the research had so far not been aware of.

#### **1.5.2.1: Action Notion Sources**

A whole range of normative sources have been used in the dissertation. The White Papers on defence and foreign policy have constituted an important source of information because they are a direct expression of the government’s political ambitions and plans for the future. In addition I have made extensive use of speeches and statements made by a wide range of government ministers, parliamentarians and civil servants. Another important source of information has been the minutes from government meeting, parliamentary debates, and parliamentary committee meetings and briefings. Finally, ministerial strategy papers, reports, and annual statements and reports have constituted important sources of information.

#### **1.5.2.2: Representational Notion Sources**

During his research for this dissertation, the author has conducted a whole range of interviews with centrally placed civil servants. The individuals interviewed were chosen using qualitative criteria, that is, they were primary sources for the events they were interviewed about. However, those being interviewed often had different statuses as sources depending on their relationship to the information provided. Comments made about their own work constitute primary sources, while statements on broader issues which the individual is not part of or only indirectly involved in can be considered secondary or tertiary in nature. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that the information obtained during an interview might be coloured by the vested interests of the person being interviewed, for instance, by representing his or her role or position “correctly”. This makes it imperative to consider what interests

may lay behind a particular statement or piece of information. In this dissertation, none of the information collected has been used without being verified through a comparison with other sources. This is also a good way to assess the reliability of the person being interviewed and the validity of the information provided.

Before the actual interviews took place, a presentation of the project was sent to the person to be interviewed, with a description of the topics that the author would like to discuss. The problem in using this method was the risk of leading on or manipulating the person being interviewed, rather than obtaining the most objective response. The type of interview preferred was a combination of what Steiner Kvale describes as the hypothetical testing and background interview.<sup>102</sup> My hypotheses as an interviewer were therefore that South Africa needs a capable defence force to prop up its foreign-policy ambitions in Africa, that the ANC government's prioritisation of domestic political issues are hampering the PSO capacity of the SANDF, and that the SANDF has a capacity problem that will make it unable to fulfil this tasks. Kvale states:

Ideally, you should have decided before you take the first interview how you are going to analyse the interviews, how you are going to validate them, and how you are going to publish or report them. All this before you start interviewing.<sup>103</sup>

In reality, this was only possible in the case of the interviews organised from Denmark. However, being in South Africa and later in the DRC opened new doors, and I was introduced to a number of people who had not been accessible from Denmark. More interviews were done than initially planned, and they had to be validated accordingly. The interviews were mostly conducted without the use of a tape recorder because those being interviewed generally seemed more relaxed without it, and this facilitated a more open and valuable exchange of views. Even though the minutes were all taken down immediately after each interview, some information might have been lost. However, I believe it was more important to have an open discussion with a more relaxed interview object than to obtain a series of official statements.

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<sup>102</sup> Kvale, *Interviews*, pp. 97f., 120.

<sup>103</sup> Kvale, *The Primacy of the Interview*, p. 25.



The interviews were mostly used as a way to obtain background information, but the dissertation is not reliant solely on information acquired through interviews. Nevertheless, the qualitative interviews have provided me with an opportunity to gain access to information which is generally inaccessible. Furthermore, the interviews<sup>104</sup> also gave me the chance to test my hypotheses on the individuals directly involved. From time to time, this provided interesting and very useful information. Now and then, the interviews also gave the author insights into areas that he was not aware of or had hitherto not paid any attention to. One example of this is the issue concerning the logistical problems facing the SANDF when deployed.

### **1.5.2.3: Action Sources**

The visit to the DRC turned out to be a revelation, both in terms of obtaining a better understanding of the dynamics of a UN PSO, and also in giving me a chance to see the SANDF in an operational context. It provided invaluable insights into and information on the strengths and weaknesses of the SANDF, which could not have been uncovered in a purely library study.

However, because the study is focused on South African involvement in the case-study countries rather than their actual situations, it was not of pivotal importance to visit the two other countries. A visit to Lesotho would not have provided much new information because South African forces have been withdrawn from there. A visit to Burundi would have been relevant, but the civil war has made it a difficult area to access, and several of the SANDF personnel I interviewed also had operational experience of Burundi. The fact that a large part of the personnel had been recycled confirmed that a number of the issues found in the DRC could also be found in Burundi. This also meant that it was possible for this group to reflect on the differences and similarities between the two operations, an important and unexpected bonus.

In addition, qualitative interviews were conducted with individuals in South Africa who have been or still are participants in the South African deployments in the DRC, Lesotho and Burundi. Furthermore, I also conducted a related field trip to Zimbabwe in 2000, findings from which have naturally been included.

## **1.6: Methodological Barriers**

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<sup>104</sup> See appendix 13 for a full list over people interviewed.

In working on this dissertation, the author has encountered several methodological problems. The first problem is that using a relatively limited number of cases makes it more difficult to conduct convincing tests because the limited amount of data might distort the result, e.g. exaggerating the capabilities of the SANDF in both positive and negative directions. I have attempted to solve this by creating a firm and unambiguous research design, selecting cases by using the independent variable, supported by a most dissimilar research design. Furthermore, as mentioned above, I have stressed the limited explanatory power provided by the findings from the three cases. Finally by introducing a chapter systematically and analysing the capability of the SANDF in functioning as a “lead nation”, I have made it possible for general comparisons between this general description and the findings in the three cases to be made.

A second potential barrier relating to the validity of the research results concerns the influence of omissions and other factors not considered by the author during his analysis. This may have an effect on the dependent variables, but can in the worst case have significance for both the independent and the dependent variables. This could create a situation in which a causal relationship is inferred, but is in reality not there. However, I do not believe it to be big problem in this study. I have used the following strategy. By choosing a most dissimilar design, I have attempted to isolate the influence from the chosen independent variable on the dependent variables and thus reduced the risk of omitted variables. The logic of the most different design is that divergence will not cause commonalities.<sup>105</sup> If the rival variables show a discrepancy arbitrarily in comparison with the hypothesized key independent variable, then the possible impact from those other variables is basically eliminated. It is then to a certain degree possible to conclude that any apparent pattern of joined variation between one’s independent and dependent variables is not likely to be produced by omitted variables. The different nature of my three cases thus excludes the risk of the negative effects of, for instance, omitted factors.

A third problem deals with the lead nation criteria as listed in Chapter 4, which are derived jointly from NATO and UN capability standards. The question, of course, is whether it makes sense to test the capabilities of the SANDF against first-world standards? The author believes it does. First, as shown in literature reviews in Chapters 2 and 4, the SANDF has adopted a first-world mode of operation based on the recommendation in the White Paper on defence, and specifically in the defence

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<sup>105</sup> Toft, *The Way of the Vanquished*, p. 42

review. Secondly, the requirements for functioning as a lead nation do not change just because South Africa is a developing/middle income country. This means, in short, that if South Africa is to function as lead nation in PSOs, it needs to be able to undertake a whole range of functions. In its international relations, including its military commitment to international PSOs, South Africa will be measured by internationally agreed criteria and standards.

A fourth problem concerns the cost of a South Africa soldier, compared to soldiers from other countries. In the chapter dealing with the SANDF's general capabilities, the study also considered the size of the defence budget. However, the cost of a defence force is extremely difficult to estimate precisely, i.e. it is difficult to compare how much defence one US\$ can buy in country A or B. This is due to the large number of variables that need to be considered, for instance, the cost of living, salary levels, the cost of training, and force structure and design. This is an issue that defence and intelligence economics struggle to solve. I have therefore chosen not to try to compare South African costs with, for instance, those in other African states because, without a thorough investigation of the state concerned, scientifically this does not make any sense. The author is aware, as noted in Chapter 2, that in the academic literature on defence in South Africa it is quite common to compare South Africa's real defence expenditure with that of the rest of, for instance, the SADC, without taking the problem mentioned above into consideration. However, the author sees these types of statements more as a normative political input than as scientific contributions.

## **Chapter Two:**

### ***2: Foreign Policy and Military Power in South Africa: Framing the Research Questions***

The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader a comprehensive overview of existing academic research on South African foreign policy since the end of apartheid in 1994, and in particular the role of the SANDF in that foreign policy. This will contextualise the central problem in the dissertation presented in the preface. The chapter will show that the central theme in South African foreign policy is the change from a pariah to a regional power and peacemaker, which has made the SANDF an increasingly important tool in realising this objective. As shown in the introduction, a military capacity is increasingly considered a necessary condition for South Africa to achieve its foreign policy objectives, which is why it is important to cover this gap in the literature. It seems that the academic literature on South Africa's foreign policy, though often mentioning the increased military contribution, has neglected to make a comprehensive analysis of this foreign policy tool, and therefore of South Africa's combined capacity as a state and a foreign policy actor. The presentation shows that the military dimension in foreign policy has so far not been given substantial attention, which is why in this dissertation I am able to present a new contribution to the existing research field on South Africa's international relations.

The chapter is structured in following way. First an attempt is made to structure the academic debate schematically along thematic lines. Four broad thematic issues, all related to the change from pariah to peacemaker are used as chapters in structuring the presentation. Finally I close the chapter with a focus on the literature on defence and make an attempt to explain why the role of the defence force in foreign policy has so far been relatively unnoticed in the academic literature.

The role of the chapter in the dissertation is primarily to help investigate the first claim presented in the preface, that is, that post-apartheid SA foreign policy is characterized by efforts to change South Africa's image from "pariah" to "peacemaker". This has already partly been demonstrated in the introduction, but will be further demonstrated here in Chapter 2, which includes a comprehensive literature review of the findings in the existing academic literature on South Africa's foreign policy. The investigation of the first claim will be further illustrated in Chapter

5, which outlines the basic principles in the government's White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions. Seven basic criteria for the deployment of the SANDF in PSOs are highlighted and will be used as a part of the analytical framework for investigating the government's criteria for deploying military force as part of its strategy of being a benign peacemaker.

The chapter also contributes to the investigation of the second claim in the dissertation, that is, that the SANDF has played an important and somewhat overlooked role in this transition. Its transformation and its involvement in peace operations have been necessary to support this transition, and it will remain necessary to sustain it in the foreseeable future. The chapter will demonstrate that the existing literature, relatively substantial as it might be, has for some reason not given substantial attention to the critical foreign policy role played by the SANDF.

## **2.1: Structuring the debate**

A number of different, but more often than not interlinked debates can be detected when scrutinising the existing research on South African foreign policy. In an attempt to structure the presentation of the literature, I have chosen to order the themes schematically according to the following criteria:

- General applicability , i.e. a topic that cuts across foreign policy actions, e.g. consistency in foreign policy, but not policy towards Zimbabwe
- Widespread detachability and repetition in the literature

I have chosen to structure the presentation of the academic field schematically. The academic literature, with some obvious exceptions, is generally not characterised by being theoretically driven, but is generally heavy on empirical analysis and descriptions, and is often methodologically eclectic.<sup>106</sup> It therefore made more sense to me to organise the presentation of the literature along broad four thematic lines instead. The function of this schematic presentation is therefore merely to give the reader a rudimentary overview of the field and to situate the dissertation within the existing literature. The presentation of the academic debate will be along thematic lines, i.e. the four themes used in the diagram.

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<sup>106</sup> See for instance Taylor's critique of International Relations research in South Africa, in Taylor, Rethinking the study of International Relations in South Africa. I am fully aware of the fierce, and at times it seems malicious, debate that has taken place between a group of critical scholars, for instance Vale and Taylor, and a group of realist scholars, for instance Geldenhuys, Olivier and Solomon.

The consistency vs. in-consistency debate	African vs. Western orientation	The question of "power": the RSA's role in Africa	Domestic vs. African development
Nathan, Barber, Bischoff, Hentz, Spence, Habib, Solomon, Cilliers, Henwood, Mills, Van der Westhuizen, Muller, Vale, Alden, Schoeman, Williams, Taylor, Van der Westhuizen, Olivier, Geldenhuys	Barber, Nieuwkerk, Bischoff, Hentz, Kagwanja, Evans, Van der Westhuizen, Mills, Muller, Bond, Alden, Vale, Van der Westhuizen, Baregu, Olivier	De Coning, Barber, Bischoff, Hentz, Kagwanja, Evans, Spence, Habib, Solomon, Cilliers, Sidiropoulos, Mills, Daniel, Luthchman, Van der Westhuizen, Muller, Naidoo, Naidu, Vale, Alden, Soko, O'Meara, Schoeman, Landsberg, Adebajo	Le Pere, Barber, Lodge, Bischoff, Hentz, Evans, Nieuwkerk, Le Pere, Daniel, Naidoo, Naidu, Luthchman, Muller, Taylor, P. Williams, P. Vale, Bond, Baregu, Marais

The thematic issues have been identified using the criteria above and similar thematic categories used previously by other scholars. In 1998, for instance, the South African scholar Janis van der Westhuizen made an attempt to structure the debate on post-apartheid South African foreign policy, an attempt that can be detected in several later studies. He identified what he saw as three particular contentious debates, namely:

1. A discrepancy between the stated prioritization and the focus on democratization and human rights values, and the problems involved in attaining them in reality<sup>107</sup>
2. A failure to engage and include civil society in the debate concerning the foreign policy<sup>108</sup>
3. Criticism from its African partners for prioritizing Western interests over African solidarity.<sup>109</sup>

Of these three criteria, the author has chosen to rephrase criterion 1, calling it the consistency vs. inconsistency debate, and 3, calling it African vs. Western orientation, but leaving out number 2 as an independent criterion, and letting it be integrated as part of my Domestic vs. Africa category. In this way I believe the categories reflects contemporary debates better.

In addition to these debates, there is, for instance, the debate dealing with the prioritization in South Africa's policies of domestic concerns versus more general African ones. This is inspired by, for instance, Alden and Soko, who argue that a deepening division can be detected both at policy level, but also among academic analysts concerning whether South Africa is a benevolent hegemonic power "providing public goods to a region bereft of economic prosperity, or an exploitative power actively undermining the economies of its neighbours".<sup>110</sup> This is closely linked to another debate that deals with South Africa's role in Africa and internationally, i.e. is it a regional hegemonic power, and/or a pivotal state,<sup>111</sup> or merely a middle power with limited resources. Daniel et al., for instance, focus on this in their article, "The South Africans have arrived", analysis of South Africa's behaviour in its relations with the rest of the continent.<sup>112</sup> My last two categories have been drawn from these debates.

## **2.2: The consistency vs. inconsistency debate**

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<sup>107</sup> For a discussion of these discrepancies see for instance Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy, p. 19-21; Mandrup, Carry a big stick, but use it gently

<sup>108</sup> Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy, pp. 32-33

<sup>109</sup> Van der Westhuizen, South Africa's emergence as a middle power, p. 445ff

<sup>110</sup> Alden & Soko, South Africa's economic relations with Africa, p. 368

<sup>111</sup> Schoeman, South Africa as an Emerging Middle Power, The State of the Nation, 2003-04; Swatuk, Intellectual Coherence, Permanent Emergencies, p. 7

<sup>112</sup> Daniel et al., The South Africans have arrived, p. 373f, in State of the nation 2003-04

Multilateralism is both a primary goal and a primary strategy of South Africa's foreign policy. It is consistent with the country's negotiated settlement and pluralist politics, and with the emphasis in African state politics on unity and solidarity.<sup>113</sup>

The literature often divides the post-1994 foreign policy into a 1994-99 Mandela era foreign policy that was characterized by inconsistencies and personalized foreign policy making, something that is historically a typical characteristic of South African foreign policy making, and then the post 1999 Mbeki era foreign policy, characterized by pragmatism and a larger level of coherence.<sup>114 115</sup> In connection with this, Southall argues that:

To summarise, the human rights, moralistic orientation of South Africa's early post-1994 foreign policy has been subordinated to pragmatic, regional concerns and African solidarity.<sup>116</sup>

In his article *Consistency and Inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, the South African scholar Laurie Nathan cites the principles listed in the DFA's strategic plan of 2004, which functions as the foundation of South Africa's foreign policy. They are a commitment to the promotion of human rights and democracy; to justice and international law in the conduct of relations between nations; to international peace and internationally agreed-upon mechanisms for resolving conflict; to promoting the interests of Africa in world affairs; and to economic development through regional and international cooperation in an interdependent and globalized world.<sup>117</sup> Nathan points out that these principles are basically identical with those presented when the ANC took power in 1994, and that consequently it is too simplistic to argue that South Africa's foreign policy has been inconsistent.<sup>118</sup> Clapham supports this claim and argues that "*the Mbeki government has developed a remarkable coherent response to the challenges facing Africa in the post-apartheid era*".<sup>119</sup> Nathan pragmatically

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<sup>113</sup> Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, p. 365

<sup>114</sup> Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*; Alden & le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*

<sup>115</sup> The question of coherency in the Mbeki foreign policy is, however, contested and a scholar like Paul-Henri Bischoff argues that Mbeki's foreign policy is characterised by ambiguity; Bischoff, *External and domestic sources of foreign policy ambiguity*, Paul Williams calls it eclectic in his *Getting critical* article, and Jack Spence that argues that the ad hoc based foreign policy is caused by the unpredictability of the international relations and events in general., Spence in Sidiropoulos eds., *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*.

<sup>116</sup> Southall, *An unlikely success: South Africa and Lesotho's election of 2002*, p. 294

<sup>117</sup> From the DFA 2004 Strategic Plan cited in Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*

<sup>118</sup> Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, p. 362

<sup>119</sup> Clapham, *Introduction*, p. 278



argues that the tension in the foreign policy shown in much of the academic literature is more strategic in nature than one of policy. An ambitious foreign policy in a state with limited capacity will create tension, especially between the commitment towards both multilateralism and democracy, and seeking first world support for NePAD, while at the same time attempting to transform the international system of power.<sup>120</sup>

Cawthra argues that

While these principles arise from South Africa's constitutional and political evolution, they are very idealistic and hardly provide a guide to action in the world of realpolitik. Indeed, it is difficult to see how these commitments are manifested in key foreign policy decisions where, unsurprisingly, South Africa's trade and political interests appear to be the key factors in decision making.<sup>121</sup>

Mills argues, from a realist point of view, that the list of priorities in the foreign relations document from 1996, which are more or less identical with the priorities listed above, was nearly unlimited. The consequence of this was a lack of focus, which, to a certain extent, explains the inconsistent policies, particularly during the Mandela era, coming out of the government offices in Pretoria. There was a need to prioritise fewer political goals and to recognise South Africa's limitations.<sup>122</sup>

Spence argues within this framework that it has proved difficult to reconcile pragmatism and principle. However, this, according to Nathan, does not make the foreign policy inconsistent, but in need of a focus on the strategic level.<sup>123</sup> He also argues that much of the inconsistency during the Mandela reign was the consequence of an inexperienced administration that was influenced by high expectations being placed on South Africa by the international system.<sup>124</sup> Schoeman argues that the international donor community expects South Africa to be an emerging African "big power", playing a constructive role in stabilising and securing the international system.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Spence in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 38

<sup>121</sup> Cawthra, in Cawthra et al., *Democratic control of the Security Sector*, p. 47

<sup>122</sup> Mills, *Leaning all over the place? The not so new South Africa's Foreign Policy*, pp. 2f.

<sup>123</sup> Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, p. 371-372

<sup>124</sup> Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, p. 361

<sup>125</sup> Schoeman, *South Africa as an Emerging Middle Power*, 357f in *State of the Nation 2003-04*

However, several scholars disagree, partially or in whole, with Nathan's analysis,<sup>126</sup> which was merely one position in a debate that has been running more or less since the inauguration of the ANC government in 1994. A disagreement concerning the future priorities in the new post-apartheid South Africa's foreign policy is the heart of this debate. Williams, from a radical position, criticizes the government for only paying lip service to these new ambitions of African solidarity, and for seeking narrow South African national and especially economic interests.<sup>127</sup> Henri Bischoff, arguing along the same lines challenges the supposed focus on multilateralism and solidarity by arguing that South Africa has often chosen economic unilateralism and exceptionalism in its relations with the rest of the African continent, areas that are difficult to merge with the stated goals and strategy.<sup>128</sup> Olivier and Geldenhuys argues from a so-called pragmatic' approach that South Africa changed its foreign policy after 1994 in a "pragmatic and reasoned manner", in the process disappointing the "ideologues and idealists" who previously argued for a total break from the past.<sup>129</sup> In response, Taylor points out that, by reducing other opinions and research findings as "ideologues and idealist", Olivier and Geldenhuys are attempting to reduce the value of other opinions of the foreign policy of the GNU, because they consider themselves to be objective.<sup>130</sup> Vale and Taylor argue that the debate on South Africa's international role must be understood as dualistic, being both exceptional, but also that of just another country.<sup>131</sup> They point out that this is particularly the case with Nelson Mandela, who for long time was used as a foreign policy tool, especially in relation to bridge-building and peace-making. According to them, the policy seemed to be one of just calling in Mandela.<sup>132</sup> The "just another country" aspect they exemplify with reference to South Africa's handling of the "two China problem", the isolation of South Africa in case of the Nigeria, and the struggle between South African and Zimbabwe.<sup>133</sup>

Spence, coming from a realist point of view, argues that South Africa's foreign policy is characterized by an immanent contradiction between its reformist ambitions and

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<sup>126</sup> See for instance: Spence, 'Point Man' on Zimbabwe, Henwood, South Africa's Foreign Policy: Principles and Problems; and Olivier and Geldenhuys 'South Africa's Foreign Policy: from idealism to pragmatism'; Mills, *Leaning all over the Place?*, in Solomon, *Fairy Godmother, Hegemon or Partner*

<sup>127</sup> Williams, *South African foreign policy*, p. 76

<sup>128</sup> Bischoff, *External and domestic sources of foreign policy ambiguity* p. 192. This claim is further supported by Landsberg, in *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation* and citing Mahmood Mamdani

<sup>129</sup> Olivier & Geldenhuys, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: from idealism to pragmatism*

<sup>130</sup> Taylor, *Rethinking the Study of International Relations*, p. 209

<sup>131</sup> Vale & Taylor, *South Africa's Post Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*, p. 630

<sup>132</sup> Vale & Taylor, *South Africa's Post Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*, p. 630

<sup>133</sup> Vale & Taylor, *South Africa's Post Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*, p. 630

the pragmatic approach it has selected. It tries to be a dominating leading power in Africa, but is reluctant to use or project its power to reach its goals. Habib and Selinyane call the foreign policy schizophrenic, because it is sometimes characterised by hegemonic behaviour in an attempt to establish and guarantee stability, while it in other instances South Africa hesitates to intervene.<sup>134</sup>

According to Westhuizen, one of the main reasons why South Africa's foreign policy has been considered inconsistent and as having an immanent tension is that South African foreign policy was characterized by a split between the "neo-mercantilist" and "internationalist" camps, i.e. what he terms the trade/human rights dilemma.<sup>135</sup> The latter group, dominated by people from the ANC's left wing, advocated solidarity with the third world and a focus on human rights issues. The first group, often dominated by DFA staff from the old apartheid regime, argued that South Africa had to focus on promoting trade and exports, and South Africa's national interests in general.<sup>136</sup> This group cooperated with the strong Department for Trade and Industry, which, especially under the Mandela government, had a strong and relatively independent foreign policy profile. According to several academics, this split between the camps resulted in a foreign policy that was both inconsistent and unpredictable.<sup>137</sup> According to Nieuwkerk, therefore, like most other states in the international system, South Africa is faced with the problem of trying to balance its normative ambitions with its economic interests. It has therefore moved away from the idealistic ambitions of Mandela, who in 1994 stated (cited by among others Alden and Le Pere):

Human rights will be the light that guides our foreign affairs.<sup>138</sup>

According to Henwood and others, in its officially stated foreign policy and its actions, South Africa has taken the "moral high ground", whilst in other instances it has continued to support "old friends" of the ANC like Cuba and Libya, repaying old debts, and protecting South African economic interests by prolonging the free-trade

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<sup>134</sup> Habib & Selinyane, Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 54-59

<sup>135</sup> Van der Westhuizen, *South Africa's emergence as a middle power*, p. 445, Evans, *South Africa in remission*, p. 263

<sup>136</sup> Van der Westhuizen, *South Africa's emergence as a middle power*, p. 444; See also Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*, p. 14-21. See also Appendix 3 for an overview of South Africa's trade balance with the world.

<sup>137</sup> See for instance; Solomon, *Fairy godmother, hegemon or partner*; Nieuwkerk, et al., *Mission Imperfect: Redirecting South Africa's Foreign Policy*; Van der Westhuizen, *South Africa's emergence as a middle power*; Mandrup Jørgensen, *Carry a big stick, but use it gently*; Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, p. 361; Spence in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*

<sup>138</sup> Mandela, Speech, "The Future of South Africa", *The Asian Age*, 1 March 1994. quoted in Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post Apartheid Foreign Policy*,

negotiations in SADC.<sup>139</sup> This made the government vulnerable to criticism and was damaging for its reputation among the dominant Western powers. Support for former political allies from the liberation struggle in particular has been a distinct feature of South Africa's international relations since 1994, despite the fact that some of these partners are regarded as international pariahs by the dominant Western powers.<sup>140</sup> On several occasions, Mandela has indicated that the enemies of the West are not necessarily the enemies of South Africa.<sup>141</sup> According to Raymond Suttner, South Africa's foreign policy became increasingly non-ideological and was directed by a principle of universality, according to which South Africa's interests were seen as being best served by not offending anybody.<sup>142</sup> Its foreign policy became increasingly characterized by pragmatism and a reluctance to speak out against any state actor, whether Morocco over the Western Sahara issue, the East Timor/Indonesia issue, and more recently the Zimbabwean issue. Unilateral South African foreign policy action, as seen in Mandela's public condemnation of the Nigerian military dictatorship in 1995, has become a thing of the past.<sup>143</sup> Maxi van Ardt<sup>144</sup> called this new strategy "quiet diplomacy" in general, and in relation to South Africa's approach to Nigeria's military dictatorship in particular.<sup>145</sup> The term "quiet diplomacy" is, of course, the name given later to South Africa's contested foreign policy strategy towards Zimbabwe.

South Africa under President Mbeki has married, to use Vale's term,<sup>146</sup> the concepts. Pragmatism and economic considerations have been integrated into one relatively coherent foreign policy strategy. Alden and Soko argue that Mbeki has attempted to take up the pan-African sentiments and "marry it to a neo-liberal agenda".<sup>147</sup> Exactly on this point, the ANC government has received harsh criticism from primarily critical and pan-African scholars because it has chosen a neo-liberal economic model, in which economic considerations often collide with the moral objectives listed above, particularly in the African context, given the stated priority of solidarity and

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<sup>139</sup> See for instance Henwood, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: Principles and Problems*; and Olivier and Geldenhuys 'South Africa's Foreign Policy: from idealism to pragmatism' for a realist inspired critic of the GNU's relation with old "friends" from the liberation struggle.

<sup>140</sup> See for instance Vale & Taylor, *South Africa's Post Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*

<sup>141</sup> See Henwood, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: Principles and Problems*, p. 6.

<sup>142</sup> Suttner, *South African foreign policy has limitations*

<sup>143</sup> See for instance Van Ardt, *A foreign policy to die for: South Africa's response to Nigeria*; Suttner, *South African foreign policy has limitations*

<sup>144</sup> This scholar has today changed her name to Maxi Schoeman

<sup>145</sup> Van Ardt, *A foreign policy to die for: South Africa's response to Nigeria*

<sup>146</sup> For further reading see Vale, *Upstairs and Downstairs*

<sup>147</sup> Alden & Soko, *South Africa's Economic Relations with Africa*, p. 383

partnership between the states.<sup>148</sup> Hentz and Taylor argue along the same lines that South Africa's foreign policy is the result of a political compromise between left and right in the political field, in an attempt to merge the different visions of South Africa's regional role.<sup>149</sup> The consequence, according to Alden and Le Pere, has been that, during the Mbeki presidencies, there has been a partial retrenchment of human rights concerns in foreign policy. The human rights focus and advocacy has been moved to multilateral institutions and operates bilaterally via quiet diplomacy.<sup>150</sup> Vale and Taylor argue that the government's foreign policy is divorced from any meaningful linkage with the population, which has to "bear the brunt of the debilitating effects of the neo-liberalist policies the government has bought into and which guides the country's foreign policy."<sup>151</sup>

### **2.3: African vs. Western Orientation**

One of the debates that has dominated the academic debate on South African foreign policy, and which is somewhat related to the consistency debate, is whether the ANC government has redirected its focus to its African partners and thus altered the apartheid government's Western orientation. The literature to a large extent agrees that White apartheid South Africa perceived itself to be part of the Western community and its anticommunist agenda. The inauguration in 1994 of the new ANC-led government officially altered this orientation through the expressions of solidarity with Africa and the "South" more generally.<sup>152</sup>

According to large parts of the academic literature, since 1994 the Pretoria government has operated on a knife's edge in its attempt to balance its relations with primarily the OECD-countries and then large numbers of its continental partners. This is a difficult balance to maintain because South Africa has attempted, for instance through its NePAD initiative, to attract foreign direct investment to South Africa and Africa in that order, while at the same time having to accommodate and try to remedy the shortcomings of the international system that have marginalized the African continent in an attempt to satisfy its African partners and show that South Africa is

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<sup>148</sup> See for instance Nieuwkerk, South Africa's national interest, p. 3, Bond, Against Global Apartheid, Williams, Baregu & Landsberg eds, From Cape to Congo : Southern Africa's evolving security challenges; Vale, Security and Politics in South Africa;

<sup>149</sup> Taylor, South Africa, the G-20, the G20+ and the IBSA Dialogue Forum; Hentz, South Africa and the political economy of regional cooperation in Southern Africa, , p. 22

<sup>150</sup> Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy, p. 130

<sup>151</sup> Vale and Taylor, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy, p. 632

<sup>152</sup> Williams, South African foreign policy, p. 76; Spence, 'Point Man' on Zimbabwe

not just an agent of the West.<sup>153</sup> According to, for instance, Cilliers, the debate concerning the voluntary Peer Review Mechanism in the NEPAD programme between the major donors and the African states headed by South Africa is one illustration of this potential conflict.<sup>154</sup>

However, van der Westhuizen argues that South Africa internationally was part of what has been called the “global beauty contest”, where the effective branding of the country was seen as pivotal for growth and development in South Africa itself.<sup>155</sup> Westhuizen continues that this was not just the case in projecting the seemingly right political values before the dominating economic powers of the world, but also the branding of South Africa as an effective and dynamic society and especially economy, South Africa being a country for other countries to “look to”, to use McNamara words, for guidance. This is of special importance because of South Africa’s geographical location on the “poverty stricken Dark Continent” of Africa, which is generally seen as the world’s basket case.<sup>156</sup>

Marie Muller, the South African scholar, citing the then Minister for Trade and Industry, Alec Erwin, argues that South Africa is to some extent the bridge between the developed and developing worlds, among other things as a result of its geographical location in Africa.<sup>157</sup> It is a leading nation in the developing world, which, for instance, has been made visible by its chairmanship of NAM, its involvement during the WTO negotiations, and its dialogue with the G8 members.<sup>158</sup> It has functioned as mediator at both the international and continental levels. By functioning as a mediator in the international system, it has made itself useful to the internationally dominant states and has been given certain advantages in, for instance, trade negotiations and developmental aid. Although the economic advantages of this role still need to materialise, South Africa has nevertheless gained prestige and created trust. Schoeman argues that a good example of an indirect trade-off was South Africa joining the nuclear weapons non-proliferation treaty (NPT)

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<sup>153</sup> See for instance Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa’s Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*, p. 62; Also interviews conducted by the author with Scholars Baregu and Rupiya in Zimbabwe in January 2000

<sup>154</sup> For further details about the nature of the African Peer Review Mechanism, see, for instance, Cilliers, *NEPADs Peer Review Mechanisms*, and Kanbur, *The African peer review mechanism (APRM): an assessment of concept and design*.

<sup>155</sup> Van der Westhuizen, *Beyond Mandelamania*, p. 1-2

<sup>156</sup> Van der Westhuizen, *Beyond Mandelamania*, p. 3

<sup>157</sup> Muller, *South Africa’s Economic Diplomacy*, p. 12; Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, p. 201, See also Barber, *Mandela’s World*, p. 158ff, Vale & Taylor in their article, *South Africa’s Post Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*, argues that South Africa is the acting as the go-between for today’s designated “renegades” and the international system.

<sup>158</sup> See for instance Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa’s Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*, pp. 66ff

of 1991, where pressure from the US led South Africa to sign. In return the South African leadership, besides standing out as an international example to follow as being the first and so far only state to dismantle its nuclear weapons capacity,<sup>159</sup> secured a yearly bilateral meeting with the US.<sup>160</sup> It also used this position in 1996 during the renegotiation of the NPT agreement and managed to bridge the major divide between the North and the South.<sup>161</sup>

South African foreign policy was therefore divided into two, i.e. internationally being part of the “international beauty contest, and (sub-) regionally protecting African unity and solidarity and projecting partnership. Alden and Soko argue that, whereas South Africa used to have a malevolent hegemonic role in the Southern African Customs Union (SACU),<sup>162</sup> today it has transformed itself into a benign hegemonic power in the region.<sup>163</sup> South Africa’s neighbours expect some kind of “dividend” for the support they offered to the liberation movements: they do not want a new pariah South Africa dictating interstate relations.<sup>164</sup>

According to van der Westhuizen, the Mbeki government’s choice to alter the idealistic foreign policy ambitions that had directed the ANC during the first years of the Mandela presidency meant that it followed a strategy that fell within the rules of the existing international economic and political order.<sup>165</sup> <sup>166</sup> Daniel et al. argue that one of the reasons for this was that the end of the Cold War meant the “demise of the

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<sup>159</sup> The author is of course aware of the fact that the Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus in principle also gave up their share of the Soviet nuclear weapons capacity with the dismantling of the USSR.

<sup>160</sup> The SA-US Binational Commission was established in 1995 and consists of nine committees and one subcommittee where government officials and business leaders meet in an attempt to strengthen bilateral relations. Today, the US is South Africa’s single largest trading partner. Source: South African Yearbook 2000/01.

<sup>161</sup> For further details, see, for instance, Schoeman, South Africa as an Emerging Middle Power: 1994-2003, in The State of the Nation 2003-2004.

<sup>162</sup> SACU was established in 1969, build on the foundations of the former Customs Union Agreement from 1910. Today it consists of South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana and Namibia. For further details on SACU, see Chapter 4.

<sup>163</sup> Alden & Soko, South Africa’s economic relations with Africa, p. 370

<sup>164</sup> The signing of a new agreement between the members of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) was a good example of this dynamic. After eight years of intensive negotiations, a new agreement between SACU members was signed on the 19th October 2001, which secured a more equal distribution of the resources in the Common Revenue Pool (CRP), from which South Africa had formerly benefited. This will ensure that the revenue flows to each member state remain stable. Furthermore, the new agreement secured the establishment of more democratic institutions, and also the BLNS states (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland) secured influence on the decision-making process of the Union. The SACU secretariat, for instance, was moved from South Africa to Namibia. Annual Report 2001-2002: Department of Foreign Affairs p. 65. By this action South Africa managed to safeguard this trading regime, thus strengthening its own negotiating position internationally. See also Alden and Soko, South Africa’s Economic Relations with Africa, for further details about the new SACU agreement.

<sup>165</sup> Van der Westhuizen, South Africa’s emergence as a middle power, p. 443ff

<sup>166</sup> According to Hedley Bull, order in international relations means: “order is a pattern of behavior that sustains the elementary or primary goals of social life. Order in this sense is maintained by a sense of common interests in those elementary or primary goals; by rules which prescribe the pattern of behavior that sustains them; and by institutions which make these rules effective”. See Hedley Bull, ‘The Anarchical Society’, p. 51.

state-directed commandist economic model".<sup>167</sup> Muller argues along the same lines that ANC

policy makers have adopted a broad neo-liberal stance, accepting that 'globalization' is irreversible and that South Africa should seek to work within this discourse to highlight areas where the country (and the south) can benefit from the process.<sup>168</sup>

This, of course, supports the critique of primarily pan-Africanist scholars that South Africa thereby accepts the marginalisation<sup>169</sup> of Africa by the imperialist west, and is not really safeguarding the continent's interests.<sup>170</sup> However, Bond argues that, while the domestic inequalities are a policy area that the ANC government has prioritised and is attempting to remedy, it is finding it difficult to change the global inequalities that systematically disfavour the developing world, sometimes called 'global apartheid'. The terms of trade between Africa and the international system have marginalised Africa's formal economic relations with the international system. Nevertheless, while the racist version of apartheid took the form of an actual political regime and could therefore be fought, global apartheid is based on the distribution of power in the international system and is therefore more difficult to combat.<sup>171</sup>

According to Bond, the widespread pessimism about Africa that dominated the international donor community's discourse on the continent in the post-Somalia era did make it more difficult for South Africa to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). The FDI that was attracted primarily consisted of so-called 'hot money', which was disinvested after the fall of the South African currency, the Rand, in 1997-98. This has put the ANC government under increased pressure, especially from its domestic constituency.<sup>172</sup> The South African government has stated that it wants to create a fairer international system, but it is being criticised for just accepting the existing system.<sup>173</sup> By doing so it is also creating regional political tension, because the terms of trade between South Africa and the rest of the continent increasingly favour South Africa.<sup>174</sup> According to Daniel et al., South Africa's terms of trade with SADC in 2001

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<sup>167</sup> Daniel et al., *The South Africans have arrived*, p. 373f, in *State of the nation 2003-04*

<sup>168</sup> Muller, *South Africa's Economic Diplomacy*, p. 11

<sup>169</sup> However, after the 9/11 attacks the US has increased its focus on areas like the Horn of Africa, East Africa and partially areas of the Sahel. Southern Africa, however, remains marginalised. See also Mills, *Africa's New Strategic Significance*.

<sup>170</sup> Interview with M. Baregu and Martin Rupiya January 2000; Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*

<sup>171</sup> For further details, see Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*, pp. 134ff.

<sup>172</sup> The South African rand lost 37.3% of its value against the dollar from 1997 to 1998. See, for instance, Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*, p. 141. South Africa also had problems attracting long-term development aid because of its ranking as a middle-income country. Moreover, it received mainly transitional assistance in the initial period after 1994.

<sup>173</sup> Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*, p. 140.

<sup>174</sup> See Appendix 3 for a detailed overview of South Africa's trade relations by continent.



9-1 were in South Africa's favour.<sup>175</sup> This is one of the reasons why South Africa has not succeed in having itself accepted as an unchallenged regional leader because its economic policies have opened up a space for alternative ideas for Africa's future development. Mugabe's relative success with his anti-western rhetoric strategy and his continued popularity among certain leaders in Africa is a good example.

However, the ideological ambitions still exist and the long-term objectives seem to be intact, for South Africa has been actively involved in, for instance, attempts to initiate reforms of the UN Security Council and in the stand-off at the WTO negotiations between primarily the west and third world states. President Mbeki stated in 2005 that:

We must bring about the sanity that would dictate that power should be used to advance the well-being of humankind, and not abused as an opportunity to 'control the world', with no regard for the fundamental interests of the poor and marginalised....<sup>176</sup>

South Africa's new southern regional power alliance with India and Brazil should be understood within this framework.<sup>177</sup> The Mbeki government has nevertheless continued the dual foreign political strategy, that is, the double regional and international foreign policy roles that characterised the Mandela government, i.e. what some academics term a benign regional (hegemonic) power and an international middle power.<sup>178</sup>

#### **2.4: The Question of "Power": The RSA's Role in Africa**

Like any regional heavyweight, South Africa will be damned if it does act and damned if it doesn't act to resolve regional conflicts.<sup>179</sup>

What is the position of South Africa in Africa, and what are its role and objectives? This is one of the most widely debated issues on South African foreign policy,

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<sup>175</sup> Daniel et. al., The South Africans have arrived, p. 375f, in State of the Nation 2003-04

<sup>176</sup> Mbeki in ANC Today, 22 April 2005.

<sup>177</sup> See Alden & Vieira, The New Diplomacy of the South. Ideologically, for further reading of the IBSA cooperation

<sup>178</sup> Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy, p. 54, Schoeman, South Africa an Emerging Middle Power, in State of the Nation 2003-04; Barber, Mandela's World; Mills, Leaning all over the Place?, in Solomon, Fairy Godmother, Hegemon or Partner,

<sup>179</sup> Kent and Malan, Decisions, Decisions, South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, p. 15

whether seen through an analysis of its involvement in handling the Zimbabwean crisis, in its capacity as a mediator in Burundi or in the integration process in SADC. In the literature, big differences exist concerning the interpretation of this role, often with a normative twist to it, i.e. that South Africa has a special role and responsibility in Africa. A question which is often debated in the literature is South Africa's capacity in exercising this role and responsibility.

According to Alden and Maseko, the idea that South Africa has a special role and responsibilities in Africa is not only the product of domestic political ambition in South Africa itself, but also the result of international expectations from, for instance, former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, who is quoted for requesting that South Africa take up its responsibilities in Africa.<sup>180</sup> A statement from then US Ambassador to South Africa McNamara in 1996 supports this interpretation. He stated that:

...we encourage South Africa to consider what its proper leadership role should be on African and global security issues. This country's political, economic, as well as military, capabilities make it an important player in the areas of conflict prevention, arms transfers, and non-proliferation. And the moral stature gained through your peaceful transition to democracy has made South Africa a country that people around the world look to. The US Government looks forward to continued cooperation with South Africa as we tackle security challenges around the world.<sup>181</sup>

According to Henwood, the ANC leadership has deliberately tried to use its non-aligned position internationally to create a role as a peace broker in international disputes between the centre and the periphery. This was the case in the negotiations following the dispute between the EU and UK on the one hand and Libya on the other following the Lockerbie bombing, which led to a financial settlement in 2003.<sup>182</sup> There was also South Africa's attempt to broker a deal between the warring parties in East Timor in 1999. Furthermore, the government repeatedly held talks with the Iraqi regime up until the coalition attack in March 2003, and it also brought the parties to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict together by facilitating talks between them.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Vale & Maseko, *South Africa and the Renaissance*, p. 283

<sup>181</sup> US Ambassador Thomas N. McNamara's speech in Johannesburg, 20th February 1996, on *The US approach to Regional Security*.

<sup>182</sup> Henwood, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: Principles and Problems*, p. 6.

<sup>183</sup> This attempt has not been very successful, partly due to the ANC's critical approach towards Israel, which in its turn sees the ANC leadership as being supportive of the Palestinian cause. The situation was exacerbated in 2004 when central ANC figures compared Israeli policies in the occupied territories to those of the apartheid regime. Relations between South Africa and Israel have been strained by Israel's close co-operation with the

However, South Africa's leadership role and ambitions do not go uncontested by its partners in Africa.<sup>184</sup> In the contemporary academic literature South Africa is generally described as a regional power, though differences exist concerning its capacity to exercise that role. It has been described as a regional power,<sup>185</sup> debating whether it is a regional (emerging) hegemonic power<sup>186</sup> and an international "middle power"<sup>187</sup>, and sometimes even a combination of these labels is used.<sup>188</sup> Though differences exist over the content of the "label" to be used for South Africa's role, broad agreement exists on the fact that South Africa is in a heterogeneous power relation with at least its immediate region. According to Alden and Soko, the relative size and capacity of South Africa makes it a giant, compared especially with its SADC partners.<sup>189</sup> It is by far the biggest economy and the single largest foreign investor in Sub-Saharan Africa, and is responsible for approximately 50% of all foreign trade to and from the continent.<sup>190</sup>

However, the capacity of South Africa has been questioned, particularly because of the immense domestic tasks confronting the ANC government.<sup>191</sup> Was this a colossus standing on feet of clay that some authors argued? As Spence argues, since 1994 South Africa has made serious attempts to create a leadership role for

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former apartheid regime, especially in the field of military technology. Visit and briefings at ARMSCOR, October 2004.

<sup>184</sup> Schoman and Alden, *The Hegemon That Wasn't*; Alden and Soko, *South Africa's Economic Relations with Africa*; Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*

<sup>185</sup> Hammerstad, *Domestic threats, regional solutions?*, p. 74; Buzan & Wæver, *Regions and Powers*;

<sup>186</sup> Ahwireng-Obeng & McGowan, *Partner or Hegemon?*; Mandrup, *Carry a big stick but use it gently*; Taylor, *Stuck in middle GEAR: South Africa's post-apartheid foreign relations*; Schoman in Daniel et al., *State of the Nation: South Africa 2003-04*; Daniel et al., *State of the Nation: South Africa 2003-04*; Schoman and Alden, *The Hegemon That Wasn't*; Alden and Soko, *South Africa's Economic Relations with Africa*; Van der Westhuisen, ...; Spence, 'Point Man' on Zimbabwe; Solomon, *Fairy Godmother, Hegemon or Partner*; Hammerstad, *Domestic threats, regional solutions?*, p. 74; Hentz, *South Africa and the political economy of regional cooperation in Southern Africa*, p. 41, Spence in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 43, Habib & Selinyane, Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 53-55; Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*, p. 123; Taylor and Williams, *South African Foreign Policy and the Great Lakes Crisis: African Renaissance Meets Vagabondage Politique?*; Bellamy and Williams, *Who's Keeping the Peace? Regionalization and Contemporary Peace Operations*

<sup>187</sup> Cilliers, *An emerging South African Foreign Policy Identity*; Schoeman, *South Africa as an Emerging Middle Power*, in *State of the Nation 2003-04*, Taylor, *Stuck in middle GEAR: South Africa's post-apartheid foreign relations*, Van der Westhuisen, *South Africa's emergence as a middle power*, Solomon, *South African foreign policy and middle power leadership*; Alden & Vieira, *The New Diplomacy of the South*; Bischoff, *External and domestic sources of foreign policy ambiguity*; Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, p. 200; Barber, *Mandela's World*

<sup>188</sup> Muller, *South Africa's Economic Diplomacy*, Spence in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*; Schoeman, *South Africa as an Emerging Middle Power*, in *State of the Nation 2003-04*.

<sup>189</sup> South Africa's GDP, for instance, is approximately twice the size of the combined GDPs of the other 13 other SADC member states. Alden and Soko, *South Africa's Economic Relations with Africa*, p. 13.

<sup>190</sup> For further details on South African trade relations see for instance; Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, Appendix Three; for a critical view of South Africa's role in and of the international economic system in general see for instance; Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*.

<sup>191</sup> Wæver & Buzan, *Regions and Powers*; Alden and Schoman; Alden & Soko; Kagwanja, *Power and Peace*, Daniel et al., *State of the Nation 2006*

itself in southern Africa, but also more generally on the continent.<sup>192</sup> However, as Vale and Maseko rightly point out, using a Coxian line of argument, effective leadership requires acceptance of this role by other states and the capacity to maintain and cultivate that role.<sup>193</sup> Habib and Selinyane argue from a realist point of view that South Africa needs to exercise more leadership on the continent, with coercive means if need be.<sup>194</sup> Alden and Le Pere suggest that

The contradictions between the self-imposed constraints of a 'benign' hegemon, for whom regional consensus was preferred over the naked exercise of power, and the aspirational politics of South Africa as a middle power with a selfproclaimed transformative destiny for the continent, continue to shape its diplomacy in Africa.<sup>195</sup>

Alden and Schoeman, for instance, states along the same lines that South Africa "is not in a hegemonic position as far as Zimbabwe is concerned", a sentiment echoed by several authors.<sup>196</sup> South Africa has experienced problems in achieving acceptance of its leadership role, among other things because of the weak and fragile nature of the states in the region. However, according to Sidiropoulos and Hughes, South Africa is slowly transforming its regional and continental role and creating an ever more dominant role for itself on the continent, changing, together with other states, the "rules of the game" in inter-state relations on the continent and norms at the regional and continental, and even international levels.<sup>197</sup> South Africa's foreign policy must therefore also be analysed with its long-term objectives in mind. Muller, in support of this, argues:

The South African government argues very strongly that it is assuming a leadership role in order to create, with its southern allies, a new global dispensation that will favour South Africa, Africa and the developing world (the south) as a whole.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Spence, 'Point Man' on Zimbabwe, p. 193-194

<sup>193</sup> Vale & Maseko, South Africa and the Renaissance, p. 283

<sup>194</sup> Habib & Selinyane, Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004, This view is supported by Sidiropoulos & Hughes, in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004

<sup>195</sup> Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy, p. 54

<sup>196</sup> Schoeman & Alden, The hegemon that wasn't, p. 17, See for instance Nathan, Consistencies and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy; Spence, 'Point Man' on Zimbabwe

<sup>197</sup> Interview with Short and Castleman, SA DFA, September 2004, See also Sidiropoulos & Hughes, in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004, p. 65

<sup>198</sup> Muller, South Africa's Economic Diplomacy, p. 23

This underscores Bischoff's claim that the South African government is following a policy of exceptionalism, which makes its claims regarding solidarity and partnership more difficult to believe. The apologetic attitude has been replaced by a much more confident approach to South Africa's role in Africa. The policy now seems to be one of what is good for South Africa being good for the continent as a whole.<sup>199</sup> The symbolic value of this type of statement is significant. South Africa sees itself as being in a different and more powerful position than its African partners. Its participation in the G3<sup>200</sup> is important and stresses this dominant South African role. Alden and Vieira argue that, since Thabo Mbeki's inauguration as president in 1999, South Africa has increasingly acted with confidence and sees itself as the natural leader of Africa.<sup>201</sup> However, the increasing international penetration, and especially China's increasing influence on the continent, could create problems for the South African project because China offers an alternative route of development.

South Africa's attempt to project its leadership has been characterized by an attempt to be the "gentle giant", as van der Westhuizen called the South African approach back in 1995.<sup>202</sup> However, according to Alden and Le Pere, the ambition to achieve continental leadership is being negatively affected by the crisis in Zimbabwe and the ANC government's handling of the situation,<sup>203</sup> while the increased Chinese presence on the continent is also putting this benign strategy under pressure. Exercising leadership requires acceptance and trust towards South Africa from especially its (sub-) regional partners. As Hammerstad, in a slightly different context on security cooperation in SADC, argues, "it is easier to destroy than build trust and

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<sup>199</sup> Much of the critique against the South African-dominated NePAD program also relates to this, because it initially is the states with significant natural resources and infrastructure, especially South Africa, that stand to gain from the program. Critique raised by Dr. Ian Taylor at the NePAD conference in Copenhagen in 2005.

<sup>200</sup> The India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) Forum was formally launched by Presidents Thabo Mbeki and Lula da Silva and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the margins of the 58th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 58) in New York in September 2003. For further reading see for instance Alden & Vieira, *The New Diplomacy of the South*. Ideologically, this forum seems to have been inspired by Kothari's vision of a bloc of third world states countering the dominance of the industrialised world in the international system; see Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p. 296.

<sup>201</sup> Alden & Vieira, *The New Diplomacy of the South*, p. 1083

<sup>202</sup> Van der Westhuizen, *Can the giant be gentle? Peacemaking as South African foreign policy*; Spence, 'Point Man' on Zimbabwe, p. 194

<sup>203</sup> Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*, p. 47 The ANC governments handling of the crisis in Zimbabwe is one of the most debated areas in the literature; for instance what does the South African government's relative inaction towards, and even tacit support for, the ZANU-PF government say about the South African regional leadership role? The majority of the literature sees this as a consequence of a South African inability to react, and therefore an indication of lacking capacities. However, this view is contested by scholars like Adebajo, who at a conference in Copenhagen in 2005 rather cynically argued that this should be seen as a deliberate ANC strategy, both in support of the ZANU-PF, but also because it served its interests in Africa. Mandrup, forthcoming, argues along the same lines that South Africa's strategy is not the result of lacking leadership capacity, but because Mugabe's failure serves South Africa's long-term ambitions in Africa, while a hard South African stand would have divided the continent.

mutuality between and within states".<sup>204</sup> Along the same lines, Nathan argues that the Pretoria government is very sensitive to being perceived as a bully in its dealings with the other African states.<sup>205</sup> As Spence argues, a critical South African stand towards Zimbabwe may dismantle the attempts made by South Africa to construct trust between regional players and the continent more generally, which could jeopardize its long-term strategy. The quiet diplomacy approach has the downside that it might frighten off potential private investors and western actors because the ambition of succeeding with the long-term strategy has so far not permitted any criticism of states like Zimbabwe.<sup>206</sup> The example that was most widely used to support this analysis was the negative African reaction to Mandela's unilateral criticism of Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha's regime in 1995.<sup>207</sup>

According to Landsberg, among others, as part of its so-called "peace-diplomacy" South Africa has nevertheless tried to play a constructive role as a 'peacemaker' in an attempt to end conflict and reconcile former enemies in Africa.<sup>208</sup> It has been actively involved in the peace processes as a mediator in the DRC, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, the Comoros, Sudan, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, East Timor, Lockerbie, Sri Lanka, and most recently Uganda.<sup>209</sup> The government has attempted to draw on and use its own domestic experiences from its negotiated transition to democracy and transferred them to these peace processes.<sup>210</sup> The role of the SANDF as a tool in propping up these diplomatic efforts and in implementing negotiated settlements has become increasingly important.<sup>211</sup> According to Landsberg, amongst others, another problem faced by the ANC leadership was that its negotiating strategy was sometimes considered too harsh by the belligerent parties because the result of the peace negotiations often included an element of power-sharing and political reform, something which often runs counter to the interest of the old elites. Mbeki has called his ambition an attempt to reach a 'Pax Africana', while critics, for instance the late dictator of the DRC, Laurent Kabila, in anger called

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<sup>204</sup> Hammerstad, Domestic threats, regional solutions?, p. 76

<sup>205</sup> Nathan, Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy, p. 365

<sup>206</sup> Spence, 'Point Man' on Zimbabwe, p. 194

<sup>207</sup> For further details about the Nigeria issue, see, for instance: Schoeman, SADC the two-headed monster; Schoeman, South Africa as an Emerging Middle Power, in State of the Nation 2003-04; Spence, p. 1994; Geldenhuys, The Special Relationship between South Africa and Zimbabwe; Landsberg, The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation, pp. 176f

<sup>208</sup> See for instance Landsberg, The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation

<sup>209</sup> See for instance Landsberg, The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation; Alden & Soko, South Africa's economic relations with Africa; Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy

<sup>210</sup> See for instance Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy; Habib & Selinyane, in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004; Landsberg, The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation.

<sup>211</sup> See for instance Landsberg, The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation; for further reading see also the following chapters.

a 'Pax Pretoriana'.<sup>212</sup> As Landsberg argues, Kabila did not have any real intention of initiating political reforms in the DRC, and he quickly found allies among like-minded states within SADC and distanced himself from South Africa.<sup>213</sup> He thereby helped undermine South African reformist ambitions in SADC and played his hand in support primarily of Zimbabwe in the power struggle that has been taking place within SADC. According to Landsberg and others, Kabila was also furious with the South African government because it did not condemn the joint Rwandan–Ugandan invasion in support of the rebel movement, Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD). This move was seen as an indication of South Africa's support for the anti-Kabila forces, which the South African government denied.<sup>214</sup> Mills argues that the Pretoria government has been aware of this problem and cites Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad for recognizing these pressing dilemmas faced by the ANC when he stated at a Department of Foreign Affairs workshop at Randburg in 1996:

We start from the premise that South Africa is committed to human rights. The problem we face in this regard is the issue of possibilities and limitations on South Africa in the real world. How do we get human rights enforced and implemented in the international environment? There must be a possible [sic] contradiction between South-South co-operation and the values which we may want to protect. There has to be interaction between theory and practice.<sup>215</sup>

One of the areas in which this dilemma has been most visible is in the academic debate over SADC cooperation and integration, and, relevant for the topic of this dissertation, cooperation on security in particular. The very notion that SADC is a community must, according to Nathan, be questioned.<sup>216</sup> The SADC region has never been characterised by close social relations and contacts between its member states. To be a community, there needs to be a common sense of belonging, that is, common values, goals, objectives etc.<sup>217</sup> SADC co-operation is still understood as an association, with disagreements still being solved by the use of force or by threats,

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<sup>212</sup> Landsberg also uses this term; see *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, pp. 159ff.

<sup>213</sup> Landsberg, in Clark, *The African stakes of the Congo War*, p. 173.

<sup>214</sup> Landsberg, in Clark, *The African stakes of the Congo War*, pp. 174-175; Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*, p. 44

<sup>215</sup> Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Aziz Pahad. September 1996. Quoted in Mills, *Leaning all over the place?* p. 1.

<sup>216</sup> Nathan, *Domestic instability and Security Communities*; See also Nathan, *The Absence of Common Values and Failure of Common Security in Southern Africa, 1992-2003*

<sup>217</sup> This is not a rejection of the existence of ideas and values such as pan-Africanism and Ubuntu cutting across boundaries. An example of the pan-African sentiment can be found in the Burundi case in Chapter 7. However, as rightly pointed out by Lodge, these principles often do not represent more than mere political rhetoric, used to sell another political message and objective. The use of the term 'renaissance' may be another example of this. See Lodge, *Politics in South Africa*.

where, according to Vale, co-operation is directed by formal agreements, as exemplified by the MDP, and where the individual members prioritise national interests over collective ones.<sup>218</sup> SADC is, according to Vale, not a community but merely a Westphalian system, structured around “South Africa - the first in a community of unequals”.<sup>219</sup> He also argues that

The failure to recognize that the SADC was less than it pretended to be eventually corroded the media hype and propaganda that were frantically being used to build its image – and South Africa’s averred pivotal role in it.<sup>220</sup>

Swatuk supports this claim:

The region’s state-makers interact with each other on the basis of realist frameworks. They clearly divide national and regional concerns into ‘high’ and ‘low’ politics. High politics continues to be the province of military power, diplomacy and statecraft.<sup>221</sup>

As Laurie Nathan rightly points out, Deutsch’s idea about security communities has never been confined to the governmental level. Nathan argues again, using Deutsch, that “the sense of community encompasses a “we feeling”, generally being characterized by mutual sympathy, consideration, loyalties, trust and responsiveness in decision-making,<sup>222</sup> a trust that, according to Vale and Swatuk, cannot be found in the SADC.<sup>223</sup> Nathan goes further and argues that domestic instability might be an obstacle for the creation of these communities because it leaves states and individuals insecure and makes the creation of a security community impossible. His basic argument in the article is that SADC cannot be defined as an emerging security community because of the domestic instability that characterizes a number of its member states. Nathan attempts to argue that a security community cannot simply be understood as the absence of war, nor even of the likelihood of war between states, but must also be understood as instability within states.<sup>224</sup> Nathan furthermore argues that “it defies common sense” to claim, as several authors have done, that SADC is an emerging security community when several states are marred by civil

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<sup>218</sup> Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*, p. 121.

<sup>219</sup> Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*, p. 123

<sup>220</sup> Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*, p. 122

<sup>221</sup> Swatuk, *Intellectual Coherence, Permanent Emergencies*, p. 8

<sup>222</sup> Nathan, *Domestic Instability and Security Communities*, p. 276

<sup>223</sup> Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*, p. 121ff; Swatuk, *Intellectual Coherence, Permanent Emergencies*, p. 8

<sup>224</sup> Nathan, *Domestic Instability and Security Communities*, p. 277



strife and/or threatened by intrastate conflict. Nathan does not accept the distinction made by Söderbaum between the intergovernmental level and relations on other levels.<sup>225</sup> For Nathan, security communities not only include states, but also “individuals, citizens, groups and populations”.<sup>226</sup> In opposition to this, Hammerstad argues that it is exactly because of developments in recent years, with the end of apartheid and of the wars in Angola, Mozambique and partly the DR Congo, combined with attempts to coordinate their relations and interactions, that it makes sense to talk about a nascent security community.<sup>227</sup>

A security community is not only based on the absence of violence, but also on the expectation of the continued absence of violence and peaceful change. Intrastate conflicts and unrest will continue to destabilize the region, and thus the potential of a security community to exist. Furthermore, domestic conflicts are often hard to predict and control, especially by often weak African states, reducing the ability to create trust between states concerning continued peaceful development and change.<sup>228</sup> Another academic debate that has emerged in South Africa, related to this debate, and especially as a criticism of the government’s strategy in the region, is the question of what constitutes “security”. The ANC government has been criticized by a number of critical scholars for not prioritizing the soft security issues of the people or even the individual.<sup>229</sup> According to these critics, the focus so far has remained on the narrow definition of security, that is, on issues dominated by military considerations and concerns over national security. This critique is directed against the government’s claim to be adhering to a broad-based human security focus.<sup>230</sup> However, one question raised by this critical school is, of course whether, as post-structuralists like Ole Wæver claim, it is possible to “securitize” the individual.<sup>231</sup> The Copenhagen school argues that it is issues that are securitized, rather than individuals, e.g. it is poverty, not the individual poor, that is securitized. This does not alter the fact that the critique of the critical scholars concerns what is perceived as lacking prioritization by the ANC government concerning the battle against poverty in general and the needs of the poor in South Africa. The priority seems to be regime

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<sup>225</sup> For further reading see Söderbaum, *The Political Economy of Regionalism – The Case of Southern Africa*

<sup>226</sup> Nathan, *Domestic Instability and Security Communities*, p. 279

<sup>227</sup> Hammerstad, *Domestic threats, regional solutions?*, p. 77

<sup>228</sup> Nathan, *Domestic Instability and Security Communities*, p. 286

<sup>229</sup> See for instance: Williams, *South African foreign policy*, p. 80, Vale, *Security in Southern Africa*;

<sup>230</sup> See Vale, *Security in Southern Africa*; Vale and Taylor, *South Africa’s Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*.

<sup>231</sup> For further reading see for instance Wæver et al., *Framework for Security*; Mcsweeney, *Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School*

security.<sup>232</sup> Vale argues that, in colonial states in southern Africa, the crucial issue was not the security of the general population in the territories, but the protection of the in-migrated minority against the native majority. Since independence this has continued in other and different forms, but the basic principle continues to be the same, namely that security is concerned with protecting some sections of these states' societies against other sections, i.e. the elites protect each other.<sup>233</sup>

Critical scholars like Williams and Vale have argued that the South African government has had to focus on the one issue that concerns most South Africans, which is poverty and security. It has become a "norm entrepreneur", projecting leadership and taking responsibility on the international level.<sup>234</sup> In 2004 Mandela confirmed this and argued that, in moving into the second decade of democracy, it was important that the debate concerning the restructuring of the global order was kept alive. In relation to this it is important:

that as a leader of developing world South Africa is at the forefront of innovative ideas and proposals in this regard.<sup>235</sup>

Alden and Le Pere continue this point by stating that the inclusion of social charters in agreements and protocols are part of the ambitious South African grand design project.<sup>236</sup> Former President Mandela, in the preface to a recent book on South African foreign policy, defended the country's leadership and strategy and argued that

South Africa has not shirked from contentious or complex issues.... Our involvement in breaking the Libyan Lockerbie impasse, our early engagement in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and that of Burundi are illustrations of this. The resurgence of Africa, a key element in South Africa's vision for the continent, cannot happen without addressing the internecine conflicts that have plagued Africa's peoples. Our ability to overcome this legacy has made it imperative for us to become and remain engaged in resolving other wars and chronic instabilities.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> See for instance Vales book, Security and Politics in South Africa.

<sup>233</sup> Vale, Security and Politics in South Africa, p. 36.

<sup>234</sup> Van der Westhuizen, Beyond Mandelamania, p. 13, Alden & Soko, South Africa's Economic Relations with Africa, p. 384, Muller, South Africa's Economic Diplomacy, p. 5

<sup>235</sup> Foreword by Nelson Mandela in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004

<sup>236</sup> Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid policy, p. 58

<sup>237</sup> Foreword by Nelson Mandela in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004

## **2.5: Domestic vs. African Development**

Whereas, according to Anthony van Nieuwkerk, reality and a type of moral internationalism distinguished foreign policy during the Mandela administration, the Mbeki government chose to make dealing with South African domestic concerns a priority instead of a focus on international niceties.<sup>238</sup> Along the same lines, Alden and Soko argue that “at the heart of South Africa’s post-1994 external trade policy” has been an attempt to reconfigure and modernise its industry through the promotion of increased cross-border trade and investment.<sup>239</sup> Citing Mandela, they argue that the government believes it cannot avoid its African destiny. Foreign Minister Zuma argued along the same lines that:

Over the past the years, our involvement in world affairs has been premised on the view that the strength of our nation depends on the strength of the entire continent.<sup>240</sup>

In this statement, Foreign Minister Zuma underlined that the ANC government sees South Africa’s destiny as being closely intertwined with that of the African continent as a whole, i.e. the strength of the nation equals that of the continent. This also means that South Africa’s foreign policy is closely interlinked with domestic policies and prioritizations. Williams, citing former Director General of the DFA Jackie Selebi, argues that foreign policy is basically nothing more than the pursuit of domestic policies and priorities internationally, which places severe constraints on the government’s ability to act and form policies internationally.<sup>241</sup> Former President Mandela also stressed this when, in 2004, in the foreword to a book on post-apartheid South African foreign policy, he stated:

Importantly for Africa, South Africa’s ability to meet its domestic socio-economic and political challenges will be crucial in determining the role that it can play in the affairs of the continent as a whole.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Nieuwkerk et al., in *Global Dialog*, Vol. 4.3, p. 3.

<sup>239</sup> Alden & Soko, *South Africa’s economic relations with Africa*, p. 370

<sup>240</sup> Budget speech by Foreign Minister Zuma in parliament 3 June 2004

<sup>241</sup> Williams, *South African foreign policy*, p. 76

<sup>242</sup> Foreword by former president Nelson Mandela in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa’s Foreign Policy 1994-2004*

This is, of course, a very important point because foreign policy is then reduced to a means of reaching domestic goals. It is the domestic concerns that dictate the priorities in the foreign policy, for instance the struggle against poverty and underdevelopment by large numbers of primarily black South Africans. This is also an important statement because it illustrates that a minimum of resources must be used to obtain maximum influence internationally, a perhaps self-evident point, but important nonetheless. However, this statement can also be understood more narrowly as an attempt to stress that, at the end of the day, foreign policy serves the national interests of the state. Furthermore, as Vale and Maseko show, Mbeki's launch of the renaissance idea falls within the old South African tradition of seeing itself as the locomotive in the modernization and development of the continent.<sup>243</sup> According to Lodge, the notion of an African renaissance must be understood as reflecting both the market-driven ambition of attaching Africa to the international system and the aim of breaking the circle of marginalisation, hence, for instance, Mbeki's consistent reference to globalisation as not a threat to Africa but a challenge. The other aspect of the renaissance idea is the focus on the notion of 'Ubuntu', which aspires to rediscover the cultural values of the 'African Bantu nation'.<sup>244</sup>

According to Bischoff, from its inauguration in 1994, South Africa's ANC government was caught between domestic and international expectations, balancing domestic needs and expectations with those of international financial institutions and the donor community.<sup>245</sup> The conclusion, according to Williams, was that South Africa was caught between wanting to be a force for good, a responsible and especially respected world citizen seeking multilateral solutions, and political realities on the African continent.<sup>246</sup> The domestic politico-economic climate made it difficult for the government to grant concessions in regional co-operation because it needed to use its full economic potential to remedy past injustices at home and create economic growth. The members of the ANC alliance pressured the government into protecting national economic interests from regional and international competition, thereby creating doubt about South Africa's benign ambitions. This coercive act has caused much frustration in the other SADC countries because they have only been allowed limited access to the relatively lucrative South African market.<sup>247</sup> According to Alden

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<sup>243</sup> Vale & Maseko, *South Africa and the Renaissance*, p. 275-76; Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*, p. 13

<sup>244</sup> For further reading on the South African approach to Ubuntu and renaissance see for instance Lodge, *Politics in South Africa*.

<sup>245</sup> Bischoff, *External and domestic sources of foreign policy ambiguity*, p. 189-190

<sup>246</sup> Williams, *South African Foreign Policy: getting critical?*

<sup>247</sup> See for instance Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*

and Soko, the Pretoria government's strategy focused on a strict liberal economic policy aimed at creating economic growth and reducing inflation levels in South Africa. Private businesses have invested heavily on the continent, and South Africa's exports to the rest of the continent have grown significantly. South African businesses took advantage of their relatively competitive position compared to their African competitors.<sup>248</sup> Williams argues that, at the end of the day, DFA reduced ANC policy to two topics: wealth creation and security.<sup>249</sup> In 2003 Alden and Le Pere suggested, in relation to this, that

....South Africa could not remain 'an island of prosperity in a sea of poverty'....only through concerted regional development would some of the region's deep-seated problems (..) be addressed.<sup>250</sup>

Hentz, furthermore, argues that one of the main reasons for what he terms South Africa's functional cooperative strategy has to be found in the interdependent relationship that exist between it and the region. South Africa needs the region as a market for its products and as a future source of water and energy.<sup>251</sup> The ANC government has used its foreign policy to further its attempts to finance its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)<sup>252</sup> and Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)<sup>253</sup> programmes, thereby creating domestic growth and development in South Africa.<sup>254</sup> However, the government has been severely criticized for strict, some would even argue conservative financial policies focusing on the balance of payments, inflation and currency stability, and therefore for not doing enough in its attempt to create jobs and growth in South Africa for the poor majority of the population.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Alden and Soko, South Africa's Economic Relations with Africa, p. 4.

<sup>249</sup> Williams, South African Foreign Policy: getting critical?; Nieuwkerk, Implications for South Africa's Foreign Policy Beyond the Lesotho Crisis; Nieuwkerk, South Africa's national Interest

<sup>250</sup> Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy, p. 13

<sup>251</sup> Hentz, South Africa and the political economy of regional cooperation in Southern Africa, p. 42; see also Nelson Mandela in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004

<sup>252</sup> Socio-economic framework introduced by the ANC government in 1994 to address the immense problems caused by apartheid including poverty and lacking social services.

<sup>253</sup> Neo-liberal economic plan launched in 1996 to secure growth rates of 6 % pr. year, attracting foreign direct investments, and a targeted goal of 400.000 jobs created pr. year from 1996 - 2000

<sup>254</sup> See for instance Williams, South African foreign policy, p. 76-77

<sup>255</sup> See for instance, Terreblance, The history of inequality; Bond, Against Global Apartheid; Lodge, Politics in South Africa. Various statements by COSATU and SACP; The Pan African Congress (PAC) call's the ANC financial policies for "cut-trought capitalism", PAC comment on the budget speech 2007; Marais, South Africa: Limits of Change

The discussions mentioned above did relate to a large extent to the question concerning continuity or change between the pre- and post-1994 governments.<sup>256</sup> Williams argues that the South African government's foreign policy still, not surprisingly, "displays important elements of continuity with the apartheid era".<sup>257</sup>

The South African experience has shown that the nature of a state and its policies does not necessarily change entirely because the colour of the government changes. This, among other things, is because South Africa is a signatory to many international treaties and bilateral agreements that limit the space for new policies. The foreign policy of the new government will always be based on elements of the old policies, combined with, for instance, the normative ambitions of the new government.

Furthermore, Evans points out that, in the South African case, the ANC's victory was based on a negotiated settlement, which limited the political manoeuvrability of the government. For instance, the new foreign policy strategy, the New Diplomacy, launched by the DFA and Neil van Heerden at the beginning of the 1990s, did become the foundation for what developed into the ANC's foreign policy. Apart from its focus on the non-coercive aspects of its relations with other states, the idea of South Africa as a regional great power, with special rights and obligations in the region, was kept intact. However, the means used to obtain and safeguard that position had changed.<sup>258</sup>

In 2004 the South African scholar Anthoni van Nieuwkerk argued that there was a need to scrutinise the question of national interest in relation to South African foreign policy.<sup>259</sup> Basing himself on Krasner's ideas about national interest, he stressed that national interest deals with long-term and persistent objectives that tend to continue to be considered of high priority.<sup>260</sup> One of the problems related to this, which have characterized foreign policy formation in South Africa and its foreign policy in general, is that this has not been debated much in South African society,<sup>261</sup> even though the involvement of civil society in the process of foreign policy formation was a stated

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<sup>256</sup> Evans, *South Africa in Remission*, p. 249, Mandrup Jørgensen, *Carry a Stick, but use it Gently*

<sup>257</sup> Williams, *South African foreign policy*, p. 76

<sup>258</sup> Evans, *South Africa in remission*, p. 256

<sup>259</sup> Nieuwkerk is not alone in dealing with that topic, which for instance Spence, Habib, and Sidiropoulos all touches upon.

<sup>260</sup> Nieuwkerk, *South Africa's national interest*, p. 1; See also Le Pere & Nieuwkerk in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*.

<sup>261</sup> Le Pere and Vickers, *Civil Society and foreign policy*, in Nel et al, *Democratizing foreign policy*, p. 75; see also Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy*, p. 18-19

goal of the ANC. Vale and Taylor argue that, while the ANC government has laid out most of its domestic policies, its foreign policy is up for debate and a matter for the people.<sup>262</sup> In fact, as some of the cases in this dissertation show, debate has been visible in parliament, and criticism has been raised against at least some elements of the government's foreign policy strategy.<sup>263</sup> However, van Nieuwkerk argues that the debate between the ANC government and the political opposition in the South African context has been reduced to a "zero-sum game" in which the opposition criticizes the government for more or less all its foreign policy initiatives as not serving South Africa's national interests.<sup>264</sup> Van Nieuwkerk quotes Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad for stating that "South Africa's foreign policy is premised upon its national interests..."<sup>265</sup> which are often identical with its domestic political concerns and considerations, as shown above. This became evident in 1999, for instance, when South Africa's largest trade union (COSATU), a member of the ANC alliance, argued in a comment to the proposed SADC Free Trade Agreement that it would have serious negative implications for several industrial sectors.<sup>266</sup> As Hentz argues, free trade could be seen as a direct threat to South Africa's labour-intensive productive sectors and therefore a direct threat to the ANC and its alliance with COSATU.<sup>267</sup> This can explain some of the government's initial reluctance to implement the agreement. Schoeman argues that a related issue supporting this view concerns SADC integration. So far the organisation, with large South African influence, seems to have focused more on integration in breadth as opposed to integration in depth. This is basically because breadth provides increased market access, while depth requires transfers of sovereignty and national control to the supra-state body.<sup>268</sup>

In contrast to this, the country's contribution to and participation in international PSOs do not come high on the foreign policy agenda, where issues such as trade and economic relations with its regional partners, the arms package, the Zimbabwe crisis and the 2010 Soccer World Cup rank as more important for South Africa's national interests.<sup>269</sup> Furthermore, according to Kent and Malan there has been a tendency to

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<sup>262</sup> Vale & Taylor, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy Five Years On*

<sup>263</sup> See Chapters 6-8

<sup>264</sup> Nieuwkerk, *South Africa's national interest*, p. 2

<sup>265</sup> Nieuwkerk, *South Africa's national interest*, p. 2

<sup>266</sup> Hentz, *South Africa and the political economy of regional cooperation in Southern Africa*, , p. 36 and Alden and Soko, *South Africa's economic relations with Africa*, p. 378-379

<sup>267</sup> Hentz, *South Africa and the political economy of regional cooperation in Southern Africa*, , p. 36

<sup>268</sup> Schoeman, *SADC: the two-headed monster*.

<sup>269</sup> Nieuwkerk, *South Africa's national interest*, p. 2; see also Mandrup, in Buur et al, *The Security-Development Nexus*

bypass parliament concerning matters related to PSO, thus making it difficult for it to exercise its oversight functions.<sup>270</sup>

This chapter has so far shown that the academic debate is broadly in agreement with the idea that South Africa is some kind of regional power, and that it has changed its role from being a pariah to some kind of relatively benign power, though variations exist on the interpretation of this role. The question that remains to be answered is the role played by the SANDF in this transformation.

## ***2.6: The Gap in the Literature: The Armed Forces Capacity as a Foreign Policy Tool***

The existing academic debate on the SANDF's role in South Africa's foreign policy can be divided into two main camps. The first looks at the SANDF from a foreign policy angle, as one element in the country's overall foreign policy. The second camp focuses on broad issues related to the SANDF and its tasks more generally, but only has a limited focus on the consequences of the increased expectations towards the SANDF's contribution in support of the government's diplomatic drive on the continent. This dissertation intends to interlink the two debates and fill the gap, i.e., as mentioned in the preface, to demonstrate the relatively unnoticed but crucial role played by the SANDF in the transition from "pariah" to "peacemaker", and to investigate the SANDF's capacity to fulfil the international tasks given to it by the government.

### **2.6.1: The foreign policy side**

Since 1994 the government has replaced the militarist security project of the apartheid regime with a holistic approach to security. The armed forces are no longer the favoured policy instrument and are no longer involved in state decision-making. The primary threats to security are not military and cannot be dealt with by military means.<sup>271</sup>

The end of apartheid, and in particular the end of the wars in Angola and Mozambique, meant that no direct conventional military threat confronted South

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<sup>270</sup> Kent and Malan, *Decisions, Decisions*, South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, p. 8

<sup>271</sup> Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, p. 364



Africa.<sup>272</sup> In the first years after the transition, there was therefore a debate in South African society concerning the future role of the armed forces in the country.<sup>273</sup> However, according to Jack Spence, South Africa attempted to “punch above its weight”<sup>274</sup> on the international arena by using its newly acquired reputation, which nonetheless required “both a symbolic and practical manifestation of military capability”.<sup>275</sup>

As Evans argues, the ANC’s “New Diplomacy” strategy did stress the lack of utility of military power when confronted with the new security situation.<sup>276</sup> The SADF’s inability to obtain its military objective at Cuito Cuanavale in 1988 had shown that there are limits to the use of military coercion, and that the SADF’s military capacity was not limitless. However, more importantly the Cuito Cuanavale incident tipped the balance between the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence in favour of the former. This also became the first indication of the MOD’s future role, as one tool amongst many in the foreign policy of the state.<sup>277</sup> Landsberg states that:

Many western powers harboured the view that South Africa could play the role of “fireman” in southern and Central Africa, hoping that in the process it would develop an appetite for peacekeeping and peaceenforcement. Pretoria rose to the occasion and played the role of power broker in many conflict situations.<sup>278</sup>

The primary focus was first on the government’s attempt to shape a new international role and realign South Africa’s foreign policy, and to transform the civil service in general. Several authors have made attempts to look upon the SANDF’s role in South Africa’s foreign policy mostly as part of a wider analysis of the country’s international relations. Until 1998 it was primarily the SANDF’s missing role that was concentrated on.<sup>279</sup> The main issues were the attempt to reduce defence costs dramatically, and to integrate the seven different statutory and non-statutory armies into one coherent and representative body.<sup>280</sup> This was, as Williams rightly states, an

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<sup>272</sup> See for instance Williams, William in Williams et al eds., *Ourselves to Know; Hammerstad, Domestic threats, regional solutions?*, p. 77

<sup>273</sup> Spence in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa’s Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 37

<sup>274</sup> Formulation also used by Mills back in 1997, See Mills, *Leaning all over the Place?*, in Solomon, *Fairy Godmother, Hegemon or Partner*,

<sup>275</sup> Spence in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa’s Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 38

<sup>276</sup> Evans, *South Africa in remission*, p. 256

<sup>277</sup> Evans, *South Africa in remission*, p. 256

<sup>278</sup> Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, p. 216

<sup>279</sup> See for instance Van der Westhuizen, *South Africa’s Emergences as a Middle Power*; Mills, *Leaning all over the Place?*, in Solomon, *Fairy Godmother, Hegemon or Partner*,

<sup>280</sup> The seven armies were the SADF, the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA), *Mkhonto we Sizwe* (MK) and the four homeland (Bantustan) armies.

unprecedented exercise that required a lot of attention. As O'Brien argued in 1996, a successful integration process was a precondition for SANDF to undertake major international deployments, which he estimated to arise in 1999.<sup>281</sup> A focus on the creation of capacity for PSOs was not on the table because the focus had simply been placed elsewhere.<sup>282</sup> What triggered the government to start a focus on the SANDF's PSO capacity, according to Williams, was

1. A prompt by a visit by then US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, concerning the US supported African Crisis Response Initiative/Force (ACRI);
2. The war in the DR Congo and the Great Lake region in general and finally;
3. The South African led intervention into Lesotho in 1998.<sup>283</sup>

This led to the production of White and Green Papers on the SANDF's future international involvement. It was, according to Williams, the potentially negative political ramifications of the American initiative for African unity that forced the South African government to consider its own PSO policies.<sup>284</sup> Vale and Masoko argue that another element in the creation of South Africa's new policy on international participation was to be found in "right wing" think tanks that used the focus on PSOs to mobilize support for the domestic arms industry.<sup>285</sup> A fourth element that led to an increased focus on PSO operations was the 2000 Arusha agreement brokered by Mandela, which led to the deployment of 700 South African soldiers to Burundi. This was a political decision which exerted severe pressure on the capacity of the SANDF.<sup>286</sup> According to Malan and Kent, the seminars on lessons learned that followed the Lesotho intervention had already pointed out that, apart from a well-defined mandate, involvement in PSO required availability of necessary means and resources.<sup>287</sup> However, the deployment of troops to Burundi and to the DRC quickly resulted in capacity problems within the SANDF.<sup>288</sup>

William's argued that the Americans, together with a number of other dominant players in the North, saw South Africa as central player in their project because it was expected to function as the lead nation in future joint African missions and to

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<sup>281</sup> O'Brien, *Regional Security in Southern Africa*, p. 71

<sup>282</sup> Williams, R, *Challenges for South and Southern Africa*, p. 1

<sup>283</sup> Williams, R, *Challenges for South and Southern Africa*, p. 1

<sup>284</sup> Williams, R, *Challenges for South and Southern Africa*, p. 3

<sup>285</sup> Vale & Maseko, *South Africa and the Renaissance*, p. 277

<sup>286</sup> Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid policy*, p. 52-53

<sup>287</sup> Kent & Malan, *Decisions, Decisions: South Africa's foray into regional peace operations*, p. 1

<sup>288</sup> Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, p. 168

provide the specialized functions required for the missions.<sup>289</sup> According to Williams the government also came under pressure from inside Africa when, in 1996, the Tanzanian president asked South Africa to take the lead in a military intervention into the DRC.<sup>290</sup> This shows that South Africa found itself under pressure from several angles to make substantial contributions with military means to African peace missions. From the inauguration of Mbeki as president in 1999, participation in PSOs in Africa was stated to be a government priority. The question is, of course, as Nieuwkerk has previously argued, to what extent this is the case.<sup>291</sup>

Williams points out that the defence White Paper, and in particular the 1998 Defence Review, focused on national security and traditional primary military objectives. In his view, after the military intervention in Lesotho in 1998 the debate concerning the role of the SANDF resurfaced again, and the government was criticized for using a blunt instrument, the military, in its attempt to solve what was essentially a political conflict, by acting in a coercive, hegemonic manner.<sup>292</sup> After the Lesotho intervention in 1998, the academic debate focused on whether the mission was a military and political success, and whether this intervention was in reality an act of coercive hegemony and a return to apartheid-style relations with the rest of the region.<sup>293</sup> Within political academic circles, there was general agreement that the operation had been a failure because of the way it had been conducted and the negative reaction that followed.<sup>294</sup> Nathan states that "The operation was riddled with strategic and tactical errors and was widely viewed as a military and political disaster".<sup>295</sup> According to this line of argument, it was seen as damaging to South Africa's new benign international image because of what Kagwanja calls its apartheid-style military adventurism.<sup>296</sup> He concludes that the Lesotho invasion "revealed the limitations of South Africa's unilateral use of force in advancing democracy".<sup>297</sup> From a military point of view, conversely, it was argued that the operation was a military success, since it obtained its objective.<sup>298</sup> However, according to Kent and Malan, the SANDF admitted that the psychological and media war had been lost.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Williams, R, Challenges for South and Southern Africa, p. 4

<sup>290</sup> Williams, R, Challenges for South and Southern Africa, p. 5

<sup>291</sup> See for instance Muller, South Africa' Economic Diplomacy, p. 3-4 citing Mbeki's State of the Nation address from 2000, See also Chapters 4 and 6-8

<sup>292</sup> Williams, South African foreign policy, p. 78

<sup>293</sup> See for instance Daniel et al, The South African's has arrived, in State of the Nation, 2003-04; Landsberg, The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation; Barber, Mandela's World; Makoa, Foreign Military intervention in Lesotho,

<sup>294</sup> Nieuwkerk, Implications for South Africa's foreign policy beyond the Lesotho crisis; Coning, Lesotho

Intervention: Implications for SADC

<sup>295</sup> Nathan, Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy, p. 370

<sup>296</sup> Kagwanja, Power and Peace, p. 164;

<sup>297</sup> Kagwanja, Power and Peace, p. 164

<sup>298</sup> Kent & Malan, Decisions, Decisions: South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, p. 5; Interviews with

According to the criticism that resurfaced after the Lesotho operation, the South African field of security was still dominated by diplomats and soldiers, whereas it should be dominated schoolteachers and doctors, i.e. a broader human soft human security approach.<sup>300</sup> Furthermore, security cooperation at the regional level was still focused on the military level,<sup>301</sup> despite expressed ambitions of an increased focus on human security issues.<sup>302</sup> The members of SADC have, on several instances and in several treaties, stressed that the political leadership sees SADC as a regional organization. To what extent it is a community or not,<sup>303</sup> and whether it is a regional security complex in the Buzan/Wæverian understanding of the word, is another story.<sup>304</sup> What is important in the context of this dissertation is that, according to the existing literature, South Africa is playing an instrumental role in shaping and forming the attempts to produce regional and continental integration, including cooperation on security. This is already having a tremendous impact on the expectations towards the SANDF and its involvement in South Africa's wider international relations.<sup>305</sup>

However, as Nathan points out, "the Pretoria government is convinced that pacific forms of conflict resolution are the most viable methods for achieving durable peace and stability"<sup>306</sup>. This is partly the result of South Africa's relative success in negotiating settlements and using its own relatively peaceful political transition. The coercive tool is considered to be of limited applicability, and the ANC government prefers to use it in UN-approved PSO operations only.<sup>307</sup>

Since 1998, the academic debate dealing with the SANDF's foreign policy role has changed from asking whether it should play a role in foreign policy to whether it has

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SANDF Col. Serfontein in January 2000 and Col. (Rtd) Henri Boshoff at ISS in December 2003.; Neethling, Conditions for successful entry and exit; Coning, , Lesotho Intervention: Implications for SADC

<sup>299</sup> Kent & Malan, Decisions, Decisions: South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, p. 5

<sup>300</sup> Williams, South African foreign policy, p. 78

<sup>301</sup> Hammerstad, Domestic threats, regional solutions?, p. 81

<sup>302</sup> For further reading on dilemmas and problems concerning security cooperation in SADC and AU see for instance Nathan, Domestic Instability and Security Communities; Hammerstad, Domestic threats, regional solutions? Vale, Security and Politics in South Africa; Cilliers, Building security in Southern Africa, An update on the evolving architecture; Buzan and Wæver, Regions and Powers; Solomon eds., Towards a Common Defence And Security Policy in the Southern African Development Community; Nathan, Organ Failure: A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security in Laakso eds., Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa; Europe, SADC and ECOWAS; Söderbaum, & Taylor Eds., Regionalism and Uneven Development in Southern Africa

<sup>303</sup> Nathan, Domestic Instability and Security Communities

<sup>304</sup> Hammerstad, Domestic threats, regional solutions?

<sup>305</sup> Neethling, in Sidiropoulos eds., South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004

<sup>306</sup> Nathan, Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy, p. 364

<sup>307</sup> Nathan, Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy, p. 364-365; Interview in the RSA DFA with Short and Castleman September 2003. They argued that the military tool was something that preferred not to use "it would rather send in the NePAD Secretariat.

the capacity to undertake such a task. The debate is focused on its role in South Africa's new "peace diplomacy". For instance, Landsberg concluded, in his recent book *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, that

....South Africa has overstretched itself in African peacekeeping and peacemaking. This was done to boost South Africa's image as peacemaker.<sup>308</sup>

Alden and Le Pere, arguing along similar lines, concluded in their 2003 study of South African foreign policy that South Africa's ambitious foreign policies are in need of adjustment because of constraints that hinder its ability to reach these ambitious goals, including a lack of capacity in the SANDF and the DOD.<sup>309</sup> In opposition to this, in 2004 Jack Spence argued, in an analysis of whether South Africa is in fact an emerging power, that:

The country has a respectable military capability (though opinions vary about its effectiveness); and new capabilities have been purchased from abroad. There is, in addition, a local arms industry of substantial substance..... in order to be defined and regarded as an emerging power a military reputation is essential.<sup>310</sup>

Sidiropoulos and Hughes suggest that so far South Africa has had greater success in dealing with conflict by using a more interventionist strategy, including the SANDF, in for instance Burundi and the DRC, as opposed to the non-interference strategy used towards Zimbabwe.<sup>311</sup> Along the same lines, Habib and Selinyane conclude that, wherever South Africa has chosen to use its hegemonic potential in an interventionist manner, it has been able to bring stability to that country through political and sometimes military means.<sup>312</sup>

Nieuwkerk cites the minutes from the annual cabinet planning meeting in 2004, where the foreign policy objectives for the coming year were listed as:

1. Global governance – issues relating to the UN, trade, Millennium Development Goals, security, the Middle East, transborder crime:

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<sup>308</sup> Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, p. 227

<sup>309</sup> Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid policy*, p. 10

<sup>310</sup> Spence in Sidiropoulos eds, *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 44

<sup>311</sup> Sidiropoulos & Hughes, *Between Democratic Governance and Sovereignty*, p. 64, in Sidiropoulos eds., *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*

<sup>312</sup> Habib and Selinyane, in Sidiropoulos eds., *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004*, p. 59f

2. Consolidation of the African agenda – issues relating to **democracy and stability, conflict resolution** (highlighted by author), socio-economic development, and integration into global economy:
3. South-South cooperation; and
4. The strengthening of strategic bilateral relations.<sup>313</sup>

Nieuwkerk argues that

Concerning South Africa's pursuit of these objectives, the president expects the security sector to play a critical supportive and implementing role. Although members of the defence or intelligence agencies will vigorously defend their role in this quest, academics point to a gap between expectations and the potential to deliver.<sup>314</sup>

However, the common denominator for all these statements is that they were made without conducting a thorough investigation of the capacity of the SANDF to prop up this diplomatic drive, simply because that was not an objective of their studies. Conversely, as noted already in the preface, this study does intend to investigate this question.

## 2.6.2: The Academic Debate on Defence<sup>315</sup>

That South Africa has capacity problems within its defence force is nothing new. Neethling cites the former Chief of Joint Operations, Godfrey Ngwenya, who, back in 2003, warned against deploying more troops because this would overstretch the

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<sup>313</sup> Governments Program of Action, Peace and Security Cluster, [www.info.gov.za/issues/poa/irps.htm](http://www.info.gov.za/issues/poa/irps.htm), quoted in Nieuwkerk, South Africa's national interest, p. 3

<sup>314</sup> Nieuwkerk, South Africa's national interest, p. 3. See also works related to this topic, Shelton, South African National Defence Force and President Mbeki's Peace and Security Agenda: New roles and mission; Malan, Can They Do That?; Heinecken, Facing a Merciless Enemy; Le Roux, Defining defence requirements; Neethling, South Africa's Evolving Role in Peacekeeping; Westhuizen, Can The Giant Be Gentle?

<sup>315</sup> Related literature: Theo Neethling has written extensively on the issue of SANDF and recently published an article in The Defence Force and Peacekeeping in Sidiropoulos eds, South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004; Kagwanjas article, Power and Peace, deals also with the issue of foreign policy and defence; Le Roux deals with defence requirement in, Revisiting the South African Defence Review, while Kent & Malan in their Decisions, Decisions South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, working paper touches on the issue. The late R. Williams wrote extensively on defence issues, see Chapters 3 and 4 for further reading. Cawthra has written extensively on security sector reform in South Africa, see for instance Cawthra & Luckham eds., Governing Insecurity; Heinecken has written extensively on military issues for instance in her article, Regional Involvement; Alden & Le Pere, South Africa's Post-Apartheid policy, is a general overview of South African foreign policy, which also touches upon the role of the defence force; Shelton, South African National Defence Force and President Mbeki's Peace and Security Agenda; Lamhas written several papers on different issues relating to the SANDF, see for instance; Lamb, Fighting for the Future,

SANDF's capacity.<sup>316</sup> Neethling concludes in his article that, because of South Africa's role in Africa,

....the country has no choice but to accept participation in multinational peacekeeping as a foreign policy priority. ...the government believes that close political-military involvement in regional and continental matters should be pursued.<sup>317</sup>

He furthermore argues that the military planners must prioritise capacity building for peacekeeping because the current demand will continue and grow in the future.<sup>318</sup>

According to Le Roux, some of the reasons for these problems stem from a lack of political inputs during the defence review process, especially in developing a clear foreign policy, which could be used as guidance in shaping the defence policy.<sup>319</sup>

Kent and Malan argue that the experience of the SANDF's initial involvement in Burundi showed that South Africa had been singled out to function as the lead nation in the mission, i.e. provide the framework for the operation. According to them, South Africa thereby set itself up to take full credit for the success or failure of the mission.<sup>320</sup>

In an article on the capacity of the SANDF, two former high-ranking officers in the SANDF, Le Roux and Boshoff, conclude, along the same lines, that in its present state it does not have the capacity to support South Africa's international ambitions, i.e. it cannot sustain its present (2005) deployment level of 3000 personnel in international missions.<sup>321</sup> They argue that, to be able to change this situation, it must

1. Remedy the inconsistency that exist between defence policy and budget
2. The DOD must improve its institutional efficiency
3. The DOD must recreate its part-time capacity
4. The DOD must remedy the negative consequences in force of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> Neethling, in Sidiropoulos eds., South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004, p. 145

<sup>317</sup> Neethling, in Sidiropoulos eds., South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004, p. 146

<sup>318</sup> Neethling, in Sidiropoulos eds., South Africa's Foreign Policy 1994-2004, p. 147

<sup>319</sup> Le Roux in Williams et al eds., *Ourselves to Know* p. 165

<sup>320</sup> Kent and Malan, *Decisions, Decisions*, South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, p. 7

<sup>321</sup> Le Roux & Boshoff, *The State of the Military, The State of the Nation*, 2004-05

<sup>322</sup> Le Roux & Boshoff, *The State of the Military, The State of the Nation*, 2004-05, p. 199

In another article, Heinecken points out that, due to the widespread proliferation of HIV/AIDS in the SANDF, it will experience a capacity problem when, for medical reasons, it has to reconfigure its units before deploying.<sup>323</sup>

Lamb, in article from 2004 on the future of the defence force, argues that:

The South African Defence Force stands at a critical crossroads. Decisions taken and strategies implemented over the next twelve months will effectively determine whether the SANDF becomes a capable, balanced, representative, modern, affordable and technologically advanced military (as envisaged in the South African Defence White Paper, 1996); or an armed welfare organisation.<sup>324</sup>

He furthermore argues that large parts of the SANDF are medical unfit, that much of the equipment is obsolete or in a state of disrepair, and that most training programmes were dysfunctional.<sup>325</sup> In line with Le Roux and Boshoff he also suggests that the SANDF needs to implement the one-force model and focus on the development of the reserve force, which amongst other things would reduce costs.<sup>326</sup>

Garth Shelton has written several papers on the international role of the SANDF. Using the truism that armed forces need to adjust to changes in society, conditioned the increased focus on “soft security” and the non-existence of a conventional threat to South Africa, in a paper submitted to a defence hearing in Parliament in December 2004, he argued that the SANDF must redefine its role and its missions by expanding its intelligence capacity, promoting the new regional and continental security structure, i.e. primarily the African Stand-by Force; operationalizing the SADC defence pact, and promoting the AU’s security framework.<sup>327</sup> In the same paper, furthermore, he argues that the SANDF should prepare for increased peacekeeping and peace enforcement tasks, but only by using its existing technological inventory, not investing in new equipment, but above all improving the collateral use of the technology. At the same time, the SANDF should continue to prioritise its domestic tasks, i.e. primarily support to the police, while keeping the budget at 1.5 % of GDP.<sup>328</sup> Cock, on the same theme, argues that the SANDF’s expanded roles are

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<sup>323</sup> Heinecken, Facing a Merciless Enemy: HIV/AIDS and the South African Armed Forces, p. 292.

<sup>324</sup> Lamb, Fighting for the Future, p. 1

<sup>325</sup> Lamb, Fighting for the Future, p. 13

<sup>326</sup> Lamb, Fighting for the Future, p. 14

<sup>327</sup> Shelton, South Africa's Defence policy and Updated Defence White Paper, p. 9f

<sup>328</sup> Shelton, South Africa's Defence policy and Updated Defence White Paper



being used to legitimise military and defence expenditure, even though the new approach to security does not imply an expanded role for the defence force.<sup>329</sup> Shelton is not overly impressed with the SANDF's capacity to deploy into international missions and concludes that

South Africa's present peacekeeping deployment of approximately 2700 is respectable in international terms, but still short of a number of other countries...<sup>330</sup>

Williams argued that there indeed is a need for an increased focus on the collateral use of the SANDF's capability. However, he does at the same time warn that the number of secondary tasks that can potentially be undertaken by the SANDF is long, and that

The key question that needs to be asked is whether it is appropriate to South Africa's developmental needs. Political prudent and financial affordable to deploy the armed forces in the range of non-traditional and non-military tasks...<sup>331</sup>

Cock claims, in relation to this, that the secondary function of the SANDF does not require a technologically advanced army.<sup>332</sup> However, as Williams notes along the same lines, the armed forces in many developing states are configured for very restricted and traditional roles, such as territorial defence.<sup>333</sup> In another article, furthermore, he argues that a tension exists between planning for primary functions and conducting secondary functions, and then the emerging realities of the secondary function arena. According to him, the SANDF does not have the budget, the equipment or the personnel to undertake such functions. Williams argues:

A much more realistic assessment of the role which the secondary function plays in determining force design, equipment purchase and training requirements needs to be made.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Cock, Introduction, in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>330</sup> Shelton, South Africa's Defence policy and Updated Defence White Paper, p. 10

<sup>331</sup> Williams, Defence and development, p. 65

<sup>332</sup> Cock, Introduction, in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>333</sup> Williams, Defence and development, p. 57

<sup>334</sup> William in Williams et al eds. , Ourselves to Know p. 219f

Lamb argues that the SANDF has struggled to define itself and its new role in the new democratic South Africa,<sup>335</sup> where, according to Cock, during the review process the White Paper on Defence was interpreted as an agenda for rearmament.<sup>336</sup>

Nathan pointed out that a tension could be detected between the wishes of the defence force and the political level. Concerning the principles lined out in the White Paper on Defence, he argued that

Many of the principles are explicitly anti-militarist. The only suggestion of a contrary tendency is the reference to the SANDF as 'a technologically advanced military force'. This phrase was included in the interim Constitution of 1993 at the insistence of the SADF. It was dropped from the final Constitution of 1996 and replaced in defence policy documents by the term 'technologically appropriate'<sup>337</sup>

Vreÿ, in an article dealing with the challenges faced by the African armed forces in general as a consequence of the increased soft security focus, points out that a defence force, including the SANDF, that fails to adjust to the new security agenda risk becoming dysfunctional.<sup>338</sup> He continues by suggesting that the South African experience of PSOs in Africa has shown the need to be flexible, e.g. be prepared for full-scale action in disarming militias and hunting down the killers of Bangladeshi peacekeepers, while at the same time providing close protection to returning Burundian politicians.<sup>339</sup> He concludes that, in general,

...the kind of military participation required by the AU could not be inferred directly from African armed forces because they are primarily prepared for war fighting, or internal operations. ...a more constructive pathway for employing African military means needs to be pursued.<sup>340</sup>

The question concerning weapons acquisitions is something that has been fiercely debated among academics, but also in the public domain. Academics like, for instance Nathan, Shelton, Cock and Bachelor have been very vocal in the campaign for demilitarisation and conversion and against weapons acquisition in general, as

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<sup>335</sup> Lamb, *Fighting for the Future*, p 1

<sup>336</sup> Cock, Introduction, in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>337</sup> Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>338</sup> Vreÿ, *Revisiting the Soft Security Debate*, p. 33

<sup>339</sup> Vreÿ, *Revisiting the Soft Security Debate*, p. 42

<sup>340</sup> Vreÿ, *Revisiting the Soft Security Debate*, p. 46

well as the Strategic Defence Program in particular, which is considered a waste of money and a channelling of resources away from the real pressing issues in South Africa such as underdevelopment, poverty, insufficient health infrastructure etc.<sup>341</sup> According to Williams, large parts of the criticism originated in the fact that Defence Review and the new force design was based on the primary functions of the SANDF. This leads him to argue that this

...was the extent to which a developing<sup>342</sup> country such as South Africa could afford to predicate both its force design and its budget on primary function.<sup>343</sup>

Much of the criticism also revolved around the domestic arms industry, which the critics believed should be converted to civilian production, because it was and still is absorbing scarce government resources.<sup>344</sup> Williams points out that the SDP was the direct result of the politically approved new force design for the SANDF, which was the result of the Defence Review process.<sup>345</sup> Le Roux, conversely, claims that the SANDF was facing the blanket obsolescence of several major weapon systems, thus lowering morale and motivation among its personnel.<sup>346</sup> However, Williams argues that South Africa has to rid itself of its Western-inspired doctrinal thinking, which has dominated the process so far, because it will result in a force that is unaffordable and inappropriate for the defence needs involved. A revision of the Defence Review and its primary function is needed.<sup>347</sup>

Heinecken has written several articles dealing with the SANDF. In 1999 she conducted a survey among the officers in the SANDF concerning their attitude towards being deployed into international PSOs. Her investigation showed that huge reluctance could be detected, though with large racial differences. The white officers tended to be much more critical towards international deployment. She concluded

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<sup>341</sup> See for instance Nathan, *Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies*; Cock in Cock et al. Eds. *From Defence to Development*; Shelton, *South Africa's Defence policy and Updated Defence White Paper*;

<sup>342</sup> It is of course debatable whether South Africa is a developing country, because for instance the UNDP rank it as a Middle Income Country. This is not to neglect the developmental problems that faces contemporary South Africa, but merely to stress that it is not unproblematic to use the phrase developing, which then can be seen as part of the ideological struggle between left and right about the nature of South Africa and its problems and responsibilities.

<sup>343</sup> William in Williams et al eds. , *Ourselves to Know* p. 211f

<sup>344</sup> Bachelor, in Cock et al. Eds. *From Defence to Development*; and Bachelor and Willet, *Disarmament and Defence Industrial Adjustment in South Africa*

<sup>345</sup> Williams in Williams et al eds. , *Ourselves to Know* p. 205

<sup>346</sup> Le Roux in Williams et al eds. , *Ourselves to Know* p. 155

<sup>347</sup> William in Williams et al eds. , *Ourselves to Know* p. 205f

that a large part of the resistance was due to the large budgetary cuts and a perception of lowered capacity and quality.<sup>348</sup>

A relatively large literature deals with the aspect of the defence transformation,<sup>349</sup> security sector reform and civilian control. Nathan practically drafted the 1996 Defence White Paper, a process he himself deals with in his 1998 contribution to Cock et al., "From Defence to Development". Le Roux explain that Nathan's draft proposals were met with stiff resistance from the SANDF, to such an extent that the SANDF would even criticise inputs that had originated from within the SANDF itself.<sup>350</sup> He argues that the introduction of civilian experts into the process of shaping future defence policy increased the quality of the policy itself because it forced both the non-military and the civilian side to have a fresh look at defence matters.<sup>351</sup>

Nathan stresses that, as opposed to role of the defence force during the apartheid era, the new White Paper stresses the priority of the security of the people and the military elements of security.<sup>352</sup> He continues:

In the new South Africa national security is no longer viewed as a predominantly military and police problem. It has been broadened to incorporate political, economic, social and environmental matters. At the heart of this new approach is a paramount concern with the security of people.<sup>353</sup>

Cawthra points out that, despite the government's declared "Human Security" focus, this has not resulted in an improved ranking for the country on the UNDP's Human Development Index. One of the reasons for this is that a large part of the savings from the defence cuts has been taken up by the budget for safety and security, leaving a peace dividend of only 20%.<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> Heinecken, Regional Involvement, pp. 56f.

<sup>349</sup> See for instance Cawthra, Security Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa in Cawthra et. Al., Governing Insecurity; Williams et al eds. , Ourselves to Know; Nathan, Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies; Bachelor and Willet, Disarmament and Defence Industrial Adjustment in South Africa; Williams, Defence and development; O'Brien, Regional Security in Southern Africa; Cawthra, Securing South Africa's Democracy : defence, development and security in transition; Cawthra, & Møller Eds., Defensive Restructuring of the Armed Forces in Southern Africa; Cawthra, From 'Total Strategy' to 'Human Security': The Making of South Africa's Defence policy 1990-98

<sup>350</sup> Le Roux in Williams et al eds. , Ourselves to Know p. 157

<sup>351</sup> Le Roux in Williams et al eds. , Ourselves to Know p. 166

<sup>352</sup> Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>353</sup> Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>354</sup> Cawthra, in Cawthra et. Al., Governing Insecurity, p. 51

Nevertheless, Nathan argues that the principles of defence in a democracy that constituted the agenda for the transformation of the SANDF resulted in a dramatic change in, for instance, the overall defence posture, design and structure, civil-military relations and human resource policies.<sup>355</sup> This was a huge task for the inexperienced ANC government and for the political system in general. According to Nathan, this resulted, for instance, in Parliament both accepting the principles of Non-offensive Defence (NOD), while at the same accepting an offensive force design.<sup>356</sup> At the same time resistance to change could be detected within the force, not because of counter-revolutionary tendencies, but because the new policies were often at odds with training and existing knowledge.<sup>357</sup>

## **2.7: Why has this study not been done before?**

In 2003 Kent and Malan concluded that, even though it would make sense to evaluate the relevance to South Africa's foreign policy of South African military contributions to international missions in Africa, it was still early days to draw any real lessons from South Africa's deployment into PSOs in Africa.<sup>358</sup> This is part of the reason why an in-depth study of South Africa's entry into the peace support arena has not yet been conducted. Shelton, Neethling and Kent et al. have, as shown above, made smaller contributions, but there are no larger studies of the nature of the capacity problems faced by the SANDF, correlated with tasks that the SANDF is expected to undertake – it is not just simple peacekeeping functions.

The political implications of the potential criticism and negative branding of the SANDF, and thus of South Africa's foreign policy involvement, are not looked on favourably by the government, where the positive branding of South Africa is a key priority.

A second reason is to found in the fact that the role of the armed forces in foreign policy, and the armed forces in general, has, as pointed out above, a low priority.

Another reason concerns some normative aspects. As shown above, a large group of scholars have had a dual role in also being closely related to the disarmament campaign. One speculation could therefore be that the issue of balancing ambitions

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<sup>355</sup> Nathan, *Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies*, p. 2

<sup>356</sup> Nathan, *Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies*, p. 3

<sup>357</sup> Nathan, *Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies*, p. 4

<sup>358</sup> Kent and Malan, *Decisions, Decisions, South Africa's foray into regional peace operations*, p. 10

and capacity is something that should not to be broached because the result of the investigation might be either that the ambitions regarding the country's African commitment might have to be scaled down, or else the military budget will have to be increased. The last thing would then again mean diverting funds earmarked for domestic development and softer issues to the armed forces. An often used phrase by this group of academics is that, although the defence budget might currently be only 1.5% of GDP, in real terms, compared to other African states, the defence budget is bigger than the combined budget of the other SADC members.<sup>359</sup> However, as described in the methodology chapter, this comparison is fraught with problems, and is not easily done. As described in the preface, therefore, this study investigates whether the SANDF has the capacity to fill out this new foreign policy role. This is done first by making an in-depth assessment of the SANDF's role and capacity in society and as a foreign policy tool, and secondly by investigating its capacity during actual operations.

A third reason is the whole question of race and affirmative action. In the South African political reality it is difficult, especially for a white South African, to investigate openly the government's affirmative action policies and its consequences for the capacity of the defence force. This type of investigation is easier for a foreigner to do, someone who is not tied in the same way to the South African reality and the history of race relations, which, for obvious reasons, seems to permeate that reality.

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<sup>359</sup> See for instance, Shelton, South Africa's Defence policy and Updated Defence White Paper; Nathan, Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies

## Part 1: National Security and the New Role of the South African National Defence Force

### Chapter Three: South Africa and the Concept of National Security

#### **3.1: Introduction**

In effect, the most difficult military problem to resolve is that of establishing a security system, as inexpensive as possible in time of peace, capable of transforming itself very rapidly into a powerful force in case of the danger of aggression.<sup>1</sup>

At first sight, the relationship between defence and development may, as argued by Williams, seem both an oxymoron and contingent.<sup>2</sup> Investment in defence has traditionally been considered as a use of state resources on an unproductive sector, a very controversial matter, especially in developing economies with limited resources. It can be difficult to explain to a poverty-stricken population why the government needs to use resources on defence when the same resources could be used in other sectors of society. It can be even more difficult to explain why resources are needed for defence, when the visible day-to day tasks of the defence force lie outside the nation. Nevertheless, there is a degree of interdependence between development and defence because development is not possible without security, nor security without development.<sup>3</sup> The security sector, including the armed forces, is ideally the main provider of security and therefore an institution creating the basis for development.<sup>4</sup> In classic security theory, security was regarded as being tied to the defence sector. Today, security is often used to describe a much broader set of issues than defence, including other sectors in society. At the same time, defence force tasks are often not considered part of security. This has had a significant influence on the role of the armed forces in society.

Before taking office, the ANC leadership had already stated its belief that the future security challenges to the state did not come from outside South Africa, but from the very nature of the inequalities in society. Therefore, the new government's main

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<sup>1</sup> André Beaufre, quoted in the SANDF Military Strategy Paper.

<sup>2</sup> Williams, *Defence and Development: Some Thematic Issues*, pp. 1f.

<sup>3</sup> This relationship has recently been scrutinised in Buur et al., eds. *The Security –Development Nexus* (2006)

<sup>4</sup> The author is fully aware that states and armed forces often are a source of insecurity.

priority was to remedy this imbalance in an attempt to safeguard South African democracy. Dominant figures in the old apartheid and ANC/Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK) security structures quickly found 'a common cause' and were able to form a strong alliance: they were able to define a *raison d'être* for the new national defence force within the broader spectrum of what was to be defined as national security. The 1996 White Paper on Defence and the 1998 Defence Review were the results of this new partnership, defining a future narrow role for the SANDF focusing on the primary function in defence of the nation.

In the case of South Africa, the role of the SANDF has apparently changed from being the main protector of the pariah state against its enemies to being a foreign-policy tool of this new, benign, regional powerhouse and peacemaker. This can be seen as part of a process moving the SANDF away from the security sphere and "high politics", to a role that falls within the sphere of what is considered "normal politics" or "low politics". Until 1994, the force was used in counter-insurgency and destabilisation operations against South Africa's neighbours. Since 1994, the SANDF has increasingly been undertaking what is considered secondary tasks, such as support for domestic policing, border control and, since 1999, international PSOs in support of the broader foreign-policy initiatives.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the role of the armed forces in South African society, both before and after 1994. In an attempt to do so the first part of the chapter is a descriptive historical presentation of the role of the SADF in apartheid South Africa, followed by a description of that role after 1994. This is included to show where the SANDF came from, and from what it had to change, enabling to investigate if the force has the capacity to deal with the new tasks and demands facing it. Moreover, I shall in the chapter investigate how the ANC government prioritises the SANDF in terms of overall government spending. What does it mean for the role and prioritisation of the SANDF when the government argues that peace and stability are key factors to development in Africa, including South Africa? Special attention will therefore be placed on the government's prioritisation of the deployment of the SANDF into African peace missions. Using insights from securitisation theory, I shall examine how the Pretoria government has strategically used the SANDF as part of its overall foreign-policy approach and determine to what extent the SANDF's participation in African PSOs has been prioritised?



The role of this Chapter in the dissertation is to investigate the second claim presented in the preface, that is, that the SANDF has played an important and somewhat overlooked role in this transition. Its transformation and its involvement in peace operations have been necessary to support this transition and it will remain necessary to sustain it in the foreseeable future. This was partly demonstrated in the literature review in Chapter 2, but will primarily be investigated in this Chapter through a relatively detailed description of the transformation of the armed force in South Africa, including a demonstration of the former and the contemporary societal role of the defence force. The relatively detailed description of the armed forces role during the apartheid era, is used to illustrate what the armed forces transformed from, and how this affect the present role and capacity.

By using theoretical insights from securitisation theory Chapter 3 will demonstrate how the changing government priorities in post-apartheid South Africa meant that the defence objectives and tasks was widened to include soft security elements. The findings in this Chapter will be used later in the dissertation as part of the investigation of the three case studies in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, that is, South Africa's military involvement in Lesotho, Burundi and the DR. Congo.

This Chapter will furthermore help answering the question asked in the preface, that is, to what extent the SANDF will be able to continue to play this role because of a gap between goals and objectives, and what impact this will have on South African foreign policy role. The Chapter will demonstrates that the defence force in contemporary South Africa is no longer high on the list of government priorities which means that other government departments have easier access to economic resources. There is consequently a gap between goals and the means. The Chapter will furthermore together with Chapter 4 illustrate that the SANDF generally has got a structural and capacity problem which negatively effect capacity of the force to support the government's foreign policy.

### ***3.2: Foreign Policy and National Security***

Questions on what can be considered security are often closely interlinked with foreign-policy issues. 'Security' is basically socially constructed in the sense that what eventually ends up being constituted as a security threat is the result of speech acts and securitising moves made by securitising actors. A nation's foreign policy reflects the perception of security that dominates the actions of decision-making actors. Ideas and norms are important elements in this process because they function as a kind of

roadmap on which the path to the main political objectives will be chosen. Choosing one path may close off other avenues, and political decisions may also have limiting effects. Therefore, choosing in favour of one option also means removing others. Thus, ideas and norms also function as determining factors in forming and joining alliances because the very basic ideas and norms will often form the basis of a greater sense of community between the actors in an alliance or regime. Political ideas will, if accepted by the actors, settle over time as rules or norms. In its foreign-policy behaviour as a benign regional leader, South Africa has been pivotal in introducing new political ideas and reforms that have led to the establishment of new African institutions and collective security framework.<sup>5</sup> This has led to new norms and rules being introduced and being established on the continent.

However, where historically national security was primarily understood as a matter for the defence sector, the definition of what constitutes national security and what response is needed to handle issues of national security is today more broadly defined. One example of this are the so-called human-security issues such as food security, access to water and drought, which often cut across territorial borders and may have serious implications for peace and stability in a region. These types of issue therefore have a direct bearing on the areas that traditional security theory defined as national security, though they are not issues that the defence force can handle, at least not by itself. This also means that what is perceived as constituting a security threat must be understood in much broader terms than just a conventional military threat. Therefore, in co-operation with other government departments, the modern defence force must be able to deal with a whole range of different tasks, not just conventional military ones. This constitutes a whole new set of challenges to the defence force planners, who have to take this whole new range of potential and actual tasks into account. William's remark in Chapter 2 concerning the danger of undertaking too many secondary tasks also comes into mind.

In this dissertation, I adopt the following definition of a security threat:

posited by a securitising actor as a threat to the survival of some referent object (nation, state, the liberal international economic order, the rain forest), which is claimed to have a right to survival. Since a question of survival necessarily involves a point of no return at which it will be too late to act, it is

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, institutional reform in SADC, SACU, the establishment of AU/NEPAD, and the Peace and Security Council under the AU.

not defensible to leave this issue to normal politics. The securitising actor therefore claims a right to use extraordinary means or break normal rules, for reasons of security.<sup>6</sup>

This means that 'security' is basically a matter of the survival of the referent object,<sup>7</sup> that is, in the case of what constitutes South African national security, it deals with issues that the securitising actors see as constituting a threat to the survival of the state. A securitising actor is here seen as 'someone, or a group, who performs the securitising speech act'.<sup>8</sup> Securitising actors are an individual or a group who performs the security speech act. This often comprises politicians, lobbyists, governments, NGOs, private or public businesses, international financial institutions, etc., which function as either securitising actors or functional actors, that is, actors who have a direct bearing on the actual securitising process, or even as the audience.<sup>9</sup> This is the case both if the focus is upon soft human-security issues, such as the social empowerment of marginalised groups, or in the long-term planning of hard security measures, such as defence acquisition strategies. According to Buzan et al., the securitising situation must be understood as one end of a continuum, the other being the non-politicised issues, that is, topics that the state, the media etc. have no interest in. Between the two are the issues that are politicised, that is, those that form part of the public debate.<sup>10</sup> The process of securitising an issue will often be the result of a bureaucratic bargaining process, involving the securitising actor and the audience, who between them decide whether an issue should be securitised or not.<sup>11</sup>

However, not all the actors have equal importance and influence on the securitising process, and cultural and social capital, in Bourdieu's sense, are important in terms of how legitimate a particular statement is seen.<sup>12</sup> As Buzan et al. argue, the important question in analysing security is "who can 'do' security in the name of what".<sup>13</sup> The South African President since 1999, Thabo Mbeki, will, for instance, generally have better prospects of succeeding in a securitising move concerning national security than the average man on the street. However, in South Africa

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<sup>6</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, p. 71.

<sup>7</sup> The referent object is the object which the securitising actors and the audience agree on have to 'survive' and therefore they agree that they have to put aside traditional political considerations, see Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 36 for further details.

<sup>8</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 40.

<sup>9</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 40.

<sup>10</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 24.

<sup>11</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 21.

<sup>13</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 45.

individual researchers and NGOs had, and to a certain extent still have, significant influence on the drafting of the various white papers and in shaping the foundations of the national security strategy. This could be one of the reasons why it seems today that there is a dichotomy between the force structure and capabilities of the SANDF and political ambitions and realities at the political level. The changing nature of the post-apartheid state in, moving from a pariah state to a regional benign leader has also altered what are perceived to be existential threats currently both within and towards South Africa. This has also meant that role of the SANDF in society has changed, along with the previous prioritisation of the armed forces. The SANDF has been asked to undertake other types of operation and tasks, most of which do not fall within what is traditionally considered the security sphere.<sup>14</sup> One example of this is the South African Air Force's assistance to the Mozambican authorities during the floods in 2000. This means that an increasing number of the SANDF's tasks after 1994 have been non-security in type, including, for instance, most Peace Keeping Operations (PKO). In the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions, it is argued that only if 'core national interests are at stake' will the level and size of the South African contribution to international PSOs exceed the in the contributions envisaged on paper.<sup>15</sup> A relevant question that needs to be addressed here is what, then, constitutes core national interests for South Africa which allow deployment exceeding the size of an extended battalion. In late 2005, South Africa had approximately 3000 personnel deployed in international operations: which core national interests were at stake?

### **3.2.1: National Security in South Africa**

Challenges to national security can generally be divided into those which create insecurity, that is, threats that society cannot defend itself against, and those that create security, that is, threats that the society is capable of defending itself against.<sup>16</sup> A security issue, therefore, is an 'existential threat to a designated object'.<sup>17</sup> In Southern Africa, the structural threats are the most pressing issues, combined with political and economic intervention by other states. South Africa was and still is located in a zone of war and experiences constant pressure on its borders from refugees and illegal immigrants from most of southern Africa, who sees South Africa as the land of opportunity. Another central security challenge is the failed state issue, which is closely interlinked with the issue of migration. Individuals flee poverty and

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<sup>14</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> DFA, *White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions*, p. 25.

<sup>16</sup> Wæver, *Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies*, p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> Wæver, *Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies*, p. 9.

conflict. Domestically, South Africa is faced especially with the problems of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, poverty and crime, pressing issues that have become national strategic issues. Finally, there is the question of intervention in the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe, and especially the western response to this, which have become security challenges not only for South Africa, but for all SADC members, and have led to international political intervention.

The concept of national security has traditionally been investigated at the level of the nation state. However, security is relational in nature and should, therefore, be investigated at the regional or global level. In the case of South Africa, the state's national security concerns cannot be analysed separately from the Regional Security Complex (RSC)<sup>18</sup> to which it belongs, and vice versa.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, questions on what might be considered security are often closely interlinked with foreign-policy issues. Security issues such as food security, access to water, drought and political instability cut across territorial borders and may have serious implications for peace and stability in a region. These types of issue therefore have a direct bearing on the areas which traditional security theory defined as national security.<sup>20</sup>

Former President Nelson Mandela has repeatedly argued that the single largest threat to peace and stability in South Africa today is poverty and social inequality.<sup>21</sup> Previously it was the majority of the population that constituted a direct threat to the apartheid regime. Former Minister of Defence Joe Modise argued that the new understanding of national security had been broadened since from a narrow focus on hard security:

In the new South Africa national security is no longer viewed as a predominantly military and police problem. It has been broadened to incorporate political, economic, social and environmental matters. At the heart of this new approach is a paramount concern with the security of people. Security is an all-encompassing condition in which the individual citizens live in freedom, peace and safety; participate fully in the process of governance;

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<sup>18</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, p. 187ff. For further details see for instance also Buzan & Wæver, *Region and Powers*

<sup>19</sup> South Africa is closely tied to its immediate region. Traditionally SADC, apart from Tanzania and the DRC, constitutes the RSC in southern Africa. After the transition in 1994, the South African sphere of influence has been extended and the RSC arguably increased.

<sup>20</sup> The political crisis in Zimbabwe can be seen as an example of this where, for instance, food security is used by the political actors and becomes a question of national security and survival of the state/regime.

<sup>21</sup> See, for instance, President Nelson Mandela's Speech at the Freedom Day Celebrations in Umtata, 27 April 1999.

enjoy the protection of fundamental rights; have access to resources and the basis necessities of life; and inhabit an environment which is not detrimental to their health and well-being.<sup>22</sup>

According to Modise, therefore, security focuses on the well-being of the individual citizen and encompasses more or less all human issues and behaviour; in other words, all issues are considered as falling within the area of security. The pitfall here is twofold, one being Wæver's argument that political ambitions ought to be aimed at removing all issues from the security field and into the normal field of politics, as the security sector tends to set aside democratic and political considerations, that is, to de-securitise the referent objects. The other consequence is that, by making all issues a matter of security, the meaning and value of the very term ceases to make much sense anyway. It becomes impossible to distinguish between 'real' security threats, legitimising the use of extraordinary means, and more normal political issues.<sup>23</sup>

Security threats will always have a bearing on the individual human being, since threats to something will often stem from the acts of individual human beings or groups of them. However, the issues that are securitised are not found at this individual level, but must be located at the societal or state level. In South Africa the result has been that domestic social development and the government's Redistribution and Development Programme (RDP) have become central elements in the government's security thinking, not the individual poor. Another area that was securitised was that of race. The political level decided to implement uncompromising affirmative action (AA) programmes because the issue of proportionate racial quotas was deemed so important that it constituted a direct and urgent threat to the state, as well as to the ANC itself, if it were not remedied.<sup>24</sup> Officially South Africa had to reflect the ethnic composition of its population, and strong public employment and rights reforms were initiated. The main political opposition, the Democratic Alliance

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<sup>22</sup> Statement by Minister of Defence Modise in 1996, quoted in Cawthra, From 'Total Strategy to 'Human Security', pp. 7-8.

<sup>23</sup> For further details on this debate concerning the relationship between state, society and societal security, see, for instance, McSweeney, *Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School*, pp. 82ff. It is also important to note that Ole Wæver et al. and the author agree in rejecting the claim of McSweeney and also of the Critical and Feminist Security Studies School that the individual can be securitised. Wæver argues that it is not the individual human being but issues concerning, for instance, human beings that are being securitised, e.g. poverty and not the individual poor, radical Islamism and not the individual Islamist, the destruction of the rain forest and not the individual tree.

<sup>24</sup> It must be remembered that the issue of race has long been a securitised concern in South Africa, and that it has merely continued to be so, though with a different content.

(DA), has criticized the government for its strategy and argues in favour of a softer version of AA.<sup>25</sup>

### **3.2.1.1: The Societal Role of the South African Armed Forces**

In the SANDF there has been a tendency to stick to the traditionalist approach to security, which among other things derives from the experience of the border wars in the 1970-80s. However, Western societies<sup>26</sup> are in the middle of a transitional phase and are faced with a number of new security challenges. The focus has been moved away from a peace–crisis–war logic, based on a conscript force and a large mobilisation capacity, to a relatively small professional force dealing with declared and undeclared challenges or conflicts. As a result, the modern society is in a state of constant preparedness against a multitude of mostly unconventional challenges.<sup>27</sup> One consequence of this is that the traditional distinctions between civilian – both state and NGO – and military readiness are undergoing significant changes and being incorporated into what defence circles call ‘integrated thinking’.<sup>28</sup> The Swedish Professor Bengt Sundelius has described this as a move away from total defence to societal defence. Nathan on the same line argues that;

The new approach to security bears a superficial resemblance to the apartheid doctrine of Total Strategy, which similarly stressed the political, social and economic dimensions of security (Swilling & Phillips, 1989). In substance, however, the two models are diametrically opposed. The apartheid model sought to militarise all aspects of national policy, while the new approach seeks to demilitarise the concept of security.<sup>29</sup>

The difference also being that, in the traditional total defence view, every sector in society is involved in supporting the defence forces against an external aggressor. In the societal defence concept, on the other hand, the defence force is reduced to being part of the combined efforts of the different government institutions in securing the safety and security of the society.<sup>30 31</sup> This development is shown very clearly in

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<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, the DA policy paper, ‘Opportunity for all’.  
<http://www.da.org.za/da/Site/Eng/Policies/Downloads/Empowerment.asp>.

<sup>26</sup> Here, I consider South Africa as being part of the ‘Western Society’ framework, even though in many respects the country is a developing country.

<sup>27</sup> Niels Madsen, Danish Emergency Service at DIIS in Copenhagen, April 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Lecture given by Commander RDN Torben Ø. Jørgensen at the seminar on The Danish–South African Dialogue on Security May 2004. Denmark is, for instance, increasingly seeking to integrate its international operations, both military and humanitarian. The logic is that the two sectors both constitute part of Danish foreign policy and should be co-ordinated.

<sup>29</sup> Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. “From Defence to Development

<sup>30</sup> Bengt Sundelius, at a conference, 29 April 2004 at DIIS, Copenhagen.

the above quotation by Modise, in which he underlines that security is also, and primarily, focused on the well-being of the individual citizen.<sup>32</sup>

Another aspect of determining the role of the armed forces in society is to look at the perception of what constitutes a security challenge, in other words, what is singled out by the securitising actors as constituting a security threat. As Wæver argues, this is not the act of individuals, but is influenced by a political bargaining process.<sup>33</sup> Security is, as mentioned above, concerned with survival.<sup>34</sup> The security thinking of the late apartheid regime is illustrative in this respect because its main objective was the survival of the white-led regime in South Africa. Consequently, the neighbouring states were regarded as a threat and were securitised accordingly. The military strategy, the total national strategy and the national security management system were all developed to provide security against this threat.<sup>35</sup> Even though the total national strategy was defensive in nature, it included offensive strategic measures which attempted to defuse the threat to the apartheid state.<sup>36</sup> The apartheid policies meant that the nature of the South African state was securitised in the neighbouring countries, where South Africa was perceived as constituting a direct threat to the sovereignty of these states. The regime in Pretoria managed to keep the Front Line States (FLS)<sup>37</sup> states dependent on South Africa, especially by forcing them to use South Africa as the main route for the import and export of goods. Apart from the threat posed to it by the large majority of its own population, the main security challenge for the Pretoria regime was to destabilise its neighbouring states to such an extent that they did not constitute a direct conventional threat against South Africa. This strategy was very successful everywhere but Angola, where the

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<sup>31</sup> It could, to a certain extent, be argued that the strategic thinking introduced in the Defence White Paper from 1977, the so-called total national strategy and the national security management system, was organised to an extreme degree in order to be able to handle both declared and un-declared security challenges in an attempt to protect the interests of white South Africa. The idea of 'integrated thinking' was, therefore, the driving element in this strategic thinking.

<sup>32</sup> Wæver argues that much literature on the nature of security is in reality about what is also security. Modise's statement falls well within this category and can be seen as a classic example of thinking within government circles in Pretoria; for further details see Wæver, *Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies*, p. 8.

<sup>33</sup> Wæver, *Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies*, p. 12.

<sup>34</sup> Wæver, *Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies*, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> See later in this chapter for further details on the role of the SADF.

<sup>36</sup> Even defensive military strategies, like for instance the NOD, have offensive elements build into their strategy, both in terms of actual force design and strategic set up. The SADF consisted of a relatively small permanent force and a large mobilisation capacity, which in the event of a crisis could be deployed. It was a reaction force design, aimed at deterring potential attackers. Despite the nature of the regime, the apartheid state did not have any territorial ambitions towards the neighbouring states, and the major issue was defence against the internal and external threats to it. This is of course a controversial claim and Nathan for instance argue that "*from the late 1970s South Africa's foreign posture and military doctrine became increasingly offensive*". Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>37</sup> An informal alliance of states all faced by destabilisation from South Africa, and consisting of Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe (1980) and Namibia (1990).



penetration from Cuban and USSR intervention during the 1980s made it increasingly difficult for the SADF to match the combined Angolan, Cuban, Russian and SWAPO forces. This direct external intervention altered the traditional security balance in the region, especially between South Africa and Angola.<sup>38</sup> As a result, all the means available in society were used to prop up the SADF's efforts in countering the security challenge to the state.

When politicians like Modise and Mandela designate particular soft issues as existential threats and their audience accepts this, it legitimises the use of extraordinary means in dealing with the situation.<sup>39</sup> The SANDF force planners therefore have to examine these primary tasks in their planning and determine where their priorities lie. Domestically, the new 'soft' threats facing South Africa have become national strategic issues. In southern Africa, structural threats and political and economic intervention by other states are the most pressing issues because no direct conventional military threat exists. However, as previously mentioned South Africa is geographically located in what Holsti defines as a zone of war<sup>40</sup> and experiences a constant pressure on its borders from refugees and illegal immigrants from its southern African neighbours, who see South Africa as a land of opportunity. Thus, the SANDF needs to be able to plan according to these perceived security threats. One central such threat is the emergence of fragile or failed states, which encourage migration as individuals flee poverty and conflict.

### ***3.3: The Role of the SADF in the Foreign Policy of the Late Apartheid Regime***

There is really no great tradition of crisis management nor of using military force as an instrument of South Africa's own foreign policy. The Republic lacks a body of experience, even precedent, for decision taking in times of emergency or crisis as a consequence of its former complete dependency on the British government. The South African Defence Force has the capability

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<sup>38</sup> See Jørgensen, *Speak Softly but Carry a Big Stick*; also Guimarães, *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War*, for further details of the South African involvement in Angola.

<sup>39</sup> In South Africa, one example of this is the secrecy surrounding the statistical figures concerning the level of HIV/AIDS contraction in the armed forces, which the DOD is extremely reluctant to produce because this has been deemed a strategic issue. This is a break from what have been the procedures in the DOD since 1994. In general, the department has been extremely open, giving the public access to many reports and documents that would have been classified in most states.

<sup>40</sup> For further details see Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War*.

but it is still not clear that it regards its capabilities as the primary means of responding to the country's problems.<sup>41</sup>

Until the early 1970s, the SADF did not play a dominant role in South Africa's international relations. South Africa was surrounded by friendly states, a cordon sanitaire<sup>42</sup> that protected it from direct attacks from the liberation movements. The operations against SWAPO in southern Angola were considered a police operation until 1973, when the SADF took over responsibility for northern Namibia. However, the failure of Prime Minister Vorster's détente policies towards Africa, the 1974 revolution in Portugal and the subsequent independence of Mozambique and Angola in 1975 altered the perception of apartheid South Africa's situation in Africa. The removal of the cordon sanitaire meant that South Africa's borders were exposed and the SADF was given the responsibility of providing security for the regime. From the end of the 1960s to 1980, the SADF went from being closely monitored and controlled politically to being allowed to launch operations into neighbouring countries without prior political approval. In other words, in apartheid South Africa military issues went from being within the normal political framework to being placed in a state of permanent crisis, in which all issues were securitised.

### **3.3.1: The Domestic Transition: from Cordon Sanitaire to Total Onslaught**

The foremost goal of security policy under apartheid was to defend the racially exclusive state and maintain the system of minority rule. The principal strategy was repression through military and paramilitary means.<sup>43</sup>

The period from the beginning of the 1960s signalled a relatively stable period for South Africa. The major opposition groups had virtually been crushed at the Rivonia trial<sup>44</sup> and forced to work from exile, which meant that South Africa was more or less able to avoid direct military attacks. In the mid-1960s, South Africa had the second highest rate of economic growth in the world, and it was only internationally that the

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<sup>41</sup> Deon Fourie, cited in Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*, p. 51.

<sup>42</sup> This term is broadly used by scholars to describe the ring of non-Communist regimes and colonies that protected South Africa until 1975, from Mozambique in the east to Angola in the west.

<sup>43</sup> Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development"

<sup>44</sup> The Rivonia trial was named after the place where, in July 1963, the SA Police arrested the MK high command: Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Leonard Bernstein and Bob Hepple. Together with other ANC/MK leaders (including Nelson Mandela), they were all sentenced to long terms of imprisonment in 1964. It was during this trial that Mandela uttered the famous sentence: "During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to the struggle of African People. I have fought against White domination, and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die". Quoted in Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, p. 170.

country experienced difficulties in being increasingly ostracised by various parts of the international community.<sup>45</sup>

From the mid-1960s, the South African government tried to use its dominant regional position to create a ring of buffer states to protect itself from what it perceived to be communist intervention and aggression. The relationship with Southern Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonial authorities was increasingly improved during the 1960s, including an agreement that allowed South African forces to operate freely in southern Angola in pursuit of SWAPO. In return, South Africa promised to attack any of the Angolan liberation movements it came across during its raids.<sup>46</sup> For South Africa, all African nationalist movements were perceived to enemies of the South African state. In 1970, Prime Minister Vorster stated:

I know of no terrorism in southern Africa which, in the final analysis, is not directed against South Africa.... The ultimate aim of all terrorists is to take South Africa away from us.<sup>47</sup>

This also meant that until 1974 South Africa's later allies, the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA) and especially the União Nacional Para Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) rebels, who operated in the border area with Namibia, were considered to be enemies of South Africa. The late UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi later replied to a question concerning co-operation with the South African government that, if you are a man drowning in a crocodile-infested river, you do not ask who is pulling you to the shore.<sup>48</sup> This very nicely describes the relationship between the allies, which was focused on a common enemy, not a common ideology, in a spirit of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend". Thus, South Africa, especially after 1975, switched to co-operating with a number of rebel and liberation movements in southern Africa in an attempt to stave off the perceived communist expansion and to destabilise South Africa's neighbours by reducing their conventional military capacity and forcing them not to harbour the bases of liberation movements that were hostile to South Africa.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Alden, *Apartheid's Last Stand*, p. 19.

<sup>46</sup> Guimãres, *The Origins of the Angola Civil War*, p. 125.

<sup>47</sup> Barber and Barret, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: The Search for Status and Security*, p. 139.

<sup>48</sup> Savimbi cited in Guimãres, *The Origins of the Angola Civil War*, p. 131

<sup>49</sup> For further details of this dynamic, see, for instance, Jørgensen, *Speak Softly, but Carry a big stick* where the section covering the Komatispoort agreement between South Africa and Mozambique is a classic example of South African policies at this time.

### 3.3.2: International Support and the Isolation of Apartheid South Africa

South Africa was for a period strategically important to the major Western powers in their battle against what was described as aggressive communism in southern Africa, and was, as mentioned previously, defined as a 'tar-baby' through the Nixon doctrine.<sup>50</sup> This was one reason why the major Western powers in the UN Security Council for many years vetoed sanctions against South Africa.<sup>51</sup> South Africa possesses a wide variety of natural resources important to the Western powers, for instance valuable gems and strategic minerals such as uranium and titanium. Furthermore, the country controls the international shipping route around the Cape of Good Hope, which, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, had been a cardinal interest in the foreign policy of the British Empire.<sup>52</sup> South Africa was long considered the most important bulwark against the spread of communism in the region. Nevertheless, its strategic importance declined during the 1960s and the early 1970s. Western dependence on South Africa as a provider of strategic minerals was an important element in the 1950s and 1960s, but in the 1970s other lines of supply were secured, especially because the US government was unhappy at being dependent on the regime in Pretoria.<sup>53</sup> That regime, moreover, failed to convince especially the US, but also the other big NATO countries, of the significance of South Africa's ability to safeguard the Cape sea route and therefore the oil supply to Western Europe. The US government did not see any direct threat to international shipping on the southern tip of Africa, but argued that the real threat instead was in the Persian Gulf and the Suez Canal.<sup>54</sup> The British naval co-operation agreement of 1955 was revised in 1966 and led to the withdrawal of the majority of British forces stationed at the naval base in Simonstown. The revision of the agreement was caused by South African anger over UK support for the UN voluntary arms embargo in 1964.<sup>55</sup> South Africa had already left the Commonwealth in 1963, among other things as a consequence of the famous "winds of change" speech made by the

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<sup>50</sup> See, for instance, Kloze, Norms in International Relations.

<sup>51</sup> See Appendix 12 for a list of the sanctions implemented against apartheid South Africa.

<sup>52</sup> Alden, *Apartheid's Last Stand*, p. 15, note 8.

<sup>53</sup> In 1950, the US and South Africa signed an agreement in which the Americans bought uranium, while they in return invested in South African industry and transferred technology to the country. This deal was one of the main reasons for the strong South African economic growth in that period. The UK, fearing US competition, was in 1955 forced to make an agreement with South Africa that allowed the transfer of technology and released South Africa from international agreements on the use of uranium. One of the reasons for the agreement between the traditionally anti-colonial US and the regime in Pretoria was the South African contribution to the military effort in Korea. Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa*, p. 206.

<sup>54</sup> See Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa*, p. 203, The Naval facilities at the base in Simonstown, near Cape Town, were too small to handle the large American ships, which was necessary if the base was to have significant strategic importance to the US.

<sup>55</sup> Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa* pp. 203f.

British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, in the South African parliament on 3 February 1960, where he argued that:

The wind of change is blowing through this continent and, whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact, and our national policies must take account of it. [...] As I see it, the great issue in this second half of the twentieth century is whether the uncommitted peoples of Asia and Africa will swing to the East or to the West. Will they be drawn into the Communist camp? Or will the great experiments of self-government that are now being made in Asia and Africa, especially within the Commonwealth, prove so successful, and by their example so compelling, that the balance will come down in favour of freedom and order and justice?<sup>56</sup>

This speech signalled British determination to continue the de-colonisation process, including in those states with relatively large white settlements. Another central theme was that the British government would not support South Africa if it continued its apartheid policies.<sup>57</sup> However, Macmillan also stressed the risk of the new independent territories choosing the 'East' as their model for their new societies.

The third strategic argument was that South Africa functioned as a bulwark against the spread of communism in southern Africa. For the National Party regime, the single most important foreign-policy objective was the survival of the white-minority state in South Africa. In general, African nationalism was perceived as inseparable from communism and therefore a danger to the Western world which white South Africa felt itself a part of. This perception was, furthermore, enforced by the fact that the SACP was an important part of the ANC and that the various nationalist movements received the majority of their support from the eastern bloc states. In 1973, Prime Minister Vorster stated:

South Africa was determined to defend itself and the free world to the utmost of its ability, even if the free world should continue denying South Africans the arms to do so.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Macmillan, 3 February 1960, speech to the South African Parliament, Cape Town.

<sup>57</sup> Davenport, *South Africa, A Modern History*, pp. 354-355.

<sup>58</sup> Vorster, cited in Guimãres, *The Origins of the Angola Civil War*, p. 124.

The dynamics of this statement are interesting, because even though South Africa became increasingly isolated from the international community, its leaders still perceived South Africa and the Western powers to be fighting the same enemy, namely world communism.<sup>59</sup> A statement made by the then Minister of Defence and later Prime Minister and President of the Republic, P. W. Botha, underlines this argument:

If the non-Communist world would not support South Africa as a strategic ally, it would have to defend the Cape route alone, for its own and the free world's sake, whatever the sacrifices.<sup>60</sup>

The fundamental problem in relations between the US and South Africa was the apartheid policies of the latter. In 1997, the former South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha stated that the interests of the two parties were often identical, namely the fight against world communism, securing the Cape route etc., but that the apartheid policies placed the US government in an international and domestic political dilemma which made it impossible to form an effective alliance. The continuation of the apartheid policies was in fact helping the expansion of communism in Southern Africa.<sup>61</sup> South African efforts turned out to be counterproductive in a way that the regime in Pretoria might not have anticipated. However, there did not seem to be any doubt within government circles that the continued isolation and increased international and domestic pressure would eventually force them into some kind of settlement. The political and constitutional reforms initiated from 1978 to 1984 have to be understood within this context. The apartheid regime needed to create time for itself to negotiate an all-inclusive transfer of power. This situation arose with the negotiated settlement in Angola and Namibia in 1988-89, and the simultaneous collapse of the communist world order alternative. The ANC and the PAC lost their major backers, while the communist elements in the ANC were weakened in the organisation's internal struggle. Therefore, the murder of Chris Hani in April 1993 can by no means be regarded as a random action because, as the Chief of Staff of the MK and as Secretary General of the SACP, he was a central figure, after Mandela the most prominent political figure in South Africa.

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<sup>59</sup> See appendix for a list of international sanctions implemented against South Africa.

<sup>60</sup> Botha cited in Guimãres, *The Origins of the Angola Civil War*, p. 125.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with former South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha, The Georgetown University Cold War documentary project, 20 May 1997.

### 3.3.3: The South African Armed Forces Before 1994

After the National Party election victory in 1948, the SADF was “Afrikaanized”. The nationalist government wished to get rid of the liberal and English-speaking elements within the SADF in order to secure support for its apartheid policies. This was part of the ongoing struggle between the Boer nationalists and the English-speaking segment of the white population in South Africa. A lot of the resentment towards the British dated back to the Boer War and the Boer victims of the British concentration camps. The National Party election victory in 1948 provided the Boer nationalists with the opportunity to reclaim and create the ‘homeland’ that they had fought and died for centuries. However, according to van der Waag, it would be historically incorrect to say that the top branches of the pre-1948 Union Defence Force were too much dominated by English-speaking officers with a past in the colonial force. In the period from 1912 to 1948, a delicate balance was maintained between Afrikaans- and English-speaking officers at all times. Nevertheless, in May 1948, the new National Party Minister of Defence, Frans Erasmus, initiated a process that would eventually remove all the experienced officers from the force and promote a whole range of inexperienced Afrikaans-speaking officers in their place. According to van der Waag, this had as much to do with Erasmus’s fear of the English as with his fear of the able.<sup>62</sup> A long list of regulations was introduced, most importantly the demand that all staff in the SADF should be able to speak both Afrikaans and English, which de facto excluded large groups of the latter. The command language within the force was changed every second day between English and Afrikaans. One exception was the SA navy, which right up until today has continued to be dominated by the English-speaking segment of the white population.<sup>63</sup> The way in which the NP government handled this ‘Afrikaanization’ of the Union Defence Force was very dramatic in the sense that late-night private calls in 1955 were placed to central, high-ranking, primarily English-speaking officers within the SADF, informing them that they had been released from their duties, an experience later dubbed the night of the long knives. This left the SADF stripped of most of its experienced officer corps and therefore left it extremely vulnerable. This development can be seen as a natural extension of traditional Afrikaner nationalism, where the British were the enemy, the Afrikaners the *volk*, with the birthright to South African territory.<sup>64</sup> At the same time, the Afrikaanization of the Union Defence Force was part of the long tradition of Boer generals and the commando system, which had fought and defended the

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<sup>62</sup> Van der Waag, *Smuts’ Generals: An Intimate Portrait of the South African High Command, 1912-48*, p. 19.

<sup>63</sup> Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa*, p. 109.

<sup>64</sup> For further details of the history of the Afrikaaners, see, for instance, Giliomee, ‘The Afrikaner’.

'rights' of the Boers against the Xhosas, Zulus, British etc. They believed that the Afrikaner was surrounded by enemies and had to fight in order to survive, which in the 1970s naturally made the possibility of total onslaught an integrated part of the Afrikaner perception of their historical relationship with the surrounding African states. Dan O'Meara describes the association between Afrikaner nationalism and the need for reform as follows:

Only through rigid adherence to the sacred principles of their civil religion could Afrikaners ensure their survival on the hostile southern tip of Africa. The verkramptes ceaselessly patrolled the ideological boundaries of Afrikaner nationalism in order to save the volk from itself. [...] In Botha's vision, clinging to policies that did not work represented the greatest danger to Afrikaner survival simply because it handed to the enemies of Afrikanerdom ever greater opportunities to mobilise ever more powerful forces against the beleaguered volk.<sup>65</sup>

Despite being in power, the National Party kept the military budget relatively constant at a low level during the 1950-60s, a period when the SA Police was given priority.<sup>66</sup> However, when P. W. Botha became Defence Minister in 1965, significant changes were made within the SADF. A securitisation process took place, and the survival of the white minority regime became the single most important issue, causing a breakdown of the traditional separation between the civil and military sphere.<sup>67</sup> The introduction of the National Security Management System (NSMS) meant that South African society was organised into a single defence unit, the needs of the SADF being securitised. The relationship between the arms industry, government and the SADF is an interesting example of this process. During the late 1970s and 1980s, the SADF reported directly to ARMSCOR and made its requests to it for new equipment. The resources needed were made available by the State Security Council (SSC).<sup>68</sup> This meant that the production line in the arms industry was directed by the needs of the SADF and that the political level provided the necessary resources.

The apartheid government had decided to establish ARMSCOR in 1964, as a consequence of the voluntary arms embargo introduced by the UN against South

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<sup>65</sup> O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years*, p. 256, see same book for further details on Afrikaner nationalism.

<sup>66</sup> The military budget was approximately 3.7% of GDP during those years; see Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa*, p. 90.

<sup>67</sup> Seegers, *The Military in the Making of the Modern South Africa*, pp. 142-143.

<sup>68</sup> Briefing by Dr. Johann Viljoen at ARMSCOR, October 2004, former scientist in the South African nuclear weapons programme.



Africa. ARMSCOR had been given the task of supplying the SADF with the weaponry it needed, first by creating a domestic arms industry, and secondly by acquiring the arms that South Africa was unable to produce itself. When the UN introduced a mandatory arms embargo in 1977, ARMSCOR was supplying more than 50% of the arms needed by the SADF. In addition to this, a large export trade made South Africa one of the world's eight largest arms producers.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, South Africa co-operated closely with Israel, especially in the exchange of arms technology.<sup>70</sup>

### 3.3.3.1: The Total Onslaught

The Western World – or the Free World, to put it more broadly – is being threatened by the global and total strategy under the leadership of aggressive communism....<sup>71</sup>

The ANC is convinced that the moment has now come to mobilise all forces in Africa and to crown the victories of the people of the former Portuguese colonies with a massive and concentrated onslaught on the Pretoria regime.<sup>72</sup>

At the beginning of the 1960s, the Soviet Union had launched a plan for what it called the “national democratic state”, a plan for newly independent third-world states to create a Marxist society in the post-colonial territories. This process was followed by support for different liberation movements in southern Africa, among others the ANC. The former chief of the East German intelligence service, Markus Wolf, describes in his autobiography how the East Germans and Russians supported the communist element of the ANC alliance in the hope that it might win the upper hand in the internal power struggle within the organisation.<sup>73</sup> The problem for the ANC, and many other liberation movements at the time, was that the only place from which it could obtain international support was the communist bloc. The former South African Foreign Minister, Pik Botha, stated that generally speaking the rebel movements were not communist in origin, but they were forced to seek support from the Eastern Bloc and China and were therefore wrongly perceived as being Marxists.<sup>74</sup> The

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<sup>69</sup> Seegers, *The Military in the Making of the Modern South Africa*, pp. 144-145.

<sup>70</sup> Briefing by Dr. Johann Viljoen at ARMSCOR, October 2004, former scientist in the South African nuclear weapons programme.

<sup>71</sup> P.W. Botha speaking to the House of Assembly in July 1970, cited in Alden, *Apartheid's last stand*, p. 30, P.W. Botha to the House of Assembly in July 1970.

<sup>72</sup> Declaration of The African National Congress (SA) Executive Committee, Morogoro, 17–20 March 1975.

<sup>73</sup> Wolf, *Man Without A Face*, pp. 334–335.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with the former South African Foreign Minister, Pik Botha, Georgetown University Cold War documentary project, 20th May 1997.

nature of relations between the Warsaw Pact and, for instance, the ANC becomes very clear from this 1976 interview with the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, where he states:

...as we drove further south towards the border with Namibia, the South Africa troops were completing their retreat from Angolan soil. This was March 27 and stands out for Angola, for MPLA militants and members of FAPLA, as a date to be remembered in their history. It marked the end of a period of eight or nine months which witnessed a great demonstration of international solidarity and the implementation of policies of internationalism – by Cuba and the Soviet Union....<sup>75</sup>

The western world, and in particular the US, was perceived as part of an international camp of imperialism and neo-colonialism.<sup>76</sup> Its support of non-communist movements such as the FNLA and UNITA in Angola was, not surprisingly, described as part of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy to deny the African people their right to independence. The level of hypocrisy on both sides of the conflict was considerable, and the ideological “fog” frequently covered the real enmities that were causing the conflict.<sup>77</sup> The different rebel movements often used ideological arguments to secure the external support and involvement which could alter the internal balance of power.<sup>78</sup> This could create an penetration situation, as was seen in Angola, where the communist bloc intervened directly and altered the outcome of the civil war, and subsequently the balance of power in the entire region. Furthermore, South Africa’s regionally dominant role was severely limited by its apartheid policies because it excluded large segments of the population from society, both economically and socially, and thus prevented the country from fulfilling and using its full potential. The apartheid state lacked both domestic and international legitimacy. In the mid 1970s, the National Party government realised that the exclusion of the black majority was placing severe restraints on economic growth as there was a shortage of skilled workers. The next realisation was that military mobilisation was extremely costly for the state, primarily because it meant that all white male youths had to do two years of national service and were consequently unavailable for working in industry in that

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<sup>75</sup> Racists Humiliated, Interview with Oliver Tambo in Sechaba, 1976.

<sup>76</sup> See, for instance, the Declaration of the ANC (SA) Executive Committee, Morogoro, 17–20 March 1975, where in paragraph 3 we read the words, “World imperialism, led by the USA, together with its South African outpost....”

<sup>77</sup> An interesting historical perspective is that, from the independence of the first SSA states until 1990, no opposition party ever succeeded in winning an election. For further details, see Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, pp. 56.

<sup>78</sup> Balance of power here means ‘a state of affairs such that no one power is in a position where it is preponderant and can lay down the law to others’; see Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p. 97.

period. The apartheid system also meant that the SADF had to draft its forces from the white minority,<sup>79</sup> limiting its availability of forces. However, the new policy, the Total Strategy, led to significant changes in the structure of the armed forces. By 1986, nearly 25% of the soldiers in the SADF were non-white, a consequence of the increased demands put on the force and the need for skilled labour in the economy.<sup>80</sup> However, it was only in 1990 that black South Africans were allowed into the permanent force.<sup>81</sup> In 1994, the proportion of this segment of the population had increased to more than 50%.<sup>82</sup>

### 3.3.3.2: The Creation of the National Security State

... security was too important to leave for the politicians....<sup>83</sup>

The active ideological and material support given by the communist bloc to third-world leaders and liberation movements in general made it increasingly necessary for colonial and post-colonial states such as South Africa, South Vietnam, Chile and El Salvador to create an anti-communist response to this challenge.<sup>84</sup> Paranoia among the white population in South Africa increased at the end of the 1970s due to the dramatic events in Mozambique and Angola in the mid-1970s and Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. In addition to this, there was the UN mandatory arms embargo from 1977, which increased the perception that South Africa had been deserted by its friends. Because of the political and regional changes of the mid-1970s, the National Party government was forced to change its foreign policy. The Western world was increasingly unwilling to have any association with the regime in Pretoria, and even though the government tried to make itself strategically indispensable to the capitalist world, it was isolated. After the collapse of the Portuguese colonial regime, South Africa's vulnerability increased. The government was forced to adopt a counter-revolutionary strategy to safeguard the white minority regime's interests. In response to this development, the National Party government created the National Security State, which was defined by official policies as being directed by two major political objectives:

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<sup>79</sup> The white population only numbered 15% of the total South African population.

<sup>80</sup> Crawford, *The Domestic Sources and Consequences of Aggressive Foreign Policies*, p. 11.

<sup>81</sup> The apartheid state distinguished between white, coloured and black communities. It was only the latter that were prevented from joining the SADF until 1990: the Indian and Coloured communities were recruited for service much earlier.

<sup>82</sup> Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa*, p. 269.

<sup>83</sup> Chief of Defence and later Defence Minister in the Botha government from 1978, General Magnus Malan, cited in Minter, *Apartheid's Contras*.

<sup>84</sup> O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years*, pp. 259–263.

1. the national security focus, which include counter-revolutionary measures, and the bolstering of military needs and objectives as national policy;
2. the policy reform focus, which represented recognition by the authorities that political reform was needed to counter the new radical trends. In the National Security State the reform pillar was traditionally put aside and replaced by authoritarian government structures.<sup>85</sup>

At the National Party Congress in 1976, P. W. Botha emphasised that South Africa was involved in a total struggle which stressed the need that all sectors of the society would be organised to stave off the pressure of the total onslaught. He argued that:

The military struggle is merely a part of the total struggle in which South Africa is involved. We shall have to fight in all other fields if we want to protect the hearts and minds of our people against communism...<sup>86</sup>

The authoritarian nature of the regime becomes visible in Botha's argument that the regime had to fight to protect itself against an idea. He did not envisage political reform to pre-empt the attraction of communism. The apartheid regime feared a reaction from the radical elements inside South Africa because its cordon sanitaire had disappeared. If the ANC, PAC and others could see the colonial and white minority regimes collapse, they would increase their pressure against the South African government. It was therefore important to signal South Africa's determination and strength by dominating the whole sub-region. That part of the total strategy was very successful, and the rebel movements never succeeded in launching a major military offensive against South Africa. In a transcript from the Soviet Communist Party politburo meeting 18 October 1979, we read:

The next question concerned the assistance with arms to SWAPO. He remarked that Soviet comrades assist SWAPO with arms but the SWAPO men absolutely do not fight and do not want to fight. Then one wonders, why we should help them with weapons?<sup>87</sup>

The minute demonstrates that, within the highest circles of the Soviet Union, there were doubts about the willingness and ability of one of the central actors in the liberation struggle in southern Africa, and particularly that the struggle being waged

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<sup>85</sup> Alden, *Apartheid's Last Stand*, pp. 6-11.

<sup>86</sup> P. W. Botha at the National Party Congress in September 1976, cited in Alden, *Apartheid's Last Stand*, p. 30.

<sup>87</sup> Transcript of CPSU CC Politburo Meeting, 18 October 1979.

by SWAPO would succeed within a reasonable timeframe. On the other hand, this statement also proves that the communist bloc was deeply involved in the conflicts in southern Africa, partly supporting the South African claim that an onslaught was being launched against the country.<sup>88</sup>

### 3.3.3.3: The 1977 White Paper on Defence

In the 1977 South African White Paper on Defence, the security threats against white South Africa, termed the “total onslaught”, were listed and became an integral part of the risk assessment in the years to come. The onslaught was seen as:

1. The expansion of Marxism<sup>89</sup> by revolution in southern Africa.
2. The overthrow of the white regimes in southern Africa so that the militant African bloc can realise its aspirations with regard to the destruction of the so-called colonialism and racialism and the establishment of Pan-Africanism. In its desire to destroy alleged racism the Arab bloc can, with certain exceptions, be regarded as the partner of the Africa bloc in its hostile actions as far as this serves its own purpose.
3. The striving after an indirect strategy in order to unleash revolutionary warfare in Southern Africa and, by means of isolation, to force the RSA to change its domestic policy in favour of Pan-Africanism.<sup>90</sup>

The consequence of this threat assessment was that official South African foreign policy had to be amended altogether. The Vorster government had since the late 1960s tried to improve the state’s international image by diplomatic means and had attempted to come to some sort of understanding with the independent African states. However, this policy of *détente* did not prove very successful and, combined with the country’s increased international isolation after the Angolan intervention in 1975, there was a need to change the existing policies if the white minority in South Africa was to safeguard its privileges.

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<sup>88</sup> See, for instance, Memorandum of Conversation between the USSR Ambassador to Angola and MPLA President Neto, 4 July 1975.

<sup>89</sup> Afro-Marxism became increasingly influential in the mid-1970s, at the time of the independence of the Lusophone colonies in SSA. Ideologically, it was very close to the international understanding of the term “Marxism”, and there was no attempt to “Africanise” the interpretation of Marxism, as, for instance, was seen with African Socialism in the beginning of the 1960s. In the orthodox version, definitions of class theory were introduced in post-colonial societies, and the Leninist principles of democratic centralism and state-directed economic institutions were seen as central and crucial elements in the alteration of the social order. See Chazan, Mortimer et al., *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, pp. 158-159.

<sup>90</sup> Alden, *Apartheid’s Last Stand*, p. 41.

The development of a nuclear weapons capability at the end of the 1970s underlines this determination to survive at more or less any cost. The first nuclear device was built in 1978 by ARMSCOR. The nuclear programme was divided into three phases:

1. In the first phase, at a time that was relatively peaceful, the device was not kept assembled, which made it possible for the South Africans to claim that they did not possess a nuclear device.
2. In the second phase, in time of crisis, South Africa would inform the Western powers, primarily the US, that it had access to a nuclear bomb, and through this statement pressure the US into taking action in favour of the Pretoria government.
3. In the third phase, the government would publicly announce that it had a nuclear capability and that it would be ready to use it as a last resort. This would include an underground nuclear test in the prepared test area near Upington in the Kalahari desert.<sup>91</sup>

The first device was constructed so that it could be dropped from the back of an aircraft, while later models could be launched on ballistic missiles. According to former Defence Minister Magnus Malan, one of the main reasons why a solution was found in Angola and Namibia was that both the USSR and the US became aware of the prepared South African nuclear test site and consequently pressured Cuba to accept a withdrawal from Angola as part of a peace deal in Angola and Namibia.<sup>92</sup> This was, of course, an important element in reaching the Alvor Agreement in 1988. However, the crisis in and subsequent collapse of the eastern bloc in 1989/90 also played a significant role.

One problem that the NP government faced was that it would have been extremely difficult actually to use the device due to the type of low-intensity warfare that was being fought in the region.<sup>93</sup> Despite the increased pressure from international sanctions, the increased support to the liberation movements from the Cuban and Russian presence in Angola, the increased capacity of the MK and Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and civilian disturbances within South Africa, the regime did not at any time consider it necessary to reveal its possession of a nuclear capability. A serious threat could have forced the regime to announce publicly that it had such a

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<sup>91</sup> Briefing by Dr. J. Viljoen at ARMSCOR, October 2004, former scientist in the South African nuclear weapons programme.

<sup>92</sup> Hamann, *Days of the Generals* pp.164ff.

<sup>93</sup> Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa*, pp. 206-207.

capability and was ready to use it. Nevertheless, in the event no direct military threat against South Africa ever materialized, even though the regime could not have continued the conflict indefinitely. One of the problems facing the NP government was that, while it was fighting a war that it need not lose, it was also faced with a conflict it could not win.

Another aspect of South African silence concerning its nuclear capability was the NP government's fear of an adverse reaction from the international community at a time when the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons technology was being safeguarded thoroughly by the IAEA. The Reagan Administration tried to persuade the Botha government to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which it refused to do.<sup>94</sup> This refusal and the apartheid government's nuclear policy in general underline the pariah nature of the regime.

#### **3.3.3.4: The Concept of 'Total National Strategy'**

In the 1977 Defence White Paper, the SADF concluded, in line with Botha's total onslaught notion, that all the available resources of the state should be used in the fight against the liberation movements and that a significant domestic reform programme therefore had to be initiated. The theoretical foundations of the total strategy<sup>95</sup> were the strategic thoughts of the French general Beaufre, who, in his book *La Guerre Révolutionnaire*, had written extensively on France's experiences during the colonial wars in Algeria and Indochina respectively. Beaufre claimed that a government under siege had to create an overall, total strategy involving four key areas of the state – military, economic, diplomatic, and political – in order to be able to defeat its enemies.<sup>96</sup> The problem for many governments was that a total strategy only existed within the narrow security sector. According to Beaufre, political reforms were essential because they would help counter the dissatisfaction within the state that "fed" the radical elements and movements. In South Africa, the multi-dimensional communist threat against the state was securitised, and strategies for each of the above-mentioned sectors were sought.<sup>97 98</sup> One of the problems that the regime faced was that the proposed reform met with hostility from the majority of the non-

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<sup>94</sup> Davenport, South Africa, p. 472.

<sup>95</sup> The term "strategy" is based on Beaufre's definition, namely "the art of using force to resolve the conflict between dialectically opposed wills"; see O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years*, p. 261.

<sup>96</sup> Beaufre, quoted in Alden, *Apartheid's Last Stand*, p. 42.

<sup>97</sup> Alden, *Apartheid's Last Stand*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>98</sup> A public survey made by Southscan showed, for instance, that in 1982 only 33% of white South Africans supported the suggestion that President Botha should negotiate directly with SWAPO. This figure had increased to 57% by 1988. See Minter, *Apartheid's Contrasts*, p. 132.

white part of the population. The government and the SADF seemed out of touch with the magnitude of the dissatisfaction among non-white South Africans especially, and they lacked a comprehensive understanding of the extent of the reforms and reform process required. For instance, the constitutional changes in 1983-84 were met with disappointment from many of the disenfranchised groups.<sup>99</sup>

The question remains whether the risk assessment put forward jointly by the NP government and the SADF leadership constituted a true picture of the security threats facing the South African state. The threat was real, but according to a CIA assessment from 1982, there was never an urgent existential military threat, even though the South Africans rejected this analysis and argued that the US “had gone soft on communism”.<sup>100</sup> In fact none of the neighbouring countries possessed the necessary military strength to challenge the SADF, but it is the perception of threat that directs the response. Seen from the South African perspective, the state was more or less isolated internationally and could not rely on support from what it regarded as its allies in the Western world. At the same time, the ring of hostile neighbouring states surrounding South Africa was supporting its enemies. In addition to this, the white minority was faced with increased domestic pressure from a wide range of organisations and public protests. Because the enemies of the white minority regime were receiving substantial support, both political and actual, from the Eastern Bloc and liberal Western states during the years of the Cold War, the perception among the *verkrempes* of a total communist onslaught was itself total. This prompted Prime Minister Botha to use the slogan “Adapt or die”<sup>101</sup> in an address to NP members concerning the need for white South Africans to accept political reform in 1979. This statement also constituted the beginning of a reform process of the apartheid system, which turned out to be an insufficient means of defusing the broad-based public opposition towards the continuation of the apartheid system.

### 3.3.4: P.W. Botha’s Reform Process

In September 1978, when P.W. Botha became the new South African Prime Minister, the Defence White Paper became a central element in his plans for a reform of the apartheid system. Most of the policies that were produced in the government offices in Pretoria at that time were based on the idea that South Africa was ideologically a

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<sup>99</sup> The new constitution included a three-chamber parliament, one chamber each for the White, Indian and Coloured parts of the population. The black majority was still excluded from influence. See, for instance, Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 231-233 for further details.

<sup>100</sup> Alden, *Apartheid's Last Stand*, p. 49.

<sup>101</sup> Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, p. 225.



part of the Western anti-communist alliance and that it was South Africa's duty to protect the interests of what it called the free world. The counter-revolutionary measures implemented during the late 1970s were part of this strategy. One element of this strategy was to weaken the enemy so that he would not be a potential danger to national security. This was, for instance, seen in the continued support given to the RENAMO rebels after the collapse of the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia in 1980, South Africa's active support and involvement in the Angolan civil war, the destruction of the Rhodesian/Zimbabwean air force in 1982,<sup>102</sup> interference in domestic political affairs in Lesotho, the instigation of military coups etc. The reform plans were designed to reverse the total onslaught. The new structure was called the National Security Management System (NSMS) and was a network distributed across the country linked to the State Security Council (SSC). Beneath each cell was another sub-system, and NSMS structures were distributed like a web all over the country. The structure had a dual function. On a daily basis, it had to deal with potential domestic threats to the state and report on them back to the SSC. In time of conflict, each local unit had to co-ordinate the efforts of the different elements of the security apparatus.

The basic goal of the "total national strategy" in South Africa was the survival of the white's dominant position and continuing the policy of the "separate development" of the different ethnic groups in the country. It could be argued that, with the implementation of the National Security Management System after the passing of the 1977 White Paper on Defence, a parallel state structure dominated by the president and the security sector was established. The SSC was the head of this structure and turned out to be the single most important decision-making body in South Africa. The SSC was created in 1972 together with a number of other committees to improve the efficiency of the executive part of the government. However, by 1978 it had become more or less responsible for running South Africa's security and foreign relations as a whole. The main problem for the National Party government was that it was faced with what it perceived to be a dual onslaught. First, it had a domestic African problem, where an increasing black majority was posing a potential danger. An attempt had been made to solve this problem by creating a number of "independent" African homelands. This was an attempt to push aside the domestic security problem. Still, after the Soweto riots in 1976 the domestic pressure seemed to be increasing dramatically.

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<sup>102</sup> Dzimba, *South Africa's Destabilization of Zimbabwe 1980-89*, p. 56.

The second aspect of the dual security problem, of course, was the hostility of the independent African states. In Article III of the OAU Charter it was stated that the member states had an

“absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African territories which are still dependent”.<sup>103</sup> The white minority regime in South Africa was seen as an anachronism and as part of a colonial legacy, and OAU members were dedicated to supporting the struggle against the racist regime. According to their own historical record, the Afrikaners had been in South Africa since van Riebeck landed at the Cape in 1652, where they had settled in an unoccupied territory. This is historically incorrect, but it does not change the fact that the Afrikaners had been living in South Africa for generations. They feared that, if they transferred power to the liberation movements, they would be forced to leave like the white settlers in Kenya, the DRC or Mozambique had before them, even though the ANC’s Freedom Charter of 1955 stated the opposite. The Botha government therefore saw the military as the only tool available to it in securing the state, against both external and internal threats. By 1980, South Africa had become a “garrison state”<sup>104</sup> because the armed struggle was seen as the option. The regime in Pretoria was faced with one fundamental problem during the 1970s and 1980s, namely that the regionally dominant power was not able to provide the white minority with peace and stability. First the international overlay<sup>105</sup> from the colonial powers, and later USSR/Cuban penetration in support for the MPLA in Angola, limited South Africa’s capacity to dominate the region. Later still, international penetration in the region in general also restrained the capacity of the apartheid state. However, it must also be acknowledged that, right up until the end, Pretoria was relatively successful in moving the major battleground out of South Africa and into the neighbouring countries. Therefore, it could be argued that the regime managed to defend the status quo in the regional military balance. Nevertheless, the increased domestic instability during the 1980s, combined with international isolation and sanctions, undermined the state’s viability. The

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<sup>103</sup> OAU Charter Article III.

<sup>104</sup> The term “garrison state” describes a society in which traditional civil-military relations have collapsed, and the executive and the military have gained power at the expense of the legislature and civilian politicians. The primary focus of the state is to provide for the needs of the security apparatus at the cost of the civilian production. Technology, science, industry etc. are therefore directed towards war. This type of production is extremely costly and unproductive and will damage the long-term economic development of the state. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, pp. 348-349.

<sup>105</sup> In his theory of regional security complexes, Buzan distinguishes between external penetration and overlay. In both cases the “natural” balance of power is distorted by external interference, but the degree it does so differs. A good example of penetration was the collapse of the former Zaire, but also the extensive joint Cuban/USSR support to the MPLA government in Angola in the 1970-80s. In a multipolar world order, it is very unlikely that the overlay situation will occur because no other state will be so dominant that the other dominant actor would allow the overlay to be effected. The opposite situation arises in the case of a unipolar world order. The overlay situation confines conflicts within the sphere of interest of the dominant power. In SSA bipolarity enhanced the conflicts. Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, p. 208.

destabilization of neighbouring states did not change the fact that the majority of South Africans did not want to go on living in a racially divided society in which the great majority were treated as second-class citizens. In 1989, the communist world collapsed and the NP government could therefore start the process of a negotiated transfer of power because the perceived communist onslaught on South Africa no longer existed. However, the fear of the black majority, *die swarte gefaar*, still existed. The white minority regime felt that it had won an important victory in its war against aggressive communism, which to a large extent resembled its fear of black majority rule. In particular, the experiences of other white settler communities had intensified this fear.<sup>106</sup> But the price had been high, both for the neighbouring FLS and for the future healing process inside South Africa proper. Even though it was negotiated, the final transfer of power to a non-racial democratic government was a consequence of a regime that could no longer see how it could ultimately win the struggle against its opponents. In Beaufre's definition of total strategy, the use of military force was only one of many components in the fight against one's enemies. He therefore also rejected the traditional Clausewitzian notion that military victory is the ultimate and decisive victory.<sup>107</sup> The NP government neglecting this central point in pursuing their strategy against the rebel movements and the neighbouring states because, as Beaufre continues:

the decisive outcome is an event of a psychological nature which one wished to produce in the mind of the adversary: to convince him that it is useless to engage or to continue the struggle.<sup>108</sup>

The NP realised that, even though it repeatedly won military encounters, this did not produce the desired peace and stability. Domestic violence continued to grow during the late 1970s and the 1980s, and the political, diplomatic and military capabilities of the ANC especially increased as well. The white minority regime was fighting an unjust battle, and even though it claimed adherence to the teaching of Beaufre, it used his teaching selectively. The Botha regime forgot the psychological nature of the struggle that Beaufre had emphasised, namely that in attempting to turn the course of history, the causes of the dissatisfaction must be dealt with. The trend of

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<sup>106</sup> The experiences of, for instance, DRC/Zaire, Kenya, Angola, Uganda and Mozambique acted as a warning to white minority in South Africa.

<sup>107</sup> O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years*, p. 261. Clausewitz argues that instances where a single battle has turned out to be decisive for the outcome of a whole war are rare, and it could be argued that even though South Africa won battles, none of them were decisive. For further details of Clausewitz and the effects on war, see: Clausewitz, *On War*, Chapters 10, 11 (pp. 336-348).

<sup>108</sup> Beaufre, *La Guerre Revolutionaire*.

the history of southern Africa was towards dissolving colonial and white minority rule, of which South Africa was the last remaining representative. It was only a question of time (though a long time) before its final collapse. South Africa was by 1989 probably the most isolated country in world, and in an address to Parliament on 2 February 1990, President de Klerk stated:

Without contact and co-operation with the rest of the world we cannot promote the well-being and security of our citizens. The dynamic developments in international politics have created new opportunities for South Africa as well. Important advances have been made, among other things, in our contacts abroad, especially where these were precluded previously by ideological considerations.<sup>109</sup>

The collapse of one side in the Cold War was a timely “gift” to the white minority regime as it removed the rebel movements’ external backing, and the NP representatives therefore largely dictated the terms of the transfer of power to black majority rule. The strategy was based on the basic idea that major reform should never be introduced as the result of pressure from anti-government forces or because the state had been severely weakened.<sup>110</sup> On the other hand, reform will by nature often be a result of a combination of the two. The end of the Cold War had a negative effect on the ANC and left the organisation without its main protector. The organisation could not exploit the international animosities between the main actors in the Cold War as a way of putting pressure on the NP government during the negotiations. Due to the collapse of the socialist bloc, the main political alternative to a liberal democracy was gone, taking with it the ideological foundations of the ANC as well. The NP government skilfully manage to use the political power vacuum and secure what it perceived to be a better settlement. However, it did not change the fact that the apartheid regime had lost, and had been forced to negotiate a peace deal, simply because it could not win the conflict.

### **3.3.5: Pariah South Africa**

Apartheid South Africa was, as shown in Chapter 2, widely considered a pariah state, increasingly so from 1977 onwards. It lacked international recognition and was increasingly isolated, both in its immediate region and in the international system as a whole, as indicated by the imposition of sanctions and the 1977 mandatory arms

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<sup>109</sup> Address by State President F. W. de Klerk in Parliament 2 February 1990.

<sup>110</sup> Samuel Huntington visited South Africa in 1979, and his work was instrumental in the reform process in the 1980s. See O’Meara, *Forty Lost Years*, p. 264.

embargo.<sup>111</sup> It was also considered a threat to its neighbours because its destabilisation and counter-insurgency military strategy constituted a direct threat to the security of South Africa's neighbours. The SADF and the security sector in general ran proxy forces in the neighbouring states. This was all part of what Williams calls a "defensive offensive" strategy,<sup>112</sup> that is, one of removing your enemies' capability before it becomes a direct threat. Internationally South Africa also constituted a threat because it refused to sign the nuclear weapons NPT and was rightly suspected of possessing a nuclear weapons capability. Its increased isolation created fears of how South Africa might use this capability.

The apartheid state therefore had, in relative terms, formidable military capacity. There was no single state or organisation in the region that had the conventional military capacity to defeat the regime.<sup>113</sup> However, the Pretoria regime was slowly losing the war anyway because the political legitimacy of the regime evaporated. Generally speaking the capacity of the state to a large extent depends on its coherence. South Africa was a strongly divided society, and the state was finding it increasingly difficult to deal with and control civilian disturbances. The greatest threat to apartheid South Africa was its own nature.

South Africa was very much part of the Cold War dichotomy. Politically it attempted to appease the dominant western powers and to be accepted as an important strategic partner of the west. However, the fact that sanctions were introduced anyway, despite the Cold War fog that generally overshadowed demands regarding the nature of the state from the two superpowers, stresses to what extent the nature of apartheid South Africa was considered illegitimate.<sup>114</sup> Its political aggressiveness was also illustrated by its constant refusal to comply with a series of UN resolutions concerning its occupation of Namibia. The apartheid government did not care about international norms and regulations: the survival of the regime was more important.

After the failure of Vorster's strategy of détente, in the 1970s South Africa's rhetoric towards the region became more aggressive, and it tried to keep its neighbours

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<sup>111</sup> See Appendix 12 for a list of the sanctions implemented against apartheid South Africa

<sup>112</sup> Williams, *Defence in a Democracy*, in Williams et al., "Ourselves to Know: Civil-military Relations and Defence Transformation in Southern Africa", p. 209.

<sup>113</sup> However, as previously mentioned the international penetration in Angola meant that it became increasingly difficult for the SANDF to stave off direct military pressure on the Namibian border with Angola. Especially the loss of air superiority made the operational conditions more difficult for the SADF

<sup>114</sup> There are, of course, other elements to this equation. The dominant Western powers, the US, the UK, West Germany and Japan, cooperated with South Africa for as long as possible, only giving in because of their own large domestic pressures, as well as because continued cooperation with South Africa might damage other, more important strategic alliances. South Africa was strategically important, but only to certain degree.

economically dependent on South Africa. However, it was the nature of apartheid South Africa that was unacceptable to the FLS, which meant that attempts to settle differences through negotiations were fruitless. South Africa did not have the ability to coerce the FLS into accepting its regime via formal treaties and thus making them accept the hegemonic idea presented by South Africa.<sup>115</sup> There was, despite the economic and military capacity of the South African state, no acceptance of South Africa playing the dominant role. Formal regimes were established with the purpose of countering South African domination. The South African response was the use of force in an attempt to defuse this anti-South African initiative before it could gain momentum. South Africa used a unilateral military strategy and simply disregarded international law and regulations, especially after the first Angolan campaign from 1975-77.<sup>116</sup> Apartheid South Africa in the 1980s was a classical example of a pariah state. This was the reality for the new ANC-led government when it took office in 1994, and it found it an immense task to change the image of South Africa.<sup>117</sup>

### ***3.4: The Principles of Defence in a Democracy: The SANDF and the Transition from Authoritarianism to Democracy***

The primary object of the defence force is to defend and protect the Republic, its territorial integrity and its people in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulating the use of force.<sup>118</sup>

As described in detail in the previous chapters, South Africa's role in Africa changed dramatically after the transition to majority rule in 1994. This also meant that the security challenges facing the state, and thus the task and role of the SANDF, changed as well. The existing amities and enmities were partly replaced with new ones.<sup>119</sup> South Africa's role was changed from a pariah state into that of a benign regional leader. This also meant that the perception of what constituted South Africa's security challenges changed and the issues that had to be securitised were different ones. However, the securitising actors also changed because of the change

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<sup>115</sup> One exception was, of course, the 1984 Nkomati agreement between South Africa and Mozambique.

<sup>116</sup> See Mandrup Jørgensen, "Speak Softly, but Carry a big Stick.", for further details of the SADF's experience in Angola.

<sup>117</sup> However, the NP government had started this process of image change by, for example, closing the nuclear arms programme, abolishing the "chapter six" special forces units, withdrawing from Namibia and reducing the defence budget.

<sup>118</sup> The 1996 South African Constitution, Article 200 (2).

<sup>119</sup> For further reading on security relations in SADC, see for instance Hammerstad, *Defending the State or Protecting the People?*; Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*; Nathan, *Domestic Instability and Security Communities*

in the nature of the government. This had a de-securitising effect in itself, both for South Africa and for South Africa's neighbours. During the apartheid era, all state institutions were designed to enable the state security apparatus to handle the challenges to the regime. However, after 1994, the new security structure's main function was to support the government's broader efforts in building the new South Africa. This meant that, whereas the leaders in the security sector had been significant players in designating the issues to be securitised during the apartheid era, this function now became 'civilianised' – that is, it was the political level that decided this type of issue. The apartheid regime was highly securitised and security issues were moved away from what constituted normal politics into the SSC. The securitising actors, whether the SADF itself in the 1977 White Paper on Defence or Prime Minister Botha, securitised issues in a manner that was accepted by the audience in both Parliament and among the wider public, that is, the white minority. The issue that was securitised stipulated that the SADF was to be given priority over all other affairs of state. According to this logic, the security services were the sole provider of security against 'aggressive international communism' and the 'Africanisation' of South Africa. This securitisation was accepted because it was seen as the only bulwark against the destruction of the white South African way of life. After 1994, this was, of course, changed: the new constitution secured civilian control over the security sector, and civilian secretariats in the DOD and in the Department for Safety and Security were established. The transition in 1994 was part of a large de-securitisation process, where a number of issues were re-introduced into the arena of normal politics. However, new issues were securitised by the ANC-led government, and presented and accepted as bearing on the state's survival.<sup>120</sup>

When dealing with a process of securitisation, and in the case of South Africa especially de-securitisation, these processes have a significantly different content and nature, depending on the sector that the particular object being referred to belongs to. In this dissertation, the focus is on the narrow military sector in South Africa. This section will investigate how the South African armed forces' international role as part of the country's combined policy changed over time. The focus will consequently be on whether, how and why particular international operations have been securitised within this narrow sector, and what this has meant for the armed forces' ability to fulfil the tasks allotted to it.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> See, for instance, President Nelson Mandela's Speech at the Freedom Day Celebrations in Umtata, 27 April 1999, also the Statement by Minister of Defence Modise in 1996, quoted in Cawthra, From 'Total Strategy to 'Human Security', pp. 7-8.

<sup>121</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde suggest that the political, economic, societal and environmental sectors are all

### 3.4.1: The Armed Forces in Transition

According to the Democratic Alliance (DA) spokesperson on Defence, Rafeek Shah, the role of the armed forces in South Africa should be understood as double:

In any state and particularly in young democracies the military is a critically important state institution. This is because of its capacity to exercise substantial force. It is the ultimate guarantor of sovereignty and liberty when a country is confronted by external aggression. It also has the potential to overthrow the civilian authority and destroy democracy.<sup>122</sup>

This view is echoed by Nathan who argue that the defence force play the role as a protector of the democratic project, while it at the same time can subvert or destroy it.<sup>123</sup> This duality, as both a guarantor of and a threat to democracy, is very apparent in South Africa, though in its entire history the armed forces have never taken direct control of the government. However, the political transformation of 1994 signalled a change of the role of its armed forces. In particular, the new democratic government had to regain control over the armed forces and restore the former division between the public, civilian sphere and the military sphere. During the apartheid era, civilian-military relations had been influenced heavily by the ongoing conflicts and counter-insurgency operations into South Africa's neighbouring countries, and especially by the launch of the total national strategy and the NSMS at the end of the 1970s. This resulted in an overlap of spheres that gave the military leadership unprecedented influence over the day-to-day political process. To a certain extent, the SSC became the real centre of political power in South Africa in the late apartheid era. Thus, the new government of national unity had a difficult task in separating the military and civilian sphere and in removing the military leaders from the political scene, thus disentangling the military and civilian spheres.

However, the reform process within South Africa's security structures had actually been initiated back in 1989, when the Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) was closed down and reintegrated into the ordinary defence structure. The CCB had previously been integrated into the Special Forces, which had the task of disrupting the

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important and potentially constitute threats. It is not because this dissertation takes a narrow approach to the concept of security, but because its focus is on the specific military sector sub-field in security studies, that the other elements are not placed at the centre of the analysis.

<sup>122</sup> Shah, *Revolutionary challenges for the South African armed forces*, p. 5.

<sup>123</sup> Nathan, *Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies*, p. 2



opponents of the apartheid government. The CCB was divided into different units, with most units conducting regular Special Forces operations. The exception was the so-called “*Chapter six*”, which was responsible for internal security, and where the personnel were covertly employed by Military Intelligence (MI) and were therefore not in any way officially attached to the SADF.<sup>124</sup> Chapter six of the CCB was responsible for many of the atrocities conducted by the apartheid regime, such as the infamous Vlakplass operation.<sup>125</sup> It was President de Klerk who, when he came into office, initiated the reform of the SADF following the Goldstone investigation in 1992. This had disclosed the existence of covert operations and subsequently resulted in the dismissal of 23 high-ranking SADF officers, including the former Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, and the Deputy Chief of Intelligence, Major General Thirion, in what has since become known as ‘the night of the generals’.<sup>126</sup> De Klerk wanted to regain civilian control over the security forces, which, during the years of the total national strategy, had become a shadow state. However, it was not just the old cadres of the apartheid state’s security machinery that needed reforming or dismantling after 1994: many paramilitary units, such as the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA), the MK, and homeland military and civil defence force units had to be demobilised or integrated into the new civilian controlled national army, the SANDF. Indeed, the whole of militarized South African society needed to be ‘civilianized’. The major task was to integrate the seven different armies and guerrillas and create one national army. The Chief of the SADF, General Meiring, and Chief of the MK, General Nyanda, already started the planning of the integration phase in 1992. There were a lot of technical and practical issues that needed settling, such as rank and mustering issues and the process of upgrading the non-statutory force members with no formal military background so that they could function within a formal military structure. On the other hand, former SADF officers had to go through some kind of training to acquire a general understanding of how civilian-military relations worked in a democratic society. Not only did the military leadership have to merge elements from seven different armies, it also had to transform the whole basis and role of the new armed forces in the new democratic South Africa. A new military doctrine had to be produced, civilian control mechanisms established, training doctrines changed and produced, and the force’s ‘raison d’être’ redefined.

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<sup>124</sup> The Special Forces units in the SANDF are the only regiments to which affirmative action policies do not apply. The personnel transferred from the old SADF have been made to sign contracts prohibiting them from disclosing their activities prior to 1994.

<sup>125</sup> An infamous farm used as a base for Chapter six elements to conduct operations West of Pretoria.

<sup>126</sup> Hamann, *Days of the Generals*, pp. 177ff.

### 3.4.2: The Post-1994 White Paper and Defence Review Processes

The aim of the Department of Defence is to defend and protect the Republic of South Africa, its territorial integrity and its people, in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulating the use of force.<sup>127</sup>

The SANDF's role was distinctly different from that of the old SADF. The ANC introduced a 'peaceful means strategy' into the South African defence sector, which involved a whole new way of thinking. Force was only to be used as a last resort. It was important for the ANC to bring the SANDF under civilian control so that it could serve all the 'people of South Africa'. In the late years of the apartheid regime, civilian control of the SADF had been lacking, its role and actions both being decided in the SSC, where President P.W. Botha, in co-operation with the main generals and ministers, ran the South African state. Parliamentary and even cabinet control and oversight of the daily running of the state was largely lacking because the major decisions were taken by the SSC. The new civilian and democratic constitution demanded a reform of this system in order to secure civilian oversight and civilian control of the security sector.<sup>128</sup> The establishment of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSCD) and the creation of a civilian defence secretariat was part of this process. According to the South African scholar Gavin Cawthra, together with a vibrant civil society, the JSCD was instrumental in drafting the White Paper on Defence, which was finalised in 1996 and defined the future tasks of the SANDF.<sup>129</sup> The ANC's focus on transparency and openness also meant that the White Paper and the Defence Review formed part of an all-embracing political process with civilian NGOs like the Institute for Security Studies, the Military Research Group and the Centre for Conflict Resolution, which had a significant influence on the drafting of papers.<sup>130</sup> More than ninety written public submissions were made to the DOD during the drafting of the White Paper on Defence, making it a very time-consuming process. However, the NGOs and the public in general had much more influence over the White Paper process than was the case during the drafting of the Defence Review from 1996-98, even though civil society groups were members and co-

<sup>127</sup> South African Defence Vote 22, 2004.

<sup>128</sup> For further details on the Civilian Control over the SANDF see for instance Shelton, South Africa – Defence Transformation and 'New Security', Cawthra, Cawthra, Security Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa, in Cawthra & Luckham, *Governing Insecurity*, pp. 38ff.

<sup>129</sup> Cawthra, *Security Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, in Cawthra and Luckham, *Governing Insecurity*, p. 41.

<sup>130</sup> Williams, *The South African Defence Review and the Redefinition: The Parameters of the National Defence Debate: Towards a Post-Modern Military?* p. 104.

drafters of the review, as well through the membership of the Defence Review Work Group (DRWG). It could be argued that this is actually not unexpected, taking the two documents' role into account: that is, while the first was concerned with the political framework, the second put down the guidelines for the future force design, thus enabling the force to fulfil the task laid down in the White Paper. Nevertheless, both drafting processes were characterised by being dominated by the small number of NGOs and individuals<sup>131</sup> who had the capacity to function as drafters of this type of document. This was largely the result of the limited capacity on the civilian side of the DOD and the ANC, which made outside assistance necessary. The NGOs still play a role, but a diminished one.<sup>132</sup> Other central actors, besides the obvious ones from the DOD, were drawn from the defence industry and the JSCD.

The White Paper and the subsequent Defence Review outlined the future structure and force design of the SANDF. The process was initiated during the transitional negotiations under the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), in which the ANC in particular wished to secure democratic and civilian oversight of the new national armed forces.<sup>133</sup> Since the militarization of the DOD, from which the civilian post of Secretary of Defence was removed in 1966, there had been limited parliamentary control and oversight of the defence forces.<sup>134</sup> Thus, it was of the utmost importance for the ANC to create a new civilian defence secretariat aimed at reducing the political influence of the armed forces and securing civilian control over them.<sup>135</sup> The division between a civilian defence secretariat servicing the minister and the military-led and military-dominated DOD was new and has at times led to tensions emerging over their respective responsibilities for particular tasks. The most important elements of the reform of civilian-military relations was the constitutional position of the president as commander-in-chief, the constitutionally determined functions of the SANDF, parliamentary committee oversight and a transparent defence policy process.<sup>136</sup> According to the Senior Researcher at ISS in Pretoria, Len Le Roux, this meant that the armed forces could focus their attention on their primary function, namely their provision, preparation and employment.<sup>137</sup> The armed forces ceased to be a political player, and a clear separation between the civilian and

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<sup>131</sup> More precisely, certain individuals within these NGOs.

<sup>132</sup> In the autumn of 2004, for example, one South African NGO was asked to draft some of the policy papers for an SADC conference on the future ASF.

<sup>133</sup> Williams, *The South African Defence Review and the Redefinition: The Parameters of the National Defence Debate: Towards a Post-Modern Military?* p. 105.

<sup>134</sup> Koornhof, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces*, p. 6.

<sup>135</sup> A civilian secretariat was also created in the Ministry of Safety and Security.

<sup>136</sup> Le Roux, *Defence Sector Transformation*, p. 8.

<sup>137</sup> Le Roux, *Defence Sector Transformation*, p. 8.

military sphere was established. What was particularly important was that civilian control and oversight of the armed forces were created. However, this also meant that SANDF personnel started focusing on being professional soldiers.<sup>138</sup>

The White Paper on Defence concluded that the review process should emphasise the preservation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of South Africa as the main function and *raison d'être* of the armed forces. This narrowly defined objective for the future of the armed forces was a result of the euphoria that existed within South Africa in the aftermath of the transition in 1994. Strong voices in South African society even argued that there was no need to have a defence force at all. The SANDF therefore very quickly had to define its own *raison d'être* to legitimise continued spending on defence. The DOD did not have any directives from the government on what its future tasks should be and therefore chose to focus on a traditional, narrow, basic understanding of national security, namely protection of the territorial integrity of the state against foreign aggression.<sup>139</sup> Under the South African constitution, for instance, the main function of the SANDF is defined as the defence of South Africa against any external aggressor,<sup>140</sup> while in the Defence Review it is stated that:

The primary function of the SANDF is defence against external aggression. The other functions are secondary.<sup>141</sup>

The transition from apartheid and the end of the Cold War meant that the disruptive potential that military threats traditionally have were in competition with the needs of other government departments.<sup>142</sup> The needs and concerns of the other departments were securitised and thus considered more important than the potential military threats facing South Africa. This relates to the changed role of the SANDF in society, where, in the South African version of integrated thinking, it was reduced to supporting other sectors of government. However, the drafters of the defence review in the DOD managed to convince most political actors that the defence force needed investments totalling US\$ 10 billion over ten years to be able to fulfil the role outlined in the constitution and the White Paper for Defence.<sup>143</sup> They skilfully managed to use

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<sup>138</sup> For further details on the concept of professionalism, see, for instance, Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*; also Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*.

<sup>139</sup> Williams, *The South African Defence Review and the Redefinitions: The Parameters of the National Defence Debate: Towards a Post-Modern Military?* pp. 99ff.

<sup>140</sup> The Constitution of the RSA, Article 200.

<sup>141</sup> The Defence Review, Chapter 1, 29.

<sup>142</sup> Wæver, *Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies*, p. 9.

<sup>143</sup> Interestingly enough, the only party that voted against the SDP was the former Chief of SADF, Constan

the traditional concept of security that formed the basis for the White Paper to obtain the new equipment. This created a consensus around a narrow focus on the primary functions of the tasks of the defence force and resulted in a recommendation for the acquisition of fighter-bombers and submarines.<sup>144</sup> However, as pointed out by Le Roux in Chapter 2, there was also a lack direction from the political level to the defence planners concerning the future foreign policy role of the SANDF.

### 3.4.3: The Force Posture Question

Military posture tells us a lot about a state's role, especially its intentions. Is it offensive or defensive in nature, and do its neighbours consider it to be a threat to their national security, to which they must react? One important conclusion of the South African White Paper on Defence was that the new force should have a defensive posture, marking an apparent doctrinal change from the total national strategy of the apartheid era. The new doctrine for the defence force was inspired by the idea of "non-offensive defence" (NOD), which underlined the defensive posture. The thinking behind NOD was based on the idea of creating a defence posture that was not strong enough to be perceived as a threat by South Africa's neighbours, though was still strong enough to repel an armed attack on the country. It therefore became a way of transforming perceptions of South Africa as a coercive state and a threat into being considered a benign regional power. The NOD theory argues in favour of a strong military capability, not in size, but in quality. Before it took office in 1994, the ANC's approach to the South African security apparatus was that it was one of the main instruments ensuring the survival of the apartheid state. Therefore, reform was needed to ensure civilian control and accountability and to de-politicise the future security sector. This included the arms industry, and especially the government's weapons industry, which was divided into the acquisitions arm, ARMSCOR, and the production arm, DENEL.<sup>145</sup> In 1994, the role of the new armed

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Viljoen, then Chairman of the small Afrikaaner nationalist party, Freedom Front, who argued that the future defence force would need long-range transport capacity and mobility to be able to operate in Africa. This was rejected by the other parties. Mentioned by the ANC Chairman of the JSCD, Kadar Asmal, at the defence hearing, October 2004.

<sup>144</sup> It is important to recognise that this is not exclusively a South African problem. A similar bargaining process has been seen in, for instance, the US in its transition from its Cold War strategy to something different, and also in Denmark, where sections of the defence force have stubbornly continued to argue the need for new submarines and large numbers of battle tanks.

<sup>145</sup> This was actually the second time in South Africa's history that the acquisition and production arms were divided into two independent companies. ARMSCOR–DENEL underwent significant restructuring and lost huge parts of its intellectual capacity in the process, mainly because the high space and nuclear programmes were terminated more or less overnight. No plans were drawn up as to how to retain or move these scientists to other functions, which meant that many emigrated. The required reform also resulted in uncertainty as to the role of the institution in the new South Africa. However, in the last couple of years the restructured ARMSCOR has regained its importance, and in the financial year 2003/04 the organisation produced an economic surplus of R10 million. Conversely, DENEL is struggling with chronic deficits and in October 2004 it pleaded with the government for

forces had still not been defined, and doctrinal strategies, like NOD, were included in national strategic thinking following the Defence Review in 1998. The consequence of this was that, in the early years after 1994, the SANDF focused on integrating the seven different armies and on transforming its defence posture in accordance with the provisions put forward in the White Paper and later in the Defence Review. This defensive posture constituted a significant challenge to the SANDF as it represented a shift in military doctrine away from the counter-insurgency strategy that had directed operations during the apartheid era, especially after the adoption of the total national strategy in 1977-78 that followed the recommendations of the White Paper on Defence produced the year before. In the 1977 Defence White Paper, the SADF concluded that all the available resources of the state should be used in the fight against revolutionary forces, but also that a significant domestic reform programme had to be initiated. During the Defence Review process, the defence planners therefore had to change the existing military logistics and infrastructure, which were based on being able to deal with and counter the challenges posed by revolutionary warfare. The defence planners had to decide to close down a number of military bases, adjusting force composition and equipment, etc. They were confronted with the usual problems that defence planners are always faced with, namely that they had to plan for the next thirty years without knowing what the future would bring, in a volatile regional setting. Long-term military planning deals with actual, potential and latent threats to national security, which the South African government often uses as an explanation for the recommendations put forward in the Defence Review.<sup>146</sup> The future force structure was now to be based on a relatively small permanent force consisting of 70,000 civilian and military personnel, supported by a large conventional and territorial defence reserve capability. The force was to be right sized in both actual numbers and ethnic composition, making it representative of the population in general.

One critical area is the very nature of the defence review process. The late Dr Rocky Williams, who played a central role in drafting the White Paper on Defence and the Defence Review, argued that, although the whole process was a historic occasion in civilian–military relations in South Africa, the recommendations and the strategic

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extra funds and for a termination of the open tenure system, which would favour DENEL in competition with other international suppliers. However, at a press conference in August 2005, Public Enterprise Minister Alec Erwin argued that "Denel does play an important role in South Africa's technological capabilities, and I believe the evolutionary process will result in a strong business entity, serving both the domestic and international defence markets." SAPA 23 August 2005. For further details of the South African defence industry, see, for instance, Bachelor and Willet, *Disarmament and Defence Industrial Adjustment in South Africa*.

<sup>146</sup> Koornhof, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces*, p. 7.

thinking behind them were influenced by the military culture of the Western world in general. In his view, there was tension between the doctrinal 'mannerism' underlying the recommendations in the Review and the real challenges that the new defence forces were faced with.<sup>147</sup> By this he was arguing that the review was based on a Western logic which did not necessarily fit the volatile and unpredictable African context. In 1998, after the completion of the review process, the SANDF's primary function was to protect the territorial integrity of the state and defend it against external threats: issues such as regional PSOs and humanitarian disaster relief were of secondary importance. However, the review recognised that it did not foresee any direct conventional threats arising against South Africa. By 1998, the important day-to-day tasks that the SANDF was faced with were precisely its secondary functions, namely support to the police and preparing for regional PSOs without jeopardising its capacity to deal with the primary objectives.

#### **3.4.4: The Strategic Defence Package<sup>148</sup>**

The Department of Defence ensures, in accordance with the Constitution, effective defence for a democratic South Africa, enhancing national, regional and global security through balanced, modern, affordable and technologically advanced defence capabilities.<sup>149</sup>

An important part of the Defence Review was the proposal for a new affordable and appropriate force design. In September 1999, Cabinet approved the strategic armaments procurement programme. The proposed acquisition package provided the DOD with the possibility to spend a total of US\$ 5 billion between 2000/01 and 2011/12. The SDP was designed in such a way that in theory an estimated US\$ 15 Billion should have been secured for re-investment in South African defence-related industry through task-sharing and joint ventures. Nathan argues that the SDP decision runs counter to the holistic approach to security that dominates the ANC policy strategy on security, and to the stated policy of containing military spending. The SANDF succeeded in getting the politicians to accept the need to update the existing military equipment, without having consulted alternative experts to consider other models.<sup>150</sup> During the first phase the plan was to acquire four new Meka Class corvettes, three new submarines, 28 Grippen fighters, 24 Hawk fighter-trainer aircraft,

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<sup>147</sup> Williams, *The South African Defence Review and the Redefinitions: The Parameters of the National Defence Debate: Towards a Post-Modern Military?* p. 125.

<sup>148</sup> See Appendix 2 for an overview of South African defence acquisitions since 1994.

<sup>149</sup> South African National Defence Force Military Strategy, 2004.

<sup>150</sup> Nathan, *Consistency and inconsistencies in South African foreign policy*, p. 369, For further reading concerning the Defence review see further down.

and 4 new maritime and 30 light utility helicopters, as well as to upgrade its C-130 capability.<sup>151</sup> Through the SDP the SANDF, is set to acquire some of the most technologically advanced equipment available on the market, though focused primarily on its primary functions. Only in the second phase of the SDP was some of the ageing equipment in the South African Army (SAA) to be replaced. The SAA already has advanced plans for the requirements for the force future main battle tank, which is to replace the aging the Olifant battle tank, which the SANDF has in its inventory at the moment. The army has also plans or are in the process of upgrading its Rooikat reconnaissance vehicles and its Casspir armed personnel carriers. The question that the South African politicians and the defence planners need to ask themselves is what the SANDF need to be able to solve the tasks at hand, and what kind of resources they are willing to invest in this project. Does the army for instance primarily need a new main battle tank, a replacement for the anti-tank capabilities of the Ratel<sup>152</sup> infantry fighting vehicle, or a new mobile replacement for the Rooikat reconnaissance vehicle? The Ratel and the Rooikat have traditionally been preferred by the South African armed forces because of their mobility and because they are easier to deploy and support compared to battle tanks.

Since 1994, South African defence acquisition has largely followed the guidelines laid down in the White Paper and the Defence Review's emphasis on the SANDF's primary function.<sup>153</sup> None of the above-mentioned equipment from phase one of the SDP, except perhaps the C-130 transport aircraft and the helicopters, is particularly useful in the SANDF's current daily PSO deployments in Africa. The SANDF has prepared itself for primary functions, but the dual functions of its new equipment are limited.

The focus on modernizing the armed forces' conventional submarine and fighter capabilities may seem strange when it is mostly the South African Army (SAA) that is being deployed, both domestically and internationally.<sup>154</sup> One of the major reasons for this, aside from the strategic recommendations put forward in the 1998 review, is the historical under-development of the navy and air force, a consequence of the apartheid regime's heavy emphasis on the army. This was partly because the conventional threat from sea and air was limited, but also because it became difficult for South Africa to modernise its air force following the 1977 mandatory arms

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<sup>151</sup> South African Defence Vote 22, pp. 582-583.

<sup>152</sup> The SAA army seem to be striving at replacing the Ratel with the Finish build Patria AMV.

<sup>153</sup> For an overview of South Africa's major defence acquisitions since 1994, see Appendix 2.

<sup>154</sup> A point also mentioned by the Boshoff and Le Roux in Daniel et al., State of the Nation South Africa 2004-05. Both authors are former army officers.



embargo, after which the apartheid state was unable to produce or acquire these types of advanced weapons system on the international arms market. Consequently, the need for new equipment became more acute in the navy and air force. The priority given to submarines over, for instance, new armed personnel carriers or transport capacity for the army might seem strange in 2004, but given the recommendations of the Defence White Paper regarding the protection of South Africa's territorial integrity and sovereignty, the SANDF has done what was asked of it, namely to prepare for the 'primary tasks'. The submarines were much used and proved effective during the apartheid era in, for instance, launching special operations against neighbouring states, as well as in gathering intelligence. However, the decision to acquire submarines, taking the SANDF's indifferent record of achievement in PSO operations into consideration, seems to be a matter of resources not being well spent.<sup>155</sup> The focus on the air force's fighter capability must be understood in light of the experiences of the SADF during the last years of the conflict in Angola, when the obsolete Cheetah C fighters<sup>156</sup> had increasing difficulties in fighting the more modern Russian-built MiG fighters. The weapons acquisition programme, with its focus on new fighter planes, was seen as a way of addressing the SADF's Achilles' heel during the war in the late 1980s, namely the lack of air superiority in Angola.

As we have seen, according to the 1998 Defence Review, the SANDF's primary function was to secure the territorial integrity of the state and to protect the state against external threats. However, as Williams argued, the plan was to create a balanced force, despite the focus on the force's primary functions.<sup>157</sup> Providing domestic support to the police also became a priority, as did taking over border control responsibilities: As just noted, issues such as regional PSOs and humanitarian disaster relief were of secondary importance.<sup>158</sup> However, as also mentioned above, the defence review acknowledged that it did not foresee any direct conventional threats arising against South Africa. Its increased participation in international PSOs after 2001 meant that the SANDF's effective primary day-to-day function had become its secondary functions. The equipment provided for by the defence review was bought for SANDF's primary functions, not its secondary functions, and it has had to be used collaterally whenever possible. However, a

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<sup>155</sup> See Chapters 6 - 9 for further details of South Africa's PSO's experience.

<sup>156</sup> The Cheetah C and D were based on an upgraded version of the French-built Dassault Mirage III jet fighter.

<sup>157</sup> Williams, *Defence in a Democracy*, in Williams et al. "Ourselves to Know: Civil-military Relations and Defence Transformation in Southern Africa", p. 209.

<sup>158</sup> Williams, *Defence in a Democracy*, in Williams et al. "Ourselves to Know: Civil-military Relations and Defence Transformation in Southern Africa", p. 208.

number of capabilities within the army have become too expensive to maintain, leaving it with gaps in its spectrum of capabilities.<sup>159</sup> The question that remains to be answered is whether it will be possible for the defence planners to persuade the decision makers to initiate phase 2. Following the controversy of corruption and political turmoil concerning the cost of the first phase of the SDP, it is questionable if that will be the case. If the government decides to release the funding for phase two of the SDP, whether there will be enough resources available to maintain and keep the equipment operational, a contemporary problem for the SANDF.<sup>160</sup>

#### **3.4.4.1: The New Long-Range Transport Capability**

Despite the problems concerning the SDP the Department for Transport in December 2004 announced that it had signed a deal to buy fourteen A400 Airbus transporters for the SANDF worth EUR 837 million to be delivered from 2010-14, a deal which quickly were named the “secret arms deal”. The deal was put together in a similar way to those involving the SDP and should secure South Africa foreign investment equivalent to the invested resources.<sup>161</sup> The deal had been negotiated and signed without informing Parliament and resulted in angry responses from the Democratic Alliance opposition. Nonetheless these aircraft will solve the SANDF’s current logistical transport problems, where it is currently unable to support troops further north than Kindu in the DRC. The new airbus deal and the SDP also have an international political element to it because the South African government has, on both occasions, chosen to sign the contracts with West European instead of American weapons manufacturers. This was a strategic choice on the part the ANC leadership, which sees its future political and strategic interests being linked more to Europe than the US.<sup>162</sup>

#### **3.4.5: The Review Process of the Review and White Paper: Facing Up to the Realities of the New Millennium?<sup>163</sup>**

...the White Paper adopts a broad approach to security and a narrow approach to defence. The combined effect is to downgrade the status of the

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<sup>159</sup> The most critical area currently is finding a replacement for the Ratel, which has to be used in sharp missions, like those in the DRC and Burundi, for infantry protection. Interview with Sergeant Major A. Meier, SA Special Forces, in Kinshasa, 10 November 2004.

<sup>160</sup> See chapter 4 for further reading on maintenance back lock in the SANDF

<sup>161</sup> SAPA, 10 December 2004, DA wants committee meeting on ‘secret arms deal’.

<sup>162</sup> Interview with Nick Sendall, DOD, 24 September 2003.

<sup>163</sup> The redrafting process is still continuing at the time of writing this dissertation, making the final outcome uncertain.

armed forces in the state's definition of security, formulation of strategy and allocation of funds. Whereas previously 'security' had virtually the same meaning as 'defence', the latter is now seen as a discrete subset of the former.<sup>164</sup>

The President referred, in his state of the Nation Address, to our troops as 'midwives of peace, stability and prosperity'. The SANDF is a visible and tangible instrument of our foreign policy, the principles of NEPAD and the African Renaissance.<sup>165</sup>

The 1996 Defence White Paper, the 1998 Defence Review and the 1999 White Paper on Peace Missions have proved to be insufficient frameworks for meeting the challenges that the SANDF is expected to manage.<sup>166</sup> South Africa, like Denmark and the rest of NATO, is not faced with any conventional military threat and is not expected to be faced with one in the foreseeable future.<sup>167</sup> Nevertheless, South Africa is geographically situated in a "zone of war" and even though the conflicts are directed against South Africa, it creates a volatile situation, which makes it more difficult to predict the future and thereby also conducting military planning. The White Papers' focus on the primary function corresponds badly to the actual and future tasks of the force. In April 2005, Defence Minister Lekota argued in Parliament that:

there is...a need to prioritise peace missions and give peacekeeping its correct place in the roles and functions of the SANDF...[though] We are not making an SANDF of peacekeepers.<sup>168</sup>

Furthermore, despite having an establishment of approximately 78,000 soldiers and civilian personnel, the SANDF has had problems in sustaining the current level of 3,000 soldiers deployed in Africa.<sup>169</sup> Consequently, it was decided that the review itself needed to be reviewed by redefining the primary tasks as the actual defence tasks and creating a force design that fits this challenge.<sup>170</sup> At the public defence

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<sup>164</sup> Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>165</sup> Defence Minister Lekota's Budget Speech in Parliament, 8 April 2005.

<sup>166</sup> All three papers were declared outdated by both the military and policy sides in the DOD and the Defence Secretariat. Interview with SANDF Chief Director Strategy and Planning Rear Admiral Hauter and Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General DOD Defence Secretariat, Mr Motumi, in the DOD, 26 November 2003.

<sup>167</sup> It can of course be argued that the war on terror and the events in both Iraq and in Afghanistan in particular increasingly has got an operational "conventional" nature, however, they do not constitute a direct conventional threat to the NATO members in a classical understanding of the word.

<sup>168</sup> Defence Minister Lekota's Budget Speech in Parliament, 8 April 2005.

<sup>169</sup> For further details see Chapters 4 and 7-8.

<sup>170</sup> For further details of the structural constraints experienced by the SANDF, see Chapter 4.

hearing in the JSCD in Parliament in Cape Town<sup>171</sup> in November 2004, the submissions to the committee focused primarily on the structure of the force, that is, both the tooth-to-tail ratio and the actual force numbers, as well as on the doctrine of the posture, that is, the force's offensive capability. The conclusions were, both in the presentations and in the replies from the DOD, that the existing force design was not affordable with the present means available. However, there seemed to be no agreement concerning the future tasks of the SANDF because several submissions argued that the SANDF only had to prepare itself for traditional peacekeeping operations and increased support for the SAPS's national tasks, not more complex peace-support operations.<sup>172</sup> The whole notion is based on the idea that it is possible to be an effective peacekeeper and combat soldier at the same time. The USA's experiences of Iraq show that the two types of task can only be separated with difficulty because one day soldiers are expected to perform peacekeeping tasks and the next day combat operations. It requires considerable forces and resources, which South Africa does not possess, to be able to train one segment for combat operations and another for peacekeeping operations. In practice, most national armed forces must be able to handle both tasks.<sup>173</sup> Taking the experience of the SANDF in recent years into consideration, the approach also seems to be rather politically motivated, part of the guns-versus-butter debate, than an actual research-based recommendation.<sup>174</sup>

Since the transition in 1994, influential and very vocal civil society groups in South Africa have been arguing for substantial cuts in the country's defence spending. There has even been an unsuccessful court case attempting to block the SDP. The basic argument of these groups is that the resources used on defence would be much better spent dealing with the urgent socio-economic issues that afflict South Africa. This group, the Economists Allied for Arms Reductions-South Africa, under the leadership of Terry Crawford Brown, argues that South Africa has no need of a war-fighting capability because no foreseeable external threat exists, and also that the growth in SDP equipment could lead to an arms race in the region.<sup>175</sup> He is for instance supported by Nathan who back in 1998 argued concerning defence acquisitions more generally that:

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<sup>171</sup> A selected number of submitters were allowed the opportunity to present their papers to the committee, ranging from issues concerning demobilised veterans to actual force design.

<sup>172</sup> See, for instance, the submission made by Shelton, South Africa: Defence Transformation and 'New Security'; and Chapter 2.

<sup>173</sup> Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom are just a few examples.

<sup>174</sup> For further substantiation of this argument, see below, this chapter.

<sup>175</sup> See, for instance, Shelton, South Africa: Defence Transformation and 'New Security' and ECAAR Newsletter, for further details.

The Rooivalk order is at odds with the SANDF's professed defensive posture and the aim of scrapping offensive weapons. It is a legacy of apartheid that will place an unnecessary burden on scarce financial resources. Like the corvettes, it is a project conceived in the apartheid era and brought to fruition in the democratic era. However, unlike the corvettes, no arguments can be made for the Rooivalk assuming secondary functions such as search-and-rescue or conservation.<sup>176</sup>

What this argument fails to take into account is that most defensive postures, including NOD, include a significant offensive element, deterring others from attacking. This means that the SDP decision falls well within the NOD framework. The absence of a conventional external threat does not mean that there are no security threats. In the African context, it could be argued that the incapacity of others has very quickly become a security issue for South Africa. However, it is questionable whether the SDP is tailored in such a way that it matches the future security challenges it faces. It seems that Constan Viljoin's criticism of the SDP has slowly been realised and will be addressed as a central part of the new force design.

The bottom line is that the South African state has started a process of fitting the SANDF to the actual tasks facing the force and has acknowledged that its existing policies and framework are insufficient. The outcome of this process remains to be seen, but it will certainly focus more attention on increasing the PSO capacity of the SANDF and reducing the resources spent on traditional defence tasks.

### ***3.5: The Role of the SANDF in South African Society***

The SANDF remained the key role-player in borderline control, where neither the SAPS nor the Department of Home Affairs had the capability to fulfil their rightful role.<sup>177</sup>

After the transition to non-racial democracy in 1994, the role of the SANDF was changed significantly. The force was reduced from being the main provider of security for the state to being one of many tools protecting South African society against various challenges. Through the change in its defence posture, it played a

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<sup>176</sup> Nathan in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development

<sup>177</sup> South African DOD, Annual Report 2001/2002, p. 119.

central part in changing South Africa from being a pariah state to being a benign regional power. One of these tasks was, as we saw in Chapter 2, to support the government's diplomatic drive in Africa. The purpose of this section is to analyse how these tasks and ambitions have materialised in terms of the force military strategy and priorities, as well as funding.

### **3.5.1: The SANDF in the Transitional Phase**

As argued above, the experience of the pre-1994 years did secure an emphasis in South Africa on democratic oversight and control of the armed forces. For generations, the South African society had been heavily militarised, especially by the members of the SSC, and was considered what Huntington describes as a "garrison state". The main intention of the White Paper on Defence was precisely to 'pull back' the interference and involvement of the armed forces in the civilian sphere of society. In 2003 Kent et al. argued that:

In a democracy, the government can only employ the military if they have the backing of both the public and the media. This reality is also tempered by a growing public apathy towards the military. The SANDF does not feature prominently on the South African political agenda any more, besides the occasional reference to the necessity of employing the SANDF in the fight against crime and the importance of the SANDF being representative of the broader South African public.....the SANDF has been relegated to almost peripheral status.<sup>178</sup>

This phrasing was used with the exact intention of limiting the domestic use of the armed forces to 'exceptional circumstances'. However, the widespread proliferation of small arms and the number of victims of violent crime, reaching war-like levels, have forced the South African government to use the SANDF for domestic policing purposes, despite warnings from academics of the dangers in mixing the military civilian spheres, by giving the military civilian tasks.<sup>179</sup> Since 1994, the SANDF has had between 13 and 42 companies of regular soldiers deployed at all times in domestic operations, whether in support of the police or as a border patrol or "control", as it is called today. This has harmed the integration and reform process in the armed forces because they have had to allocate resources away from their core

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<sup>178</sup> Kent and Malan, *Decisions, Decisions, South Africa's foray into regional peace operations*, p. 13f

<sup>179</sup> See for instance Nathan, *Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies*

functions and transformation process to domestic policing.<sup>180</sup> However, this does not change the fact that the DOD has managed to end an extremely ambitious process of the integration, reduction and transformation of the SA Armed Forces. South Africa has managed to cut 60% of its defence budget, has scrapped its nuclear capability and signed a non-proliferation agreement. Furthermore, it has established civilian oversight and control over the SANDF and transformed the military doctrine from one of 'Total National Strategy' to a NOD-inspired posture.<sup>181</sup> The new defence posture changed from being perceived as isolationist and offensive into being defensive. The ANC government made it clear from the start that it would only use military means if non-violent strategies and deterrence failed.<sup>182</sup> This new posture necessitated a total transformation and reform of the existing security structures of the old SADF, which was going to constitute the framework upon which the new SANDF was going to be built. However, looking back from 2006, the task given to the SANDF has changed significantly since the transformation to democracy started in 1994. The violent nature of post-1994 South African society has created a new *raison d'être* for the SANDF as a provider of domestic security and order. Since 1994, the country has been faced mainly with non-conventional security challenges, such as crime, migration and social and economic inequality. One of the main tasks performed by the SANDF since 1994 has therefore been to support the police in its attempt to provide safety and security to the people. Therefore, in the strategic business plan, the SANDF's primary mission is described as ensuring an 'Effective defence for a democratic South Africa'<sup>183</sup>. At the same time, the SANDF is increasingly being regarded as an effective foreign-policy tool, one that can support the government's diplomatic drive in Africa.

Nevertheless, the integration and reform process in the SANDF is increasingly being criticised by, for instance, the main political opposition in South Africa, the Democratic Alliance, which has begun questioning the ANC government's intentions. The DA argues that the declared reform of the armed forces has nothing to do with creating a professional force, but is concerned with 'a deployment' of ANC loyalists into senior positions in the SANDF.<sup>184</sup> This signals a breakdown of the boundaries, if

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<sup>180</sup> The formal integration process between the seven different armies into the new SANDF was declared terminated in 2003, three years later than anticipated by the military planners in 1994.

<sup>181</sup> Cawthra, From 'Total Strategy to 'Human Security', p. 1., However, critique has been raised against the perceived NOD posture, which for instance Jordaan and Esterhuysen, South African Defence Since 1994

<sup>182</sup> Koornhof, Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces, p. 3.

<sup>183</sup> Department of Defence, Strategic Business Plan, financial year 2004/05 to financial year 2006/07.

<sup>184</sup> Shah, Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces, p. 5, This criticism is part of the DA's general criticism of the affirmative action policies of the government, where the DA would have preferred a more liberal AA strategy as opposed to the government's current more rigid strategy.

they ever existed, between the spheres of the governing party and the top echelons of the SANDF and thus also a move away from the idea that the armed forces should only be involved in domestic politics in 'exceptional circumstances'. Furthermore, it shows that the main opposition party is increasingly questioning the professionalism of the SANDF and its independence from party politics, and therefore its ability to defend South Africa's democracy. A fine line is drawn between making the force representative of the composition of the South African population, and thus making it legitimate in the eyes of the population, and promoting and deploying ANC loyalists. In its statement, the DA is also trying to securitise the issue of appointments in the SANDF by pointing out the risk that politically motivated promotions will damage the professionalism of the force and once again make it a political tool for the governing party and a threat to democracy.<sup>185</sup> Shah's previous statement concerning the duality in the role of the armed forces in society comes into mind. The question that needs to be asked is whether capable individuals are being promoted, or whether there is a tendency to fast-track personnel without the necessary qualifications?<sup>186</sup> In South Africa, there seems to have been an element of both, maybe at the cost of the capabilities of the force. This also stresses the dual function of a defence force as the main protector of the state, and at the same time potentially the main threat. A politicized defence force will first and foremost be loyal to the party and only then to the state.

The process of transformation and integration within the SANDF has been subjected to severe criticism, especially from critical scholars like Peter Vale, who argues that the new force, and thus the government, has continued to keep the focus in defence on national security, this actually representing a continuation of the security perceptions of the pre-1994 period. Vale argues that, even though South Africa is no longer confronted by any conventional military threat, the focus on national security and sovereignty, that is, on protecting borders etc., is still based on such a security perception. The opportunity to build a new type of joint regional security has been missed. According to Vale, the ANC government was never interested in changing the system, merely in establishing control over it. The process of transformation therefore took the form of a trade-off between the new and old elites.<sup>187</sup>

Nevertheless, Buzan and Wæver, and before them Jackson, have pointed out that a

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<sup>185</sup> The experience of Zimbabwe, where, before the 2002 elections, the leadership of the armed forces publicly stated that it would not accept an opposition victory, shows the danger of such a development.

<sup>186</sup> According to former Deputy Chief of Defence Adm. Trainer did former Chief of the Defence Nyanda asked the politicians not to introduce the fast-track system. However, the politicians decided otherwise. Conversation with Adm. Trainer November 2004, Cape Town

<sup>187</sup> Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*, pp. 77-83.



state's strength has more to do with its internal socio-political cohesion than its actual power: the stronger its socio-political cohesion is, the more likely it will perceive its security challenges as being predominantly external.<sup>188</sup> In the case of South Africa, it could be argued that, during its first ten years in power after the abolition of apartheid, the ANC government has focused on domestic issues, but has had to focus its attention increasingly on external challenges too. In 2004, the primary function of the SANDF, apart from protecting the state against foreign aggression, became one of supporting the government's diplomatic drive in Africa. The decision to phase out the SANDF's permanent support for the South African Police (SAP) in domestic tasks must be understood as part of this development. South Africa is politically and militarily involved both in actual African PSOs and in creating new security agreements and formations, in an attempt to limit the tensions and perceptions of threat between states. The question that remains to be answered is whether the stated political commitments have been followed up by making increased resource allocations to the SANDF? A securitised issue would be expected to be prioritised and receive increased funds because of its existential nature.

### **3.5.2: The 2004 Defence Budget**

The political imperatives which guided us in 1994 have altered, and our structures, our training and our modus operandi must be adjusted and fine-tuned to align ourselves with our role on the African continent. The Defence Review, which was the result of a wide consultative process, did not adequately foresee the extent of the peacekeeping role assigned to us in support of our diplomatic initiatives.<sup>189</sup>

In a developing country like South Africa, there will always be a debate over whether the resources used on defence could not have been spent more effectively in human security sectors,<sup>190</sup> that is, on development, poverty alleviation etc. The budgetary defence cuts of more than 60% illustrate that the ANC government wanted to make spending on defence fall within what could be termed reasonable in times of peace and follow the principles of the constitution. At the same time, the reduction showed that the new government had other priorities, which meant that defence concerns were no longer at the centre of the political agenda. Lekota's statement shows that

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<sup>188</sup> Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, p. 22.

<sup>189</sup> Defence Minister Lekota, Defence Dept Budget Vote 2004/2005, Speech 8 June 2004.

<sup>190</sup> The guns versus butter discussion., See for instance Cawthra in Cock et al. Eds. "From Defence to Development; or Williams, *Defence and Development*

the SANDF had to contribute to the broad security, both hard and soft, of society, as Sundelius argued, as opposed to the apartheid era's more limited focus on defence needs.<sup>191</sup> The DOD therefore had to give a priority to the task of providing support to the people, and the defence budget was thus no longer just for strictly military purposes. In 2004, South Africa used 1.6 % of its GDP or the equivalent of R20 billion<sup>192</sup> on defence, or more than double the amount the government used on education, for instance.<sup>193</sup> So far, as part of the bureaucratic political bargaining process, the defence elite in South Africa has been able to convince both Cabinet and Parliament that the SANDF needs the resources allocated in order to be able to undertake its primary functions and thus secure the state. Strong voices in Parliament in and around the DOD have even tried to argue for an increase in the defence budget from the present 1,6 % to 2%.<sup>194</sup> However, as Le Roux argues, the DOD needs to be able to show that it is capable of making rationalisations and savings within the current budgetary framework before even considering increasing its current budget.<sup>195</sup> However, compared to other SADC countries, this figure is relatively low seen as a percentage of total GDP. Still, compared to, for instance, Nigeria - another continental African power - which only spends 0.9% of its GDP on defence, it is high. However, as mentioned in the methodological chapter, this type of comparison is difficult to make without making a comprehensive study of how much defence the state can get pr. \$US used in South Africa and Nigeria respectively.

Year	Personnel Number	1: Personnel Budget	Percentage of Budget	2: Operating Budget	Percentage of Budget	3: SDA Budget	Percentage of Budget	1+2+3: Total Budget	Percentage of GDP
1994/95	81 288	4,007	37%	4,499	41%	2,401	22%	10,907	2,5%
1995/96	100763	3,561	34%	4,412	42%	2,562	24%	10,535	2,2%
1996/97	97 990	4,293	42%	4,811	47%	1,142	11%	10,246	1,9%
1997/98	97 087	4,796	50%	3,658	38%	1,125	12%	9,579	1,6%
1998/99	96 291	5,516	57%	3,396	35%	809	8%	9,721	1,5%
1999/00	90 334	5,318	51%	3,610	35%	1,477	14%	10,405	1,5%
2000/01	84 923	5,839	42%	3,666	26%	4,405	32%	13,910	1,6%
2001/02	79 295	6,182	39%	4,253	26%	5,618	35%	16,053	1,6%
2002/03	76 520	6,341	34%	4,686	25%	7,387	40%	18,414	1,7%
2003/04	74 599	7,093	35%	4,710	23%	8,247	41%	20,050	1.6%
2004/05	72 131	7,252	35%	4,913	24%	8,325	41%	20,489	1.5%
2005/06	69 967	7,557*	34%	5,281	23%	9,694	43%	22,532	1.5%

<sup>191</sup> The new strategic thinking and role of the SANDF in society is fundamentally different than that of the SADF during the apartheid era. At that time, security dealt with the SADF's needs to secure the state. Now the SANDF constitutes only one part among many other government institutions in dealing with creating security for South Africa and its citizens.

<sup>192</sup> Approximately US\$ 3.3 billion.

<sup>193</sup> South African Budget vote, 2004. However, many of the costs of education are covered by the individual budgets of the nine provinces.

<sup>194</sup> Lekota mentioned in his 2005 budget speech that more resources might be needed.

<sup>195</sup> Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS in Pretoria, 21 October 2004.

Figure 3.1. South African Defence Budget. Source: Briefing to the Defence Portfolio Committee on Defence: Defence's Budget Framework 2003/04. Letters in italics are projections for that particular financial year  
\* The increased personnel cost is due to the falling exchange rate of the rand.

It is interesting to see that the resources available for the operational budget have declined dramatically as a result of the increased cost of the Special Defence Account (SDA), that is, mainly the costs of the SDP, and the large percentage spent on personnel. As shown in Figure 3.1, personnel costs as a percentage of the total budget have apparently been reduced from more than 50% in financial year 1998/99 to 34% in financial year 2005/06, this being comparable with international norms. However, as outlined in the DOD's own HR strategy for 2010, these figures are distorted because of the cost of the SDP. The real personnel costs are more than 50% of the entire defence budget, a figure which is unsustainable in the medium to long term.<sup>196</sup> One of the problems facing the DOD has been the 'rank creep' that followed the transition and reduction of the force. In 2002, the DOD estimated that:

At 100 000 personnel, we had anticipated a decline in personnel costs to R3.950 billion against reduction of personnel to 71 000. This has not been achieved because of rank creep. Demobilisation payments have also contributed to the problem. But for reductions of personnel, these costs would be even higher because costs per person are growing out of line.<sup>197</sup>

This should, of course, pose only a temporary problem, which should be solved over time by the introduction of the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) programme and the retirement of more expensive personnel categories.<sup>198</sup> However, the budgetary problems within the DOD were underlined during the 2002 briefing, which stated that:

Without the arms deal, the budget would be R12.984 billion and 52% of our budget would be used for personnel. We must reduce the personnel costs to 40% as anticipated in the Defence Review or we will be unable to meet operating and acquisition budget targets.<sup>199</sup>

However, the figures from 1998/99 show that the DOD's capital investment was down to 8% of the total budget, which in reality meant that no new equipment was

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<sup>196</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 6.

<sup>197</sup> SANDF Budget Briefing to the Defence Portfolio Committee, 8 May 2002.

<sup>198</sup> See Chapter 4 for further details of human resources issues in the SANDF.

<sup>199</sup> SANDF Budget Briefing to the Defence Portfolio Committee, 8 May 2002.

brought into the system. In real terms, the DOD has been unable to follow the Defence Review's recommendations to reduce personnel cost to 40%, operating costs to 30% and capital renewal to 30%. The increased deployments in international missions will further increase personnel costs. So far, the DOD has only received limited extra funding to cover the extra expenses of its international missions because, in the cash-strapped South African national budget, defence requirements do not have the same priority as domestic social and health policies. Accordingly additional costs from actual operations, both domestic and international, should be covered by the national treasury contingent funds, but are currently being covered by the operating cost budget. Thus, in December 2003, the DOD had a deficit from international deployment of approximately 1.2 billion Rand, which needed to be reimbursed. The lack of resources for reimbursement constitutes one of the main obstacles for the creation and future success of the AU's African Standby Brigades.<sup>200</sup>

One of the major problems with the current budget is that it is assessed year by year, and not on a longer term basis, in other words, the 30 : 30 : 40 ratio has to be fulfilled every year. According to Len Le Roux, this should instead be a long-term objective, meaning that the ratio levels should be reached over a long-term period, even though individual years might vary.<sup>201</sup>

### **3.5.3: Foreign Policy and Military Capacity**

...any form of participation in peace operations is an extension of South African foreign policy....<sup>202</sup>

One of the problems facing the SANDF from 1994 until 1999 was the lack of consistency in South African foreign policy. The SANDF found it difficult to choose a development path in attempting to create the necessary capabilities for future PSOs because the government did not have any policy in this field. In addition, in the mid-1990s there was a widespread opposition to South Africa's participation in international PSOs from within the new force,<sup>203</sup> many of whom feared being dragged into open-ended missions on a weak UN mandate together with weak African partners. Another aspect to this resistance was the lack of experience with international PSOs that existed and still exists in the SANDF. Though inexperience

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<sup>200</sup> However, the AU has already received large allocations from the EU, among others, to help cover the costs of deploying troops in African PSOs.

<sup>201</sup> Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS, 21 October 2004.

<sup>202</sup> South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 30.

<sup>203</sup> Heinecken, Regional Involvement, pp. 56f.

could explain some of the resistance, a large part of it stemmed from the failures that the UN had experienced in Rwanda, Somalia and Bosnia. However, the more successful participation in MONUC, UNMEE, and other operations may have changed this attitude, though the African partners remain weak. Some of the insecurity detected in Heinecken's survey was caused by the widespread downsizing of the armed forces, the perception of a reduced quality of training, the lack of funds with which to buy new military equipment and the resignations of experienced officers from the armed forces.<sup>204</sup> These issues created doubt and insecurity among staff members concerning the military capability of the SANDF to deal with future PSOs.<sup>205</sup> This was changed, despite the vague recommendations, with the presentation of the White Paper on Peacekeeping in the spring of 1999 in which the lessons learned from Operation Boleas were included.<sup>206</sup> But the problems concerning the lack of coherence were recognised by the present Foreign Minister, Zuma, when she addressed the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) on 1 November 1999:

The fact that South Africa now has a policy on peacekeeping and has made a practical commitment to start participating in multinational peace missions makes it incumbent on the Government to recognise the role that the Defence Force will play. This puts a new dimension to the Defence Force in terms of South Africa's international obligations.<sup>207</sup>

One of the pressing issues which led to the publication of the White Paper was the national and international debates on what could be expected of South Africa in relation to her participation in PSOs. Thus, it was essential for the South African government to formulate a policy on this field. The paper aims to outline what can realistically be expected of South Africa in terms of her participation in peace missions, as well as to draw up a national policy strategy for the SANDF to prepare for and implement. In the paper it is stated that:

Although South Africa acknowledges its global responsibilities, the prioritisation afforded Africa in South African foreign policy makes Africa the

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<sup>204</sup> An important issue and limiting factor is the widespread HIV epidemic among SANDF personnel. It has been estimated that up to 40 % of the soldiers are HIV positive. For further details concerning the consequences of HIV/AIDS for the SANDF, see Chapter 4.

<sup>205</sup> Heinecken, *Regional Involvement*, pp. 56f.

<sup>206</sup> It came as reaction to this pressure, but it also coincided with the initial date, indicating the end of the process of the SANDF's integration and demobilisation.

<sup>207</sup> Foreign Minister Zuma's speech to the SAIIA, 1 November 1999.

prime focus of future engagements. South Africa has an obvious interest in preserving regional peace and stability in order to promote trade and development and to avoid the spill over effects of conflict in the neighbourhood.<sup>208</sup>

The White Paper also stresses that South Africa is in principle willing to participate in all kinds of international PSOs, including peace enforcement and humanitarian assistance. However, it is clearly stated that participation in international PSOs is only of secondary importance to the SANDF. Since it took office in 1994, the South African government has increasingly worked on a peaceful means strategy, where the military tool is absolutely the last option. An example of this is Operation Boleas, where the initial strategy of the government was to launch a proactive military operation to pre-empt a military coup.<sup>209</sup> The South African Army (SAA) has, as part of the national defence review process, allocated two infantry battalions<sup>210</sup> for participation in peacekeeping operations. This means that at all times the SAA has one battalion ready for deployment and one ready for rotation. If deployment into Chapter VII operations is needed, the SAA will be able to make use of a mechanised and parachute battalion.<sup>211</sup>

#### **3.5.4: The New Mission Plan for the SANDF**

It has been widely recognised within both the SANDF and the DOD that the proposed force structure in the Defence Review and the subsequent recommendations put forward in the White Paper on Peace Missions<sup>212</sup> no longer fit the political realities that face the SANDF in 2006. The process was a typical example of trying to create a framework for South African military contributions to international PSOs by looking backwards and not forwards to the future. It also underlines the issues which have hampered South African foreign policy historically, namely the lack of communication and co-operation between the DFA and the DOD. Moreover, another problem has been the increasingly dominant foreign-policy profile of the president's office since 1999, which in certain periods has led to a lack of coordination in foreign policy. The

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<sup>208</sup> South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 21.

<sup>209</sup> It must be recognised that the constitutional crisis in Lesotho might eventually have resulted in a military coup and that the diplomatic efforts of the SADC troika with South Africa in charge had been unable to solve the conflict between the parties. That the operation itself was ill managed and carried out by the SANDF and BDF and resulted in unnecessary material destruction is indisputable.

<sup>210</sup> An expanded South African battalion consists of approximately 1000 soldiers, while the normal battalion size is 600-800 soldiers.

<sup>211</sup> South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 23.

<sup>212</sup> White Paper produced by the DFA in 1999 based partly on the lessons learned from the South African-led intervention into Lesotho in 1998. The White paper and its recommendations were already by 2001 considered to have been overtaken by the realities faced by South Africa.

top management of the SANDF as a consequence met in the town of Parys in March 2004 to discuss how to deal with the strategic challenges facing the force. They took a decision and introduced seven strategic resolutions, called the "Parys resolutions":

1. The Defence White Paper of 1996 must be reviewed
2. The Defence Review of 1998 must be reviewed
3. The DOD's vision was revisited and changed
4. The DOD must revisit its structural arrangements for optimal efficiency and effectiveness, including the appropriate capacity for the Secretary for Defence and the Chief of the SANDF
5. The DOD must identify strategic gaps and develop a Concept of Operations and a Concept of Support
6. The DOD must improve its public image
7. The DOD must investigate the use of Balanced Scorecard approach as a management tool, in conjunction with the SA Excellence Model.<sup>213</sup>

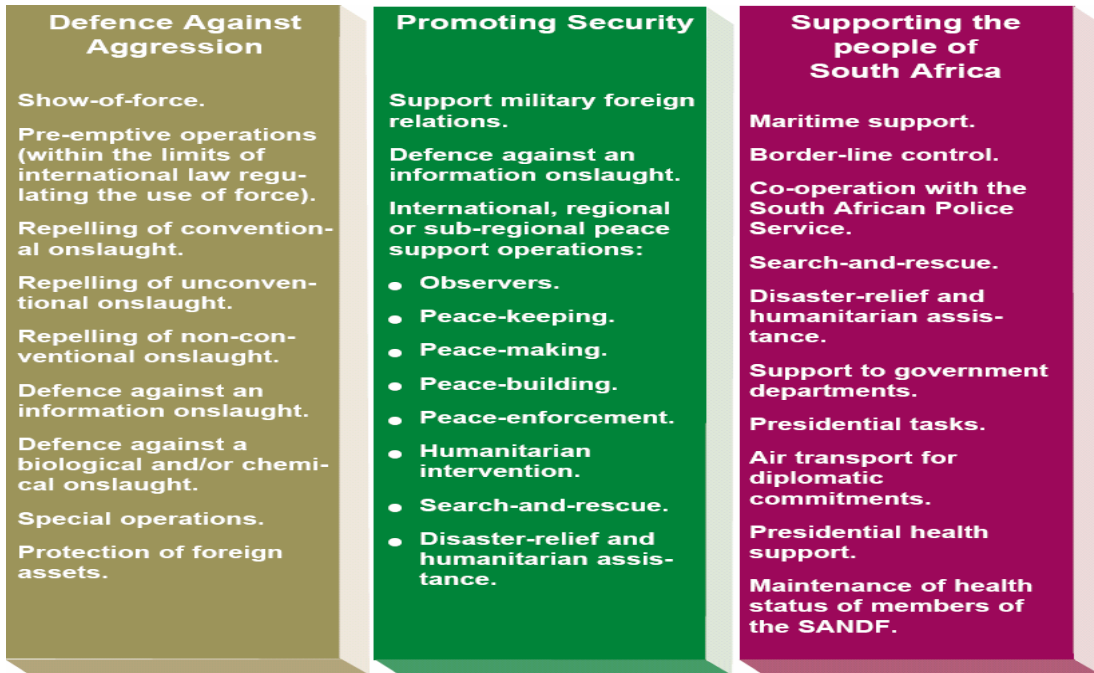
The force number proposal for a permanent force of 70,000 put forward in the Defence Review has been declared unsustainable, while the White Paper on Peace Missions has become outdated.<sup>214</sup> The DOD has told policy-makers that the current level of operations cannot be sustained without additional funding or a political prioritisation of the SANDF's tasks. However, the attitude in the other government departments seems to be that the DOD receives more than enough resources as it is.<sup>215</sup> The quotations above from Defence Minister Lekota's June 2004 defence budget speech, and again in his 2005 speech, have to be understood as part of this prioritisation of the SANDF's tasks, with its increased focus on the SANDF's role in supporting South Africa's diplomatic drive in Africa. Nevertheless, according to the SANDF's military strategy paper for 2004-2007, the missions envisaged for the next ten years can be divided into three different pillars in terms of tasks that the force needs to be capable of undertaking at any time, i.e.:

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<sup>213</sup> DOD Annual Report 2004-05, p. 24

<sup>214</sup> Briefing of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, March 2004, and Interview with SANDF Chief Director Strategy and Planning Rear Admiral Hauter and Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General DOD Defence Secretariat Mr Motumi in the DOD, 26 November 2003.

<sup>215</sup> This view came out during an interview with the SA Ambassador to the DRC in November 2004. The same view was confirmed at an interview in the DOD in December 2003. In his 2005 budget speech, Lekota was more or less apologising to parliament for the strains that the DOD puts on the entire budget.



**Figur 3.2: The major missions for the SANDF. Source: SANDF Military Strategy; See Appendix 1**

The three mission areas show the tasks given to the SANDF up to now and what it expects its future tasks to be. The political level has initiated a prioritisation of the SANDF's tasks and missions because this will make funds available for what it considers to be the armed forces' core tasks. Currently, for example, the defence budget covers the internal deployments in support of the police shown in pillar three in Figure 3.2, which constitutes a major financial drain on the total budget. At the political level, it has previously been stressed that the SANDF's most important task is to provide support for the people and to protect the state against external attacks. However, as mentioned already several times, South Africa faces no conventional military threat in the short to medium term; moreover, tasks that were formerly considered of secondary importance have now become primary, for instance participation in PSOs and disaster relief.<sup>216</sup> The major challenges envisaged during the consultative processes in the 1990s have been exceeded by the scope of the government's ambitions and the capabilities required of the SANDF. As Williams points out, it is very rare for modern armed forces actually make use of their primary functions, and instead the secondary tasks become their day-to-day role.<sup>217</sup> The

<sup>216</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy, 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 5.

<sup>217</sup> Williams, *The South African Defence Review and the Redefinition: The Parameters of the National Defence Debate: Towards a Post-Modern Military?* p. 119.



DOD must therefore tackle the dual task of retaining the capability to handle the primary functions, as stipulated in the constitution and as outlined in pillar one in Figure 3.2, while at the same time being able to cope with the increased level of secondary tasks which the politicians expect the SANDF to undertake.<sup>218</sup> An ANC member of the Portfolio Committee on Defence stated in this regard that "...the SANDF will play an increasingly determining role with regard to the stabilisation of the region south of the Sahara".<sup>219</sup> He thus underlined the political ambitions directed towards the SANDF in playing an increasingly important role in securing future peace and stability in sub-Saharan Africa in support of the government's diplomatic drive. At the defence hearing in november 2004 and in the draft proposals put before the JSCD, it was repeatedly pointed out that the narrow focus on primary functions that had driven the first defence review was too limited and that South Africa's national security interests now have to be seen as including peace and stability in Africa. The South African Defence Attaché in Kinshasa confirmed this attitude when he tried to explain the reasons behind South Africa's involvement as a mediator in the DRC conflict.<sup>220</sup> In November 2004, South Africa had more than 3000 soldiers deployed as part of international PSOs, primarily in the DRC and in Burundi. In addition, in 2003, the SANDF had an average of 1765 soldiers deployed domestically on a daily basis, that is, eleven rifle companies, each consisting of 155 SAA troops, deployed in support of the police in an attempt to tackle the crime pandemic. This makes a total of more than 4700 soldiers deployed at all times. Thus Operation Intexo is a SANDF effort to control the borders, while Operation Stipper deals with rural security.<sup>221</sup> Under Operation Intexo, the SANDF was given the task of protecting the maritime borders within the Exclusive Economic Zones of South Africa and its neighbouring countries, primarily meaning Namibia and Mozambique. Illegal fishing especially is becoming an increasing problem. South Africa is the only state in the region with a functional navy, and after the acquisition of the new corvettes, it has regained its blue water capability. This means that the SANDF has nearly five to seven battalion-sized formations occupied at the same time in what have been described as secondary roles, for instance, support to the SAPS, humanitarian relief operations and support to South Africa's foreign policy. This has put heavy pressure on the SANDF and the defence budget, and, as the core policy shows, the White Paper and the Defence Review now need to be updated.<sup>222</sup> In the Defence Review it was recognised that

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<sup>218</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy, 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 5.

<sup>219</sup> Koornhof, Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Government, p. 13.

<sup>220</sup> Interview with SA Military Attaché Col. J. Khaniye in Kinshasa, 1 November 2004.

<sup>221</sup> DOD Defence Vote 22, 2004/2005, p. 604.

<sup>222</sup> Le Roux, From Self-defence to Intervention, *Business Day*, 28 October 2003.

'additional capabilities may be required'<sup>223</sup> if the SANDF was to undertake secondary functions like PSOs. The Strategic Plan for 2004 to 2007 concludes: 'Budget constraints are adversely affecting the ability of the SANDF to maintain and sustain certain capabilities'.<sup>224</sup> But the political statements coming from the ruling party still cling to the constitutional requirement of providing deterrence against external aggression as well as giving support to the people. In addition, the SANDF is expected increasingly to prepare for PSOs elsewhere on the continent.<sup>225</sup> This puts severe limitations on the capacity of the SANDF to support the government's foreign-policy initiatives because it ties down forces that could have been used for PSOs. In fact, the Cabinet has decided that routine support to the SAPS is to be phased out by 31 March 2009, enabling the SANDF to focus increasingly on the tasks contained within the first two of the three pillars shown in Figure 3.2. However, the autumn 2004 mid-term financial statement showed that the SANDF currently only has resources to keep its full force in the DRC and a small contingent in Burundi. The statement concluded that government policy seemed to be that the forces in Burundi should be withdrawn when no more resources were allocated to the DOD.<sup>226</sup> This, of course, is part of the game of political bargaining between the DOD and other government departments for additional funding of their tasks. One of the problems for the DOD is that the reimbursement of participation in UN missions does not go back to the DOD, but directly to the Ministry of Finance. Therefore, participation in international missions has to be covered partly from within its ordinary budget.

### **3.6: SANDF's New Role in PSOs**

We have to put as much muscle as words into the "African renaissance.... There can be no African renaissance without the military."<sup>227</sup>

There has been a tendency in the SANDF to understand the concept of security within a classic security studies framework based on the past experience of counter-insurgency warfare during the border wars of the 1970s and 1980s. At that time, the SADF was placed under the auspices of the SSC and given the task of conducting both retaliatory attacks and pre-emptive operations on rebel forces operating from and supported by the neighbouring states. It could to a certain extent be argued that

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<sup>223</sup> Defence Review, Chapter 1, 30.

<sup>224</sup> Department of Defence, Strategic Business Plan, financial year 2004/05 to financial year 2006/07.

<sup>225</sup> Koornhof, Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Government, p. 10.

<sup>226</sup> Mid-term financial statement presented to Parliament, November 2004.

<sup>227</sup> South African Chief of Staff Gen. Nyanda, quoted in the newspaper, *Mail and Guardian*, 20/8 /2003.

the strategic thinking introduced in the 1977 South African Defence White Paper, the so-called total national strategy and the NSMS, was organized to an extreme degree to be able to handle both declared and undeclared security challenges in an attempt to protect the interests of white South Africa. Thus, the idea of 'integrated thinking' was the driving element in this strategic policy, though at the outset it was markedly different from the ideas underlying the contemporary approach of the ANC government. Whereas the NSMS system was characterised by all sectors giving support to the military effort, the new broader security approach is characterised by the SANDF being only one institution contributing to the broader attempts to provide security and safety for the citizens of South Africa. The military effort is no longer placed at the centre – that is, military operations are no longer securitised. This also means that, whereas the military effort prior to 1994 was securitised as being of existential importance to the survival of the state, it has today been de-securitised and put back into the field of normal politics. The needs of the SANDF are no longer considered more important than other government sectors: indeed, in reality the SANDF's sole *raison d'être* is its ability to provide support to other government departments such as the SAPS and the DFA. This represents a move to 'societal defence' and away from 'total defence', in which, according to traditional total defence thinking, every social sector supports the defence forces' efforts against an external aggressor. In the societal defence concept, by contrast, the defence force is reduced to being part of the combined efforts of the different government institutions in securing the safety and security of society.<sup>228</sup> The post-1994 military tasks given to the SANDF were significantly different from the previous counter-insurgency tasks due to the fact that other government departments did not have to provide support to defence. The new government wished to reduce the offensive capability of the force as a confidence-building measure in its relations with neighbouring countries. Because of its new NOD-inspired defensive posture, participation in African PSOs and increased regional security co-operation, the SANDF became a pivotal part of South Africa's transformation from a pariah state into a benign regional power, thus supporting the government's attempts to change South Africa's international image. The South African government prefers non-military solutions to disputes and has, through the various agreements in SADC, also made it more difficult for member states to use force. The new South Africa has only reluctantly been willing to use its coercive capability, as, for instance, during Operation Boleas.

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<sup>228</sup> Lecture given by Professor Bengt Sundelius at DIIS in Copenhagen, 29 April 2004.

The SANDF's tasks also includes creating security for the individual South African citizen in co-operation with other government departments. Nevertheless, as we have seen, support for the SAPS is being scaled down and the ANC government is increasingly arguing that it needs to prioritise and narrowing the DOD's tasks. It now wants the SANDF to become capable of supporting the diplomatic efforts of the government, that is, of being the "midwife" of the African Renaissance and of peace and stability. The SANDF is therefore acquiring a long-distance transport capability, enabling South Africa and its African partners to operate on the continent without having to turn to the US, for instance, for assistance. The SANDF is, therefore, an integrated part of the government's pan-African strategy. However, the government has at the same time shown to be unwilling to increase defence's share of the national budget or in reality to prioritise the tasks and responsibilities given to the SANDF. The government is increasingly giving priority to the SANDF's international role. Furthermore, it could be argued that the narrowing of tasks that the SANDF is expected to undertake represents a de facto increase in the defence budget. The SANDF will then have to undertake fewer responsibilities within the same budgetary framework. Whether this is enough to solve its resource problems is too early to determine.

After the transition in 1994, seven different statutory and non-statutory forces were merged into the SANDF, which now had to find a new role for itself. The new constitution has secured civilian control of the national security structures, among other things by establishing a civilian defence secretariat within the DOD. The idea was to remove the SANDF from the political sphere and reduce it to being a defence force servicing the state and the South African nation,<sup>229</sup> a policy that has proved successful. There were even parts of South African society that questioned whether the new South Africa actually needed a defence force. The 1996 White Paper on Defence and the subsequent Review of 1998 stipulates that the future defence force's primary task would be to protect the territorial integrity of the state, and only limited resources were to be set aside for international PSOs. As Alden and Le Pere rightly conclude the public debate concerning the participation in PSOs did not so-much focus on the risk of landing in military difficult circumstances, but were more focused on the financial implications.<sup>230</sup> One of the problems which the SANDF was faced with from 1994 until 1999 was a lack of consistency in South Africa's foreign

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<sup>229</sup> It is of course debatable whether, in an ethnic heterogeneous society, it makes any sense to talk about a nation. The point of using the term in this context here is to stress that the new SANDF was to serve and represent all groups in society, not just a small segment.

<sup>230</sup> Alden & Le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid policy*, p. 73

policy. The SANDF found it difficult to choose a development path in its efforts to create the necessary capabilities for future PSOs because the government did not have any policy in this field.

Thus, the SANDF will increasingly have to be able to undertake a wide variety of PSO tasks, while at the same time retaining some capacity to deal with its primary tasks. As part of the AU's ASF, South Africa has committed itself to retain the capability to undertake military interventions if need be, that is, to retain some offensive capacity,<sup>231</sup> while also being able to participate in more traditional peacekeeping operations, which more often resemble advanced police operations. If the politicians allow, therefore, the SANDF leadership will have to design future defence acquisitions so that they are appropriate and affordable, given the tasks to be fulfilled. The government's approach since 1994 shows that, even though the government's rhetoric regards the SANDF's efforts as belonging to the security role, its actions show that participation in international PSOs is part of what constitutes 'normal politics'. The SANDF's international tasks are being given increased priority, but it must still compete with other government departments for resources. Even though the government has deployed many more soldiers than envisioned in the 1999 White Paper on Peace Missions, it has been able to do this without securitising the issue. The SANDF has apparently been told that it needs to justify its existence before it requests additional funding. How this relates to the government's statement in the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions that the number of troops deployed into international PSOs will only exceed one extended battalion if core national interests are at stake. The government has by far exceeded that force level, but seem to be unwilling to release the needed funds to cover this deployment. It could be argued that if core national interests were at stake, funding would not be an issue and the SANDF would not have to struggle with other higher prioritised departments for funding. The government therefore overruled that element of its own White Paper for other reasons and priorities, or because it believes the SANDF can do the job with the funding available.

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<sup>231</sup> See Appendix 5 for further reading on the AU's ASF and its operationalisation.

- *Africa: Salvation or Despair?*-

## Chapter Four: The SANDF: Capacity and Capabilities

### 4.1: Introduction

As we found in the Introduction and in Chapter 2, the role of a benign leader includes both demands and expectations regarding the behaviour to the leader, including how it uses the military tool. The historical part in Chapter 3 showed how the pariah actively used the SADF to destabilise the perceived enemies of the apartheid regime, while the 1996 White Paper called for a defensive posture. However, as the previous chapters have shown, post-apartheid South Africa has been met with different sets of expectations from various levels. From the outset, the Western-dominated international system has called for active South African participation, including with military means, in solving the problems on the continent. Just after 1994, the regional and to a lesser extent continental levels were more reluctant to give this role to South Africa or to accept her taking it on, and they still feared the South African armed forces. On the other hand, increased regional co-operation has slowly placed South Africa in the role of a benign leadership. The domestic level expects the ANC government to prioritise national economic and social development and safety, so it has been difficult to argue politically for increased funding for international military engagement, will the government it self has announced a benign leadership ambition in Africa. It is these three levels that the ANC government has had to balance at all times, while seeking to meet its own foreign-policy goals. As shown in the previous chapter, this has resulted in the political level having focused for a long time on the SANDF's primary national defence tasks, while increasingly using the force for secondary tasks such as international PSOs. This has created a significant discrepancy between the capabilities of the force and the actual tasks given to it.

When the South African White Paper on Defence and the subsequent review were drawn up in 1994–1998, it was not foreseen that South African troops would have to be deployed to international missions in high numbers. According to Len Le Roux, one of the authors behind the 1998 Defence Review, there was euphoria in South Africa at the time, and many people did not believe that a defence force was even required.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the defence review mentioned deployment into international

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS, 21 October 2004; see also previous chapter.

operations, but only as a secondary and limited function. In its submission to the defence hearing in November 2004, Le Roux and the ISS argued that:

...the Defence Review goes on to define the primary functions of the SANDF as 'to defend South Africa against external military aggression' and determines that the SANDF should be designed mainly around the demands of its primary function. It determines, incorrectly and in contrast to its own defence strategic logic, that peace support operations is a 'secondary' task and should ideally be executed largely by means of collateral utility inherent in the design for the primary function, defence against external aggression.<sup>2</sup>

However, as Williams correctly pointed out secondary tasks more as a rule than not, become the day to day tasks for the armed forces, because the primary tasks often only are relevant in times of war and crises. The ISS argument can therefore be interpreted in two ways, i.e. that the PSOs should in fact be securitised because of its existential importance to South African national security and hence prioritised in the same way as defence against external aggression, or it could be seen merely as a wish to have increased priority given to PSO deployment beyond the collateral utility. In the case of the latter it would in fact still be a secondary task, but with increased priority as long as no direct threat against South Africa can be detected. In the case of the first interpretation it seems unrealistic, because despite the stated priority given to Africa and the statement from government officials that South Africa's destiny is tied to Africa, it has so far not been possible to detect that this is an issue that merely operates within a normal political framework. It therefore seems which is also supported by government statements in the previous chapter, that PSOs are given increased priority as long as the SANDF is still able to handle its other primary tasks, and as long as it can be done within the existing budgetary frame. Calling it a primary task or not seem more to be a matter of political taste and rhetoric, than real policy.

Force planning was focused on protection from foreign aggression and protection of the territorial integrity of the South African state. Since the passing of the Defence Review, the DOD and the policy-makers have decided that, in addition to its primary objectives, the SANDF has to provide extensive support to South Africa's diplomatic efforts in Africa. PSOs are something that the SANDF is expected to be able to undertake. However, the political level also expects the armed forces to be able to take the lead in both African-led PSOs and the building-up of the security architecture

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<sup>2</sup> The ISS submission on the South African Defence Review, p. 5.



in Africa, including the SADC-based ASF in particular. South Africa needs to be able to provide the equipment that the other members do not possess, reflected in the decision to acquire long distance transport capability.

Part of having the role as a benign leader is, as shown in the Introduction, that South Africa must be willing and able to undertake the role as the lead nation in African PSOs. This was, for instance – as previously mentioned – stressed at the AU level, where the bigger nations have special tasks in the ASF.<sup>3</sup> The expectations to South Africa come both from the global and regional levels and must be seen as requirements if South Africa wants acceptance of its benign role. Participation in and contribution to international PSOs is, generally speaking, an effective and widely used way of improving a nation's international image. Argentinean participation in the SHIRBRIG cooperation is just one example of this.<sup>4</sup> It is therefore not only a consequence of external pressure that make South Africa undertake this task, but also a result of domestic pressure and ambition because it serves, broadly speaking, what the government consider to be South Africa's national interests.<sup>5</sup>

The present chapter starts by setting up an ideal capability model of what is expected of a lead nation in primarily African-led PSOs in terms of military contributions. The chapter will use this ideal type as background and subsequently analyse the capabilities and structure of the South African armed forces in order to establish what capabilities it has for participating in international PSOs, and whether it has the capacity to function as a "lead nation" in African peace missions.

The function of this Chapter in the dissertation is primarily to help answering the question asked in the preface, that is, to what extent the SANDF will be able to continue to prop up the government's foreign policy because of a gap between goals and objectives, and what the impact this will have for South African foreign policy role. The Chapter will demonstrate the consequences for the capabilities of the force of the finding in Chapter 3 that the defence force in contemporary South Africa is no longer high on the list of government priorities which means that other government departments have easier access to economic resources. The Chapter will demonstrate that there is a gap between goals and the means available. The

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<sup>3</sup> AU, Roadmap for the Operationalization of the ASF, Annex a, section II 1a.

<sup>4</sup> I thank Peter Viggo Jakobsen for this point; for further details on this topic, see, for instance, Jakobsen, *The Transformation of United Nations Peace Operations in the 1990s*: p. 274

<sup>5</sup> As shown in Chapter 2 would critical scholars like Vale and Taylor probably argue that national interest here equals the interests of the business elite and not the citizens of South Africa more broadly. Their argument being that all foreign policy decision-making should be directed by how it benefits the population more broadly.

Chapter will, together with Chapter 3, illustrate that the SANDF generally has got a structural and capacity problem which negatively affect the capacity of the force to support the government's foreign policy. This will amongst other things be done with a presentation of the transformation process in the SANDF and consequences this had for the capacity of the force. The Chapter attempts to establish to what extent the SANDF has the needed capacity and specific capabilities to function as "lead nation" in PSOs. The findings in Chapter 4, combined with the role of the seven criteria produced by government in 1999 for deployment of the SANDF into international PSOs presented in Chapter 5, will be further investigated in the three case studies later in the dissertation. This will investigate the ability of the SANDF to function as a lead nation in actual operations, while it is also will demonstrate to what extent the criteria presented by government also have been instructive in the decision to employ the SANDF in PSOs.

#### ***4.2: The Nature of UN Peace Missions at the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

What is required of South Africa to be able to take on the role as lead nation in African PSOs? In section 4.2 an attempt will be made to outline what constitutes the minimum capabilities that enable a state to function as a lead nation, that is, which functions must the SANDF be able to undertake.

Since the first UN PKO was launched in 1948, the nature, scope and content of such operations have developed tremendously. What started out as simple observer missions have now become transformed into what the UN terms 'multidimensional operations overseeing the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements'.<sup>6</sup> This means that a PSO at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century may involve technical advice at one end of the continuum and undertaking combat missions at the other. Especially in Africa, conflicts have been between different rebel and militia groups in intra-state conflicts, in which there are no clearly demarcated frontlines or markings to distinguish between the factions. This increased complexity has increased the requirements and nature of the UN forces that are able to fulfil their mandates. When deployed, UN forces are consequently no longer lightly armed but prepared for the more demanding tasks lying ahead.<sup>7</sup> In parallel with this development, there has been an increasing tendency for armed forces from the Western world to be kept

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<sup>6</sup> Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, p. 55.

clear of UN missions, the major force contributors now being states like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ghana and India.<sup>8</sup> It can be argued that the quality of the forces deployed to UN operations can be divided into three main categories: 1) well-equipped and technologically advanced NATO type troops; 2) relatively well trained and professional forces from developing nations, for instance, Pakistan and India; 3) troops from the third world, characterised by insufficient training, malfunctioning equipment, bad health,<sup>9</sup> etc. Today the UN primarily receives troops from groups 2 and 3, which creates significant problems for the organisation in executing its mandate effectively. The problem with this trend is that the UN is facing increasing demands through the complexity and mandates of the operations, while experiencing a decreasing level of quality regarding the forces available. These two trends are, of course, incompatible, and the consequences have been seen in, for example, Sierra Leone in 2000<sup>10</sup> and at times in the DRC, where the UN forces have been incapable or unwilling to fulfil their mandate: for example, in June 2004 the Tunisian-led so-called “neutral force” failed to react to stop the attacks on the UN compounds in Kinshasa.<sup>11</sup> In addition, there is the issue of the nature and scope of the mandates, with, in several instances since 1990, mandates having been issued despite discrepancies between means and ends. Again, the DRC (MONUC) is a good example,<sup>12</sup> the UN mission to Angola (UNAVEM) in the early to mid-1990s being another. Consequently, there is an urgent need for states that have the will and capacity to undertake the lead in these types of missions, a role that South Africa is expected to play in Africa, as it is one of the only states in SSA with the required specialised military capabilities. On several occasions, Nigeria has shown willingness to deploy even large numbers of troops in African conflict zones, but it lacks the necessary technological and logistical capability to support other detachments.<sup>13</sup> This has a direct bearing on the establishment of the regional ASF’s structures, in which the African regional powers are expected to contribute with the specialised functions required.

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<sup>8</sup> As of 31 May 2005, the largest contributors to UN PSOs were: 1. Pakistan (9880 troops); 2. Bangladesh (7932); 3. India (6001); 4. Nepal (3562); 5. Ethiopia (3416); 6. Ghana (3313); 7. Nigeria (3031); 8. Jordan (2554); 9. Uruguay (2433); 10. South Africa (2134). It is important to remember that these figures do not cover all troops deployed in international missions: for instance, the South African contribution to the AU force in Sudan and the VIP protection force in Burundi are not UN missions.

<sup>9</sup> An example of this is the current UN mission in Sudan (UNMIS), where Zambia tops the list of soldiers who have had to be repatriated for health reasons. Visit to UNMIS by author, June 2006.

<sup>10</sup> See for instance Jacobsen, *UN Peace Operations in Africa Today and Tomorrow* in Michael Bothe and Boris Kondoch (eds.), *The Yearbook of International Peace Operations*, Volume 7, 2001, p. 164

<sup>11</sup> Personal conversations during visit to MONUC HQ in November 2004.

<sup>12</sup> See Chapter 8 for further details.

<sup>13</sup> In the AU force deployed into Sudan’s Darfur provinces (AMIS), where Nigeria is contributing the bulk of the force together with Rwanda, all equipment and logistics have been provided by Western donors, either directly or through private military contractors. The only exception is the SANDF, which has brought its own equipment etc.

#### **4.2.1: The Function of the Multidimensional Peacekeeping<sup>14</sup> Operation according to the UN**

As mentioned above, the role and scope of the UN's PSOs have changed significantly since the end of the Cold War. The traditional Chapter VI operations have increasingly been expanded to either Chapter VI with Chapter VII elements<sup>15</sup> or full Chapter VII operations, like the mission in the DRC. However, the most significant development lies in the interpretation of mandates and the increased acceptance of the use of force beyond simple self-defence.<sup>16</sup> This means that the tasks of the deployed forces have become increasingly complex because the function has been expanded from the supervision of peace agreements to now including responsibility for, for instance, drafting and implementing peace agreements, humanitarian aid delivery, disarmament, etc. According to the UN, a contemporary PSOs overall function, including the non-military tasks, is to:

- Assist in the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement
- Monitor a ceasefire or cessation of hostilities to allow room for political negotiations and a peaceful settlement of disputes
- Provide a secure environment, encouraging a return to normal civilian life
- Prevent the outbreak or spill-over of conflicts across borders
- Lead states or territories through a transition to stable government based on democratic principles, good governance, and economic development; and
- Administer a territory for a transitional period, thereby carrying out all the functions that are normally the responsibility of a government.<sup>17</sup>

This means that, depending on its mandate, a mission must be able to undertake state-like functions and be a provider of peace, security and stability for periods of time. The UN Handbook on peacekeeping also specifies that the military element in a PSO traditionally has two basic objectives, namely

to provide a secure environment so that other elements of the peace process can be implemented, including the monitoring of human rights, national

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<sup>14</sup> The UN uses the term "peacekeeping" to cover both the traditional Chapter six and half type missions, and the new complex mission, where the mandate provides for the use of force to achieve the objective of the mission. As previously mentioned, and for the sake of clarity, this dissertation uses the term "peacekeeping" to refer to traditional Chapter six and half missions, while the broader term "peace support operation" will be used to describe the whole spectrum of operations.

<sup>15</sup> UNMIS is an example of a Chapter VI+ mission, where the mandate is an expanded Chapter VI one.

<sup>16</sup> See, for instance, Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations*, for further details concerning this development.

<sup>17</sup> *Handbook of United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations*, pp. 1f.

reconciliation and institution building, and the distribution of humanitarian assistance [and] to provide the space and opportunity for peacemaking and political negotiations to take place by preventing further violence.<sup>18</sup>

The task of a PSO differs, depending on the type of mandate it has been given. Lightly armed peacekeepers will often be used in missions where there is a need for confidence-building and to create momentum in the peace process. This type of force will be neither capable of nor expected to prevent a resumption of hostilities by using force. In a more robust mission the force will be required to prevent a resumption of hostilities and create an environment that enables the peace process to continue. This will require that the scope and nature of the forces involved are structured in such a way that they can fulfil their mandate.<sup>19</sup>

The civilian side, including police, of a mission works in co-ordination with the military contingent and has a number of responsibilities that previously seemed to belong to the military sphere namely to:

- Help former opponents implement complex peace agreements by liaising with a range of political and civil society actors
- Support the delivery of humanitarian assistance
- Assist in the disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants
- Supervise and conduct elections
- Strengthen the rule of law, including assistance with judicial reform and training of civilian police
- Promote respect for human rights and investigate alleged violations
- Assist with post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation; and
- Set up a transitional administration of a territory as it moves towards independence.<sup>20</sup>

This means that the civilian and military contingents in an operation need to co-ordinate their efforts, but also that the different sectors of the mission have different priorities, depending of the conflict resolution stage. Thus during the initial phase, with high levels of instability expected, the focus will be on the military effort, while

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<sup>18</sup> Handbook of United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, p. 55.

<sup>19</sup> Handbook of United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, p. 60.

<sup>20</sup> Handbook of United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, pp. 1-2.

during the implementation phase the military component will often be to offer support to and facilitate the civilian efforts.

#### **4.2.2: The Military Structure of PSOs: What does it take to be a 'Lead Nation'**

NATO and the UN have both established standard capability requirements for international operations. These general requirements need to be applied to the context within which they must function. Therefore, this section attempts to lay down some guidelines for what, according to international standards, the SANDF must ideally be able to manage if it is to function and sustain a role as a lead nation in international PSOs, in particular African ones. The second part of this chapter will examine the actual capacity of the SANDF and determine what is actually required in order for it to function as a lead nation in the African context. The UN's ambitions for the type of military structure that member states should aim for are based on the SHIRBRIG (Stand-by High Readiness Brigade) model, which envisages a fully self-contained brigade-size formation of between 4,000 and 10,000 soldiers. The UN explicitly states that it would like to export the SHIRBRIG rapid reaction structure, especially to Africa.<sup>21</sup> The AU initiative in establishing the ASF must be understood within that framework. According to the UN, a PSO brigade prepared for robust PSOs should, apart from standard combat infantry units sometimes supported with armour capability, consist of a squadron of combat engineers, a headquarters and communications squadron, and a logistics company.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the UN states that the recommendations of the Brahimi commissions that there should be a maximum response time of 30 days for traditional PKOs and 90 days for complex deployments should be enforced by the rapid reaction brigades, which are still very slow. The solution has been to outsource the responsibility for rapid reaction to 'coalitions of the willing' or regional entities. This means that, according to the UN, the future ASF should be able to deploy the above functions, thus providing the UN with a fully operational brigade for deployment in future operations. This also means that, to be able to function as a lead nation, the state should be able to deploy and sustain a brigade-size formation by itself. In reality only a very few states are capable of this, and often the lead nation will provide the critical functions, such as logistics, HQ unit, engineering units, and communications equipment, to make the brigade operational. One of the critical functions needed by the UN and in peace missions in general is

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<sup>21</sup> Handbook of United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, p. 65. See also appendix 11 for a description of SHIRBRIGs mandate and function.

<sup>22</sup> Handbook of United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, p. 65.

rapidly deployable mission headquarters. The UN keeps a roster of candidates that can provide the organisation with this function. Another pivotal function for the force is the logistic support surrounding the mission. In many mission areas, existing infrastructure is either absent or has been destroyed, and has to be replaced by the mission for it to be able to function. Additionally, there is a need for transport to and from the mission country for both the contingent itself and supplies, etc. The UN has some logistical capacity of its own, but it relies on its contracts with private logistics firms, as well as the support of individual states. One of the problems with the private contractors is their reliability in a sharp mission. What happens if, for instance, reinforcements or supplies need to be delivered to a war zone? Will these companies fulfil these contracts? The large number of private security companies now in existence shows that many are.<sup>23</sup> This is currently one of the problems in the DRC, where the UN is largely dependent on private contractors for logistics and air-support, even though the contracts made with them do not cover flying into a “hot” war zone. In missions run by a coalition of the willing, the participants will have to organise the transport among themselves, which often means that the lead nation(s) will have the capacity to provide the logistical capacity in, for instance, the cases of the US in Iraq, and to some extent South Africa in Burundi. Taking the above mentioned issues into consideration it is possible, based on UN and NATO standards, to make a list of criteria’s that a state ideally needs to fulfil to be able to function as lead nation in contemporary complex PSOs. These are;

Level 1:

1. Be able to lead
2. Have the financial resources available, and
3. Have the will.

On the next level a lead nation ideally needs to:

Level 2:

- Be able to deploy an effective brigade-size contribution at short notice
- Have the ability to lead a unit
- Be able to rotate, i.e. replace the deployed force

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<sup>23</sup> The contracting of large numbers of private security personnel in, for instance, Iraq and Afghanistan shows that private entrepreneurs are willing to operate in ‘hot’ operational environments. This is therefore more a political issue which is currently not acceptable to the UN.

- Have the logistical ability to support the deployment
- Have other small contributions in UN PSOs
- Have technical capacity
- Have strategic communication systems
- Have the ability to operate on the whole continent, i.e. operative capability in geography
- Have military training and educational facilities and doctrinal capacity, including specialised capacity. It must be able to offer training to other states, and
- Have the necessary financial resources at its disposal.

On the operational level the lead nation must have:

Level 3:

- HQ capacity
- Command, control and communication capacity
- The ability to lend out communications equipment
- Infantry and mechanised infantry capacity
- Engineering, Artillery, Communication and air support, and born capacities
- Logistic capacity
- Helicopter capacity
- Forward air handling capacities, i.e. air bridgehead capacity
- Training and educational doctrine
- Health service, and
- Long-term procurement plans.

It can always be argued to what extent the lead nations must have all the above-mentioned capabilities available all the time, and even whether there is actually a need for all of them. It can be argued with some justification that in the African context, South Africa needs to be able to provide the functions that the other states it co-operates with are not capable of. This means that it needs to be able to take the lead in an operation, but not necessarily fulfil all the functions of the mission: at least the framework must be provided. The capacity to function as a lead nation is not necessarily tied to the capacity to deploy large force numbers: for example, Norway,



Sweden and Finland have all been lead nations at brigade level, though providing much smaller forces.<sup>24</sup> Quoting Len Le Roux, South Africa needs to strategise around the issues for which it has the capacity, not those for which it does not, but it also has to focus on the areas where its partners have no or only limited capacity. An example of this could be Pretoria government's decision to buy A400 transporters. As will be shown in the case of Operation Boleas (Lesotho), Mistral (DRC), and Fibre (Burundi), so far South Africa has been able to deliver certain specialised functions. However, it must be questioned whether this is a sustainable development and what roles the SANDF will be asked to undertake in future.

### ***4.3: The Composition of the SANDF and UN PSO Ideal Type at Levels Two and Three***

In Chapters 2 - 3, we saw that South Africa possesses the political will to deploy forces to international missions, which at level 1 of the ideal model is described as a basic criterion. Nevertheless, we also saw that this deployment has a lower priority than other domestic tasks. This means that the financial resources needed for such operations are not always in place. However, the South African government has shown that it is willing to lead. In this chapter, South Africa's capability within the areas of levels 2 and 3 will be analysed. It has already been shown in Chapter 3 that the White Paper on Peace Missions has prepared a battalion-size unit for rapid deployment, and that through its influential role in the ASF formation, South Africa is involved in creating a brigade-size capability in SADC under her own lead.

As it was mentioned in the previous section, a lead nation does not necessarily possess all the capabilities mentioned in the ideal model. However, the lead nations need to be able to create the framework for the PSO. If South Africa is to be able to function as lead nation in Africa, it must be able to provide the capabilities that the other states cannot deliver. This means that South Africa must deliver headquarters capacity and logistical support for the deployment of forces and for the mission in general, as well as communications equipment, a critical issue for a number of African armies. The same applies to a number of critical functions, such as medical and engineering capabilities.<sup>25</sup> In relation to level 2, in the ideal model it can be argued that infantry capacity might not be the biggest issue in Africa because this is an area in which many other African states have capabilities. However, in the area of

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<sup>24</sup> Comment by Major Mads Rahbek, Danish Armed Forces.

<sup>25</sup> See for instance also Lamb, *Fighting for the Future*

mechanised capacity, it can be expected that South Africa needs to be able to deliver. The SANDF must also be able to deploy helicopter capacity, which is of pivotal importance to operating in an African context often lacking infrastructure. Furthermore, the SANDF needs to be able to sustain the deployment through rotation of forces, which themselves need proper training and planning before being deployed. Finally the SANDF must be able to offer formal training to its partners, an area where capacity is generally lacking in Africa.<sup>26</sup>

#### 4.3.1: The Structure of the SANDF

Presently, the SANDF is divided into four major branches: the army, including the Conventional Reserve Force and the Territorial Force or commandos; the navy; the air force; and the medical corps.

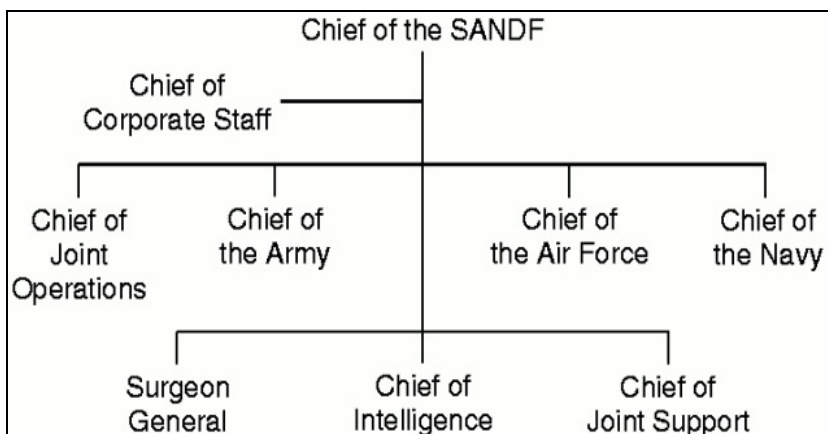


Figure 4.1. SANDF Chain of Command. Source: Janes

Of these, the army is the largest unit, with an establishment of 35,000. Apart from the division of the SANDF into different military branches, it is also divided into a civilian and a military section. According to statistics for the financial year (FY) 2002/2003, this means that the uniformed component of the SANDF numbered 61,947 and the civilian Public Serve Act Personnel (PSAP) 15,022., which is very close the target set in the defence review.<sup>27</sup> The combined target for the Financial Year 2003/2004, in accordance with the recommendations of the Defence Review, was a reduction of the full-time force to a total of 70,000.<sup>28</sup> However, according to the minutes of the Defence Joint Standing Committee, this objective should have been reached by the

<sup>26</sup> However, several western donors run PSO training programs in Africa, for instance, the US and France.

<sup>27</sup> South African DOD 2004/2005 Annual Report, p. 10.

<sup>28</sup> As shown in Figure 3.1

2005, but has been delayed due to the intake of new recruits.<sup>29</sup> The Annual Report of March 2005 concludes that this number will only be obtained if new exit mechanisms are introduced.<sup>30</sup> The experience of the 1990s shows that so far the existing retrenchment packages have not been able to right-size the force structure. Parliament has so far refused to let the SANDF introduce force retrenchment packages, primarily because of the general employment situation in the country. The number put forward in Figure 4.2 of approximately 78,000 will therefore probably be the most realistic number for the time being, and that reduction to 70,000 will only be achieved at a later stage. However, it is also important to remember, that the Defence Reviews target force number of 70.000 has been declared unsustainable.<sup>31</sup> This was also stipulated in the Human Resource (HR) strategy for 2010 and in the defence vote's medium-term objective where that number was declared unsustainable with present budgetary allocations, due to the increased costs of the Strategic Defence Package (SDP), improved salary conditions and new allowances.<sup>32</sup>

<b>Summary of personnel numbers in the different sectors</b>					
<b>Personnel numbers</b>	<b>2000/01</b>	<b>2001/02</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>
1 Administration	1 876	2 174	3 505	3 476	4 457
2 Landward Defence	40 813	38 646	34 067	33 952	35 384
3 Air Defence	10 932	10 979	10 662	10 346	10 496
4 Maritime Defence	8 203	7 821	6 223	6 338	6 601
5 Military Health Support	8 114	7 739	7 136	6 862	7 366
6 Defence Intelligence	979	835	793	853	705
7 Joint Support	9 833	9 147	11 486	11 387	11 283
8 Command and Control	2 040	1 383	1 418	1 385	1 173
<b>Total</b>	<b>82 790</b>	<b>78 724</b>	<b>75 290</b>	<b>74 599</b>	<b>77 465</b>

Figure 4.2. SANDF personnel numbers and costs. Source: DOD Defence Vote 22, FY 2004/2005

The White Paper on Defence and the Defence Review, which both recommended a relatively small permanent force and a sufficiently large reserve force, have not been

<sup>29</sup> Minutes from the Defence Joint Standing Committee, for further details see below, this chapter.

<sup>30</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05, p. 10.

<sup>31</sup> See Chapter 3 for further reading

<sup>32</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 8.

followed, and the new review will probably recommend an even smaller permanent force number because the present force structure has been declared unsustainable. An indication of this could be found in the defence vote for 2004, where the DOD's general objectives in the coming are divided into three main categories:

- Long-term objective: *'attaining optimal level of competencies, technology and force structure necessary to defend and protect the Republic of South Africa and its territorial integrity'*.
- Medium-term objective: *'to create an affordable and sustainable force structure and to right size and rejuvenate its human resources. It will focus on modernising, optimising and balancing its force elements, thus ensuring alignment with constitutional and government imperatives'*.
- Short-term objective: *'the focus is to prepare, maintain and employ defence capabilities and to finalise the department's restructuring'*.<sup>33</sup>

The force existing structure includes the establishment of a Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) comprising a mechanised infantry brigade, a parachute brigade and a Special Forces brigade on immediate military readiness. These units are to be supported by the conventional Reserve Force Division (RFD) with different levels of military readiness. This is one of the criteria listed above in the ideal model of the UN's requirements for a lead nation. As a supplement to the RFD, 14 light infantry battalions, 12 territorial infantry battalions and finally 183 area-protection units were planned, to be used for border protection and in support of the police.<sup>34</sup> This structure stresses the importance of the Reserve Force for the conventional capacity of the SANDF, and the SA Army in particular. Both the Special Forces and the Parachute Brigades comprise one battalion of permanent forces and two conventional Reserve Forces. The 12 territorial battalions and the 183 area protection units are Reserve Forces as well. This structure underlines the basic idea behind this force structure, which is to have a relatively small permanent force and a large mobilising capability.

#### **4.3.2: The Integration Process**

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<sup>33</sup> DOD Defence Vote 22 for 2004/05, p. 583.

<sup>34</sup> The Defence Review Chapter 8, pp. 20-21.

Apart from the divergent military cultures, the expectations of the two groups, i.e. the statutory and non-statutory forces, also have to be forged into a common cause. This was and still is a formidable challenge.<sup>35</sup>

...it is a very difficult task to transform a defence force... the question in the SANDF case was more a case of absorption of the former liberation movements into the old SADF structures. The reason for this was of course that the SADF was a formalised armed force, whereas the liberation movements were mass movements with only little military background. It takes time to transform an organisation like the SANDF because a guerrilla is not made a general in one day. It takes time to build up the intellectual capacity of the force among the former expatriates to meet the demanded capacity, and it takes military skills to become a general.<sup>36</sup>

In 1994, the SANDF had to adjust and prepare itself to function in the new democratic South Africa in 'support of the South African people' and in 'defence of democracy', its primary function now being the preservation of the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. A reform of the SANDF was initiated, which, among other things, incorporated the statutory and non-statutory forces of the liberation movements into the new national armed forces. In 1994, when the old statutory SADF and the former home land armies (TBVC<sup>37</sup>) were merged with the armed wings of the old liberation movements, the APLA and MK, the SANDF should have had 135,000 permanent civilian and military personnel, based on the figures reported by the seven different armies beforehand.<sup>38</sup> However, according to official figures, the new SANDF never had more than 101,000 because many personnel never registered.<sup>39</sup> The new force therefore had to be downsized considerably, both in actual force numbers and in terms of the percentage of GDP used for defence, to reflect the military requirements as outlined in the Defence Review.

The integration and reform of seven different "armies" meant the integration of different military cultures and the need to create one single unified culture. One of the problems that the SANDF leadership was faced with was the creation of a new

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<sup>35</sup> The Setai Committee Report, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Statement made during an interview with Col. S. Nyathi in the Zimbabwean MOD, January 2000, on the SANDF integration process, talking from his own experience in Zimbabwe.

<sup>37</sup> Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei.

<sup>38</sup> In addition, there was the large combined Reserve Forces of approximately 150,000 organised in the conventional reserves, the Citizen Force and the Commando System.

<sup>39</sup> Cawthra, Security Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa, in Cawthra and Luckham, Governing Insecurity, p. 38; also SETAI Committee Report.

national defence force that represented the population of South Africa, while at the same time retaining the critical function personnel from the old SADF. This has turned out to be extremely difficult because the private sector has been able to lure away large numbers of SANDF personnel. The SANDF is in direct competition with the higher salaries in the private sector, and it is finding it increasingly difficult to retain specialists, like flight controllers, pilots, doctors, etc. The vacancy rate among these groups of critical personnel is high, for example, a 32.8% vacancy rate for aircrew in the SANDF.<sup>40</sup>

Another problem the SANDF leadership was faced with during the transitional phase was that, in order to create a military capability, there must be:

1. A common doctrine directing training and creating unity in the individual units
2. The right quantity and type of equipment for the tasks at hand and to facilitate training
3. Educated and qualified personnel, and
4. Education provided through training and exercises.<sup>41</sup>

The SETAI Committee Report on the Integration within the SANDF concluded that 'the day is far off when complete unity of spirit and purpose will be achieved'.<sup>42</sup> Though the period after 1994 was marred by a number of racially motivated incidents – for instance, the Tempe base shooting in September 1999 that killed five, and the Simonstown shooting in September 2000 that killed two – there seems to be a broad-based consensus that the integration process has been a success. However, racism still is and will probably continue to be a problem within the SANDF, as it is in South African society in general. Another challenge during the integration process was the right sizing of the ethnic composition of the force. On the day of the first elections, 27 April 1994, 55.3% of the force was non-white, a figure that had increased to 75.3% by February 2003. Interestingly enough, though, it is still the old members of the SADF who, with 43.5%, constitute the bulk of the SANDF, while the former MK, for example, only constitutes 16.6%.<sup>43</sup> However, this also illustrates that the integration of the seven armies was not so much a merger, but characterised by the co-option of the other six armies into the SADF structure.<sup>44</sup> This means that the DOD is very close

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<sup>40</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05.

<sup>41</sup> I thank Dr Peter Viggo Jacobsen for this comment.

<sup>42</sup> Setai Committee Report, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> Setai Committee Report, p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> For further details on this, see, for instance, 'New Security', Cawthra, Cawthra, Security Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa, in Cawthra and Luckham, *Governing Insecurity*, p. 41.

to having reached the overall target of making the SANDF representative of the demographic composition of South African society in general. Nevertheless, this figure covers up the structural differences, in which the entry level has 83% Africans, while the middle management level has 47% white South Africans.<sup>45</sup> The affirmative action strategy has consequently been changed in an attempt to attract more non-African recruits, while the SANDF continues to attempt to improve the capacity of African officers, enabling them to reach the middle-management level. However, the rigid way in which the ANC government has chosen to implement its affirmative action policies has in the short to medium term had a negative effect on the capacity of the force. This is primarily because junior black officers and civilians are being promoted faster than they traditionally would have been in an attempt to remedy the predominance of white officers in the top echelons of the force. This has created frustration among the non-black career officers, because they are being overtaken by junior officers and feel they are being stuck. The affirmative action initiatives were needed to make the SANDF representative of the population in general. However, there is a delicate balance to strike between retaining the capabilities of the force and initiating the necessary reforms in the interests of the broader population. In this process it is essential that rumours concerning political deployments, as argued by defence speaker Shah, are refuted effectively, because they can have a devastating effect in the morale of the force and question its loyalty.<sup>46</sup> Shah even went so far as to state:

The greatest internal challenge is the ANC's mismanagement of the SANDF, whereby party political objectives have overridden the need for professional armed forces.<sup>47</sup>

The force's capability has been severely stretched by the reform process, which was delayed for more than two years and only concluded on 31 June 2001. Actual integration and demobilisation were officially concluded on 31 December 2002.<sup>48</sup> However, the integration and demobilisation processes proved much more expensive and difficult than the DOD had anticipated. The SA Army has been especially negatively influenced by the delayed demobilisation because most of those involved

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<sup>45</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 25.

<sup>46</sup> The author has on several occasions heard rumours and stories from SANDF personnel on increasing ANC attempts to place loyal ANC people in the top echelons of the force. The author cannot confirm these rumours, only conclude that political considerations are very common in appointing the most senior officers of the armed forces. This has, for instance, been seen on several occasions in Denmark.

<sup>47</sup> Shah, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Opposition*, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Defence Portfolio Committee, *Integration in SANDF*, Final Report, 27 May 2003.

belonged to it. Huge political pressure has been placed on the DOD to extend the short-term contracts of a large group of members, who, under the provision of the so-called Flexible Service System (FSS) introduced in 1994 as a replacement of the old SANDF draft system, did not qualify for extension.<sup>49</sup> In the New Service System (NSS), introduced in 2003, the Minister of Defence has stressed that the strict principle of 'rank-age vs. mustering criteria' must be followed, meaning in principle that, when an individual's career has peaked, that individual is re-skilled and re-deployed to other jobs outside the SANDF. However, as shown previously the DOD is finding it difficult to acquire the tools to make this possible.

### **4.3.3: Constraints within the Army**

Within the SA Army no funding is available for transformation. During 1997/98, the SA Army faced a series of major budget cuts – becoming a financially driven organisation rather than a 'needs' driven SA Army. The result of budget 'cuts' then and now, is a very expensive SA Army HR component – 'eating up' two thirds of the allocated budget, leaving the Capital and Operating environment with only a third of the budget.<sup>50</sup>

The limited resources available constitute a major constraint on the SANDF's capabilities, but according to the strategic plan it will be able to conduct international operations within the framework provided by the defence budget.<sup>51</sup> However, it is also clearly stressed that, due to the limited resources available, the maintenance of existing equipment is insufficient, because the focus has been shifted to the sectors of the armed forces that are strategically considered to be of vital importance to the state. In June 2004, the South African Parliament's Defence Ad Hoc Committee was briefed on the new defence budget, including in particular the state of the army. Questions were raised concerning the state of the army's equipment. According to Major-General Lusse, military vehicles have been a problem, although most of the critical equipment has been replaced. Tanks are more than fifty years old and support vehicles thirty.<sup>52</sup> The weapons acquisition programme could take ten to fifteen years to realise, which, in Lusse's view, creates the danger of block obsolescence, destroying specific Army capabilities as major investments in the army have to wait until after the completion of the first phase of the SDP. For instance,

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<sup>49</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 18.

<sup>50</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 11.

<sup>51</sup> Department of Defence, Strategic Business Plan, FY 2004/05 to FY 2006/07.

<sup>52</sup> South African Defence Ad Hoc Committee, 4 June 2004, Budget Briefing.



according to the DA's spokesman on Defence, only 12 of the army's 46 "Rooikat" armoured vehicles are in use and 15 out of 24 of the navy's vessels operational, while the SANDF Landward Capability is at only 45% of capacity.<sup>53</sup>

Type	Role	Quantity	In Service
Olifant Mk 1a	Main Battle Tank	80	43 <sup>(1)</sup>
Olifant Mk 1b	Main Battle Tank	44	44 <sup>(2)</sup>
Rooikat-76	Reconnaissance Vehicle	140	38
<a href="#">Eland 90</a>	Reconnaissance Vehicle	118	50
<a href="#">Ratel ZT-3</a>	Tank Destroyer	52	16
<a href="#">Ratel</a> Mk III	Armoured Personnel Carrier / Fire Support Vehicle	1,300	634
<a href="#">Casspir</a>	Armoured Personnel Carrier	n/a	429
Buffel/Buffel Mk 3	Armoured Personnel Carrier	2,300	n/a
<a href="#">Mamba</a> 4x4	Armoured Personnel Carrier	538	538
<b>Notes:</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remainder held as war equipment.</li> <li>2. Being upgraded.</li> </ol>			

Figure 4.3: Main equipment used by the South African Army as of 2005. Source, Janes

As previously mentioned, the current levels of conventional readiness and deployment are unbalanced and unsustainable in relation to the current resources available. There is thus an urgent need to prioritise resources or allocate more of them. However, once a military capability has been removed, it takes a long time to re-establish it again. The consequence is, of course, that defence planning must be directed by these basic primary defence objectives and not driven by finance. According to the Minister of Defence, the SANDF's priorities for FY 2004/05 were to support the government's diplomatic drive in Africa and promote regional security in the form of peace missions, as well as restoring the force's conventional defence capability.<sup>54</sup> The question is of course if this is a sustainable objective, i.e. both to

<sup>53</sup> Shah, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces*, p. 8. See also Chapters 6 – 9 for further details of the state of the SANDF equipment on deployment.

<sup>54</sup> DOD Strategic Business Plan for the FY 2004/05 to FY 2006/07, Chapter 1, p. 2.

support the government's foreign policy through for instance deployment to PSOs, and then at the same time restoring the conventional defence capability, which requires a lot of funds. In a briefing to the Defence Committee, the DOD stated that it had difficulties with the

provision of affordable and sustainable human resource requirements for external operations and simultaneously providing for joint and combined training requirements. This is compounded by health status and ageing HR profile of serving members.<sup>55</sup>

The human resource composition constitutes a problem for the SANDF because its current staff members, due to personal circumstances such as age, family status, economic dependents and health status, are less flexible and mobile. A high rank-to-age ratio plagues the SANDF because personnel even at the private level are of relatively advanced ages. In addition, their family status, often with wives and children, makes it difficult to deploy these members too frequently. This underlines the dichotomy between political intentions and stated will on the one hand and the resources allocated for these intentions to become a reality on the other. The South African army suffers from a lack of funding, which has resulted in insufficient maintenance of even primary mission equipment, with significant negative effects on the first line of defence capability, taking into account that this has been singled out as the main priority of the force. Given that there are only limited funds available for the renewal of equipment, this will lead to block obsolescence in the medium term,<sup>56</sup> with direct negative consequences for South Africa's ability either to deploy forces in international missions or to carry out its primary domestic tasks. The SANDF has also been a 'victim' of the general international tendency of governments to sub-contract new tasks and responsibilities to the armed forces without allocating them the additional funding. In South Africa, for instance, in 1998 responsibility for border control was transferred to the SANDF without additional funding – a huge task, given the budgetary resources available and the country's size.<sup>57</sup> This happened in the same period when some of the most dramatic budgetary cuts in the DOD were being implemented.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Briefing by the DOD to the Parliamentary Defence Committee on the Strategic Plan for 2005/06, 1 February 2005.

<sup>56</sup> DOD Strategic Business Plan for the FY 2004/05 to FY 2006/07, Chapter 6, p. 36.

<sup>57</sup> The resources for border protection are taken from the Landward Defence item in the budget.

<sup>58</sup> See Figure 3.1.

If the SANDF succeeds in reducing its domestic deployments, the positive impact on it will consequently be strong. However, the full impact will only be seen by 2009, by which time the police should have taken over full responsibility for domestic operations, including border control.<sup>59</sup> Until then, the SANDF will be expected to participate in domestic operations. Regarding the prospect of transferring this task to the SAPS, the ANC's member of the Portfolio Committee on Defence stated in August 2004 that negotiations are continuing and that it 'ideally must be a SAPS task'.<sup>60</sup> This shows the existence of the necessary political will, enabling the SANDF to act as an instrument in propping up South Africa's peace diplomacy in Africa. Nevertheless, the political prioritisation and resource allocation allowing the SANDF to function properly as lead nation does not yet seem to be in place.

Another pressing issue for the SANDF is the type and level of training it conducts. Given the nature of African conflicts, it can be questioned whether the chosen focus on peacekeeping, as suggested in the White Paper on Peace Missions, is actually relevant. The past year's experience of international PSOs has shown that robust and coercive measures are increasingly being included in UN mandates, especially as a consequence of mission creep. Traditional 'blue helmet' Chapter VI operations have become rarer, and UN missions have increasingly been given a more robust mandate, either a Chapter VI and a half or even a Chapter VII mandate. Once more robustness has been inserted into a mandate, the forces deployed also need heavier equipment and greater flexibility.

The ANC government has been increasingly willing to deploy the SANDF in 'robust' peacekeeping-type operations and even Chapter VII missions. This requires increased demands for flexibility and manoeuvrability, for instance helicopter capacity, and for robust policing skills. In reality, this task is not much different from the task the SANDF has been fulfilling domestically in support of the SAPS. As part of the national defence review, as previously mentioned, the SA Army has trained and prepared two infantry battalions for participation in peacekeeping operations. This means that it has one battalion ready for deployment at all times and one for rotation. If deployment in Chapter VII operations is needed, according to the White Paper on Peace Missions, the SAA will be able to make use of one mechanised

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<sup>59</sup> In its annual report, the DOD concludes that withdrawal for domestic tasks are on track, but that the SANDF will not withdraw from these operations until replacements are in place. SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05, p. 35.

<sup>60</sup> Koornhof, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Government*, p. 9.

battalion and one parachute battalion.<sup>61</sup> However, a briefing of the Portfolio Committee on Defence revealed that the 44<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regiment, which is part of the SANDF RDF, is not combat-ready.<sup>62</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> Parachute Battalion, a regular force, was also declared not combat-ready, while of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions (part of the reserves) one only exists on paper, while the other has lost such a high number of personnel that it has become ineffective.<sup>63</sup> The personnel in the 1<sup>st</sup> Parachute Battalion have an average age of 37, and in 2004 this battalion only had capacity to deploy a single company of soldiers.

Consequently, it can be argued that, if South Africa continues along the road it embarked on in relation to PSOs in Africa, the SANDF will come under severe pressure in trying to meet all the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan. The Plan recognises that the present force structure is not sustainable with the present budgetary means available and foresees a future situation in which the SANDF may not be able to fulfil the tasks it has been given by Parliament.<sup>64</sup> The SANDF will therefore be unable to function as an effective foreign-policy tool supporting South Africa's foreign-policy ambitions and role.

Nonetheless, so far the SANDF has managed to handle the tasks it has been assigned by the politicians. It had a large force continually deployed in support of the SAPS, it had the capacity to launch a proactive military intervention in 1998 in Lesotho at very short notice,<sup>65</sup> and it has so far been able to maintain a brigade-size deployment in international missions. In the short term, the SDP will increase the SANDF's logistics – that is, transport and support capacity – and conventional defence capability, and in the medium to long term also the army's conventional capability, though based on the idea of collateral utility from the primary tasks. However, in the short term at the lead-nation level, the battalion level and above, the SANDF will have a reduced capacity to participate in complex and more robust peace missions in terms of both deployable personnel and functional equipment.

#### ***4.4: The SANDF and Deployment into Peace Support Operations: the SANDF's International Role***

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<sup>61</sup> South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 23.

<sup>62</sup> Briefing of the Ad Hoc Committee on Defence, 4 June 2004.

<sup>63</sup> *Sunday Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2004; Briefing of the Ad Hoc Committee on Defence, 4 June 2004.

<sup>64</sup> DOD Strategic Plan for the Financial Year 2002/3 – 2004/5, p. 17.

<sup>65</sup> See Chapter 6 for a discussion of Operation BOLEAS.

Stringent guidelines have been provided to the DOD to do its business within budget allocation. However, this is hampered by ordered operations which do not have sufficient budgetary allocation.<sup>66</sup>

Support for the Government's diplomatic initiatives and for regional security are outlined as its defence and budgetary priorities in the defence vote 2004/05 briefing to the Joint Committee on Defence. The SANDF has become an integrated part of the nation's foreign policy and had by mid-2005 more than 3,000 soldiers deployed in PSOs in Africa. The two largest contingents were the 1,500 soldiers in Operation Fibre in Burundi and the approximately 1,400 soldiers in Operation Mistral in the DRC.<sup>67</sup> In addition, South Africa has troops in Sudan, observers as part of the UNMEE mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and has recently been deployed in the Comoro Islands. The increased focus on participation in international PSOs can also be detected in the 2004/05 Defence Budget vote, in which the allocations for infantry in the SA Army were increased by 43.7 % or R500 million compared with the previous year.<sup>68</sup>

In its Strategic Plan for 2005/06, the DOD identified a number of issues that were listed as risks to the department:

- The gap between the outputs of force-providing services and divisions and the required force levels to meet the assigned commitments
- The shortfall in the allocation for external operations in the DRC, Burundi and elsewhere; and
- The cost of internal deployments.<sup>69</sup>

The South African government is reimbursed \$US 1000 per soldier<sup>70</sup> per month for its deployment in Burundi and the DRC, of which only 30% ends up with the individual soldier as additional pay or compensation for being deployed. This means that \$US 36 million a year is returned to the government as reimbursement, and only for the troops, not for equipment, transport costs, etc. It must be added that the UN covers

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<sup>66</sup> DOD briefing of the Defence Committee on the Strategic Plan for 2005/06, 1 February 2005.

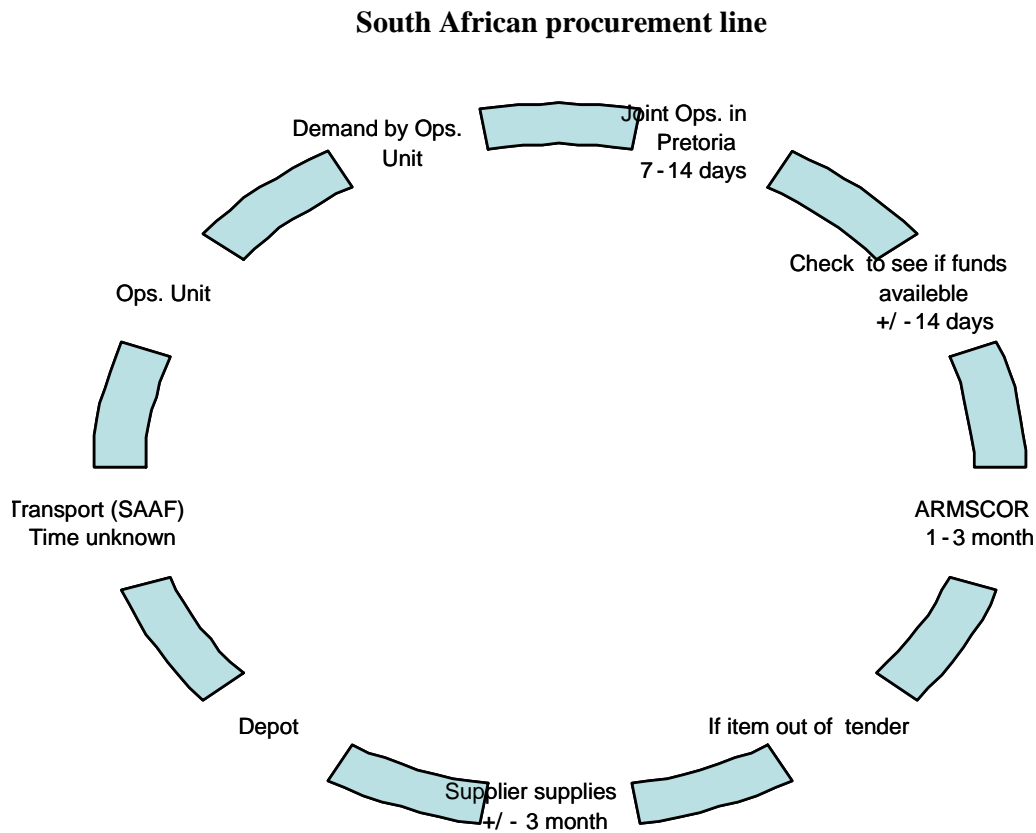
<sup>67</sup> See Appendix 10 for an overview of SANDF deployments in PSOs in Africa.

<sup>68</sup> Department of Defence Budget 2004/05 briefing to the Defence Joint Committee, 17 February 2004.

<sup>69</sup> DOD briefing of the Defence Committee on the Strategic Plan for 2005/06 1 February 2005.

<sup>70</sup> Kent et al., in 2003 set the figure at about \$US 1000 a month pr. soldier. Kent and Malan, *Decisions, Decisions*, South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, p. 11. However, a figure of EUR 113 was informed by MONUC while the author conducted his fieldwork in the DRC November 2004.

the costs of food and fuel for deployed personnel, which saves the SANDF an additional cost. The equipment brought to the mission area is also rented out to the UN in a so-called “wet lease” arrangement. In other words, South Africa receives lease payments from the UN for the equipment provided. This requires that the equipment be operational. This is an area where South Africa has some problems. For instance, during deployment, the procurement process for spare parts is extremely long, so that if a particular spare part is not in stock the delivery time of that order is unknown. The South African procurement system is structured as follows:



**Figure 4.4: The SANDF's procurement line. Source: Interview with WO I Meier, member of the UN inspection team at Camp Iveco, 11 November 2004**

The problem with this system is, of course, that when equipment breaks down, it is often uncertain when and how it can be re-supplied. If an item is in stock, it might be replaced in one to two months, but if it is not in stock the next contingent might be lucky to receive the ordered spares in six months' time. This is unacceptable to the UN because it leaves the force unable to conduct its task. This also illustrates that the South African authorities apparently do not prioritise participation in, in this case,

MONUC, nor, therefore, the safety of their own deployed troops. Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Defence concluded in a report of November 2005, that the

drawn-out procurement system of the DOD prevents the timely supply of goods and equipment, which impacts negatively on the maintenance and repair of equipment, especially of vehicles and generators, as well as the morale of the personnel.<sup>71</sup>

In its report, the Portfolio Committee also concludes that while the present procurement system is based on a peace-time system, the SANDF in the DRC has to operate in a non-peacetime role. This underlines the fact that, at the government level, the seriousness of the operations that the SANDF is undertaking has not been properly acknowledged for a long time. If South Africa wishes to participate in robust operations like that in the DRC, it must provide the required framework for the force to function. Furthermore, this creates problems for the SANDF's ability to function as the lead nation in PSOs because the criteria listed earlier stress the importance of having the logistical set up in place to support the deployment. Concerning logistics and support for the Burundi force, this was serviced by the same aircraft that also provided logistics for the SANDF forces in the DRC.<sup>72</sup>

The procurement debate is a classic example of how two dichotomous political considerations are at play at the same time, i.e. the ambition to create an open-tender system, though with black empowerment aspects, versus the need for speedy delivery for the SANDF forces involved in operations. In addition, there are the financial restraints that the DOD is facing, making spares unavailable.

There are several bottlenecks built into the procurement system, some of which the SANDF does not have any control over. First of all, the maintenance of the equipment in a UN mission is the responsibility of the individual troop contributors, who are reimbursed for functional equipment. The South African government's open-tender system has increased the delivery time for out-of-stock spare parts. If, for instance, gearboxes for the South-African built Casspir APC must be replaced and the spares are not in stock, the delivery time is unknown. This was seen in the findings of the UN inspections of the South African troops in the DRC, where 12 out

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<sup>71</sup> Report from the Portfolio Committee's oversight visit to the DRC, p. 1.

<sup>72</sup> In the fall of 2004, SAAF transport aircraft regularly flew the Pretoria – Kinshasa – Kindu – Bujumbura – Pretoria route, changing direction every second flight, that is, starting with Bujumbura and ending in Kinshasa, before returning to Pretoria.

of a total of 18 APCs were not operational.<sup>73</sup> This seriously hampers the ability of the SANDF to operate and fulfil its mandate, as well as increasing the risk of fatalities among the contingent.

In the years following the 1994 democratic transition, attitudes were mixed within the SANDF regarding the question of South African involvement in peacekeeping in Africa. Non-white officers were, generally speaking, more in favour than their white colleagues.<sup>74</sup> The widespread opposition within the SANDF to participating in peace-support operations, or even military co-operation with other African states, was caused among other things by the widespread downsizing of the armed forces, perceptions of a lower quality of training, the lack of funds to buy new military equipment, and the resignation of quality officers from the forces. All this has created doubts about the capacity of the SANDF: 80% of white officers thought that it had declined, while only 22% of black officers agreed.<sup>75</sup> Experience of military co-operation within SADC confirmed this. However, as one colonel within the force stated, the SANDF might not be in the shape it used to be in during the border wars with Angola, but there was no need for this kind of battle preparedness during peacetime.<sup>76</sup> The peacekeeping task is significantly different from traditional combat operations. However, as previously mentioned, the PSOs have become increasingly robust in nature, which alters the demands to and requirements of the deployed forces.

The continued budgetary cuts had a serious effect on the level of training especially. Peacekeeping requires training, and when resources for training are reduced, it has a serious negative effect on the capacity of the SANDF to participate in this type of operation. According to Defence Minister Lekota's defence budget speech, the problem is that PKO preparation and training are shifting the focus away from conventional military tasks and preparation, resulting in the force needing to be retrained.<sup>77</sup>

Since it took office in 1994, the ANC-led government has increasingly pursued a peaceful means strategy, in which military coercion is the last resort. To quote an official in the DFA, South Africa would rather send in the NEPAD secretariat than the

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with WO I Meier, member of the UN inspection team at Camp Iveco, 11 November 2004.

<sup>74</sup> Heinecken, *Regional involvement*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>75</sup> Heinecken, *Regional involvement*, p. 59.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with Colonel Chris Serfontein, January 2000.

<sup>77</sup> Defence Minister Lekota's budgetary speech, June 2004.



44<sup>th</sup> Parachute Brigade.<sup>78</sup> South Africa does not believe in 'gun-boat diplomacy'. The South African strategy so far, as shown in Chapter 2, has been to seek negotiated settlements, to such an extent that it has received some international criticism for being over-lenient with actors who are singled out by the dominant international powers as pariahs, whether rebel leaders or states. South Africa has so far been relatively successful with this strategy, which requires a solid starting point and that a refusal to accept the consequences of a breakdown in the negotiations. So far the only exception to the peaceful means strategy was the badly managed intervention in Lesotho in 1998.<sup>79</sup>

#### **4.4.1: Rotation and Sustainability**

In mid-2005, the number of South African soldiers deployed in international missions by far exceeded the battalion planned for in the Defence Review. Indeed, the SANDF had three battalions deployed in international missions, resulting in each available battalion being deployed for six months within an eighteen-month cycle – that is, one battalion deployed and two in preparation for deployment. This underlines yet again that the political will to contribute to international missions and to function as a lead nation exists. The problem, apart from those already described, is that, because of poor health standards within the SANDF – either HIV/AIDS-positive status or generally bad medical conditions – officially one third, unofficially two-thirds of the force are medically unsuitable for international deployment.<sup>80</sup> The international peacetime norm is six months out of thirty-six, that is, to be able to keep one battalion deployed at all times, a further five are needed as backup.<sup>81</sup> As a result, to be able to field and sustain the deployment of one battalion, following the official figure at least seven are needed in reserve. Using the unofficial figure this number raises to nine.<sup>82</sup>

According to the 2004 defence budget brief, a standard SANDF battalion will spend at least a year preparing for and conducting a deployment in an international mission of six months' duration, i.e.:

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<sup>78</sup> Interview conducted by the author in the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, 10 September 2003.

<sup>79</sup> See Chapter 6 for more details of Operation Boleas.

<sup>80</sup> For the official figure see later in the Chapter, The unofficial figure is based on personal conversations with SANDF personnel, for instance by Lamb, *Fighting for the Future*

<sup>81</sup> Koornhof, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Government*, p. 16.

<sup>82</sup> Personal correspondence with UK and Danish defence force representatives. The Danish Deputy Chief of Defence, Vice-admiral Tim Sloth Jørgensen, argued that, in its defence planning for long-term deployments, Denmark needs five battalions as backup to be able to keep one deployed. The SANDF Chief Director Strategy and Planning, Rear Admiral Hauter, confirmed during an interview that this is also the assumption of the SANDF as the criteria for sustainable deployment.

- one month for health assessments
- three months to prepare training and revise military skills
- one month on mission readiness training and final preparation for deployment
- six months of external deployment; and
- two months of leave accumulated during the period of deployment.<sup>83</sup>

This underlines the fact that the White Paper on Peace Missions is obsolete and out of date. Furthermore the conditions for South African participation in international missions – for example, signed peace agreements, clear exit strategies, both for extraction and time span, and clear and realistic mandates – have all been lifted for political reasons, such as ensuring that South Africa is the lead force in the African Mission in Burundi. In its estimate of its future tasks, the DOD has therefore focused on two of the three mission pillars shown in Figure 3.2 in Chapter 3. The task of giving ‘Support to the People’ is to be scaled down, leaving more resources for a focus on regional security.

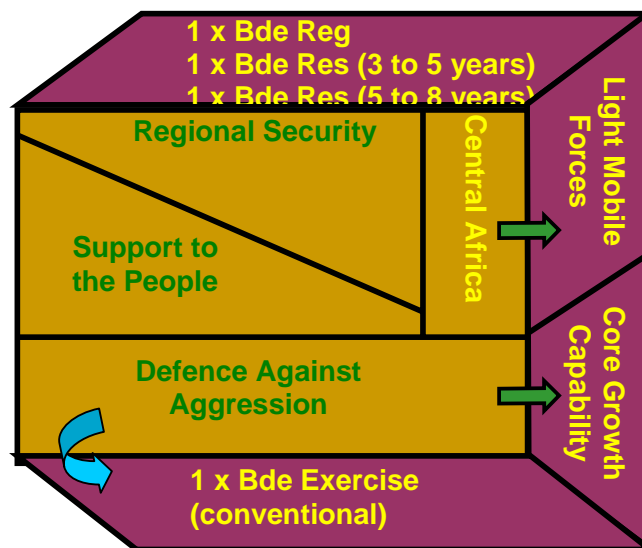


Figure 4.5: Priorities in SANDF's future tasks,  
Source: Briefing of the Ad Hoc Committee on Defence, 4 June 2004: Source the Parliamentary Monitoring Group

As shown in Figure 4.4, the SANDF leadership is aware of the discrepancy between actual forces deployed and its capacity and resources to support such a deployment. Therefore, it has produced the priority plan shown in Figure 4.5, where an increased focus on ‘Regional Security’ will replace the task of offering support to the people, by

<sup>83</sup> Defence budget brief, 4 June 2004, Defence Ad Hoc Committee, Appendix 1.

which is primarily meant support to the police. According to this plan, in addition to its existing infantry brigade prepared for PSO operations, the SAA will within eight years be able to make use of two extra brigades of Reserve Force Infantry. One full time brigade will remain with a focus on defence against aggression. This should help solve the current capacity problem that the SANDF is experiencing. The deployment of troops for a limited period is not a problem, but the more or less permanent deployment of a large number of troops is. To sustain a large deployment through a reasonable peacetime<sup>84</sup> rotation scheme requires an even larger force as back-up: thus a battalion-size deployment in non-war situations needs at least four back-up battalions, and to comply with the norm in, for instance, Denmark, the UK, Sweden, and Norway, the figure is five – that is, for every 1,000 soldiers deployed 4,000-5,000 are needed as backup. The term “reasonable” must be seen here as an expression of how frequently professional soldiers can be expected to go on six months of international peacetime duty before they start looking for alternative employment. For the SA Army this means that, to be able to sustain the current deployment level of 3,000 soldiers for a longer period of time, it needs 12,000–15,000 as backup, or 18 battalions. As shown in Figure 4.6, the SA Army currently has eleven battalions available, even though the Defence Review calls for fourteen light infantry battalions.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> In time of war other mechanisms apply, because war by nature is securitised and is fought to ensure the survival of the state.

<sup>85</sup> Defence Review Chapter 8, 21.

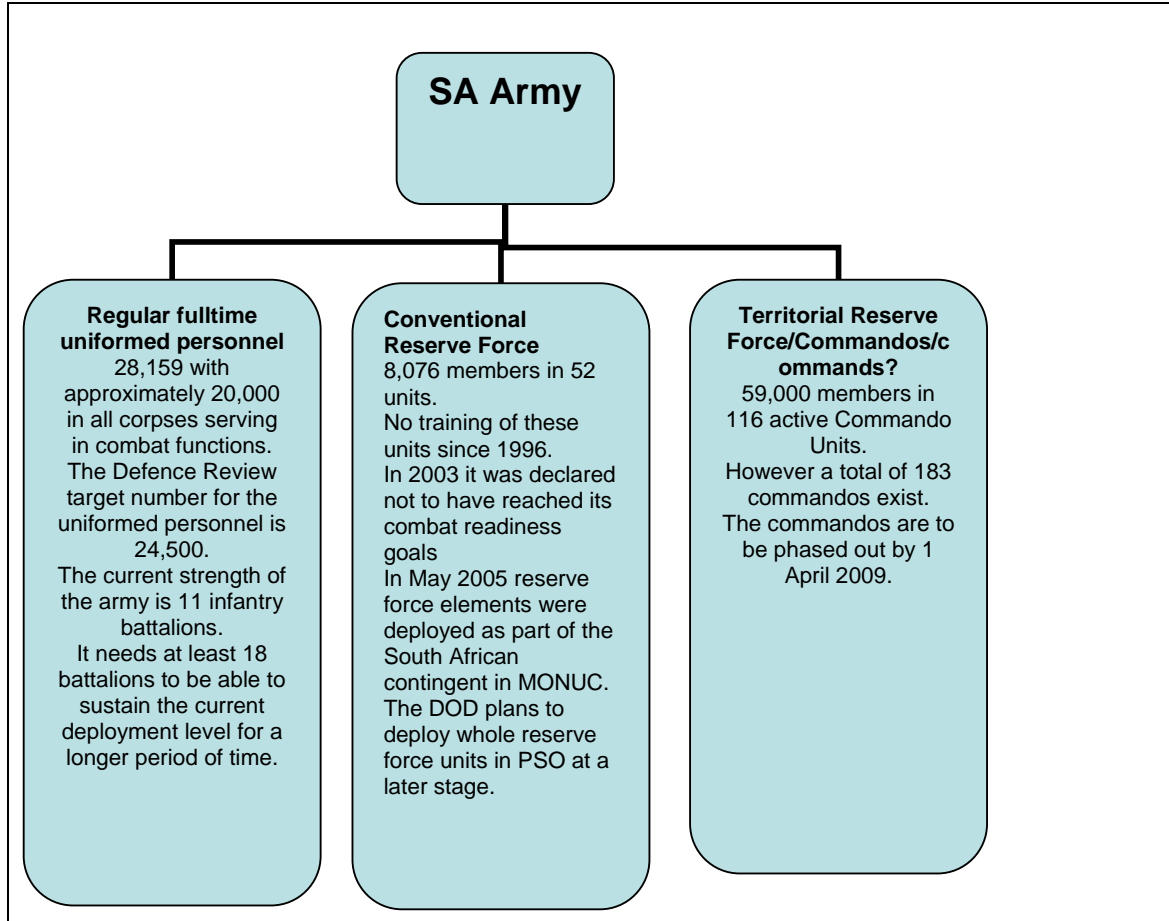


Figure 4.6: Available forces in the SA Army by 2005

However, looking only at the force numbers of uniformed personnel in the SANDF, it can be argued that the resources available are not being used effectively and that the SA Army ought to be able to field more than the present 3,000 soldiers. One of the problems seems to be that only a small part of the force is in combat functions as opposed to support functions – the so-called “teeth-to-tail ratio”. As has been pointed out in the ISS submission on the defence review, this was already mentioned in the first defence review of 1998 and formed part of it.<sup>86</sup> Paragraph 10 in Chapter 8 states that the imbalance between tooth and tail should be corrected, thus releasing more resources for combat capabilities. As Len Le Roux stated during an interview, it is difficult to argue for more resources if you cannot show that you have improved your own efficiency and cut down on your bureaucracy.<sup>87</sup> The inflation in ranks led to each promoted officer creating his own little empire, thus expanding the number of staff functions. This happened despite the introduction of new management systems in

<sup>86</sup> ISS submission on the South African Defence Review, p. 10.

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS, 21 October 2004.

1994.<sup>88</sup> Nearly a third of the SA Army's 29,000 uniformed personnel are, because of their function, not deployable into PSOs. Of the remaining two-thirds, only some of them are deployable. In comparison the British Army is currently deploying a quarter of its total force of 100,000 personnel. Naturally, the main question is how many soldiers does South Africa need to be able to fulfil its current and future tasks? The SETAI Report concludes that 'Looking at the medium to long term, it is quite clear that the current SA Army of some 34,000 (including the PSAP members), is inadequate'.<sup>89</sup> This figure has only been accepted by Parliament as a transitional and should be reduced to 29,000, including PSAP and MSDS personnel. Not even the proposed frequency of rotating four battalions will match the international norm of six months of deployment every 36 months. This could partly be solved by the new MSDS personnel, as they would in theory have been replaced by new recruits before being deployed again.

However, the permanent members of a force can only be deployed at certain intervals. One of the problems facing the SANDF is that deployment is still a voluntary matter for the individual, even though refusal to deploy so far has not been a major problem. A career soldier will probably be reluctant to decline a deployment in case this has significant negative repercussions on his or her future career opportunities. Also, the recommendation of Parliament is that in future personnel must accept any international deployment they are assigned to.<sup>90</sup> However, the experience of nations with a long track record of deployment in international missions shows that there are limits to how often permanent staff can be deployed in international missions for six months at a time: individual circumstances must be taken into account. Too frequent deployments will eventually lead to difficulties for the SANDF in retaining permanent staff.<sup>91</sup> The PSOs only constitute a secondary function for the force: it is felt that similar problems would not be experienced in the event of its primary tasks, such as an attack on the national territory.

#### **4.4.1: The SANDF's Human Resource Bottleneck Problem**

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at the ISS, 21 October 2004.

<sup>89</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 11.

<sup>90</sup> See, for instance, minutes of the Defence Joint Standing Committee, 4 March 2003.

<sup>91</sup> Recent experiences from Denmark shows that an increasing number of officers choose to leave the armed forces due, among other things, to the high frequency of international deployments. It must be added, though, that in Denmark the contemporary job market makes it relatively easy for military personnel to find other civilian employment, which is not the case in South Africa due to the high unemployment rate. PMCs nonetheless employ a large number of former South African security personnel.

In order to attain the DOD's vision to ensure effective defence for a democratic South Africa, the SANDF requires a bulk of young, fit and healthy soldiers, broadly representative of the population in terms of the Defence Review guidelines of 64.6% Africans, 10.2% Coloureds, 0.75% Asians, and 24,3% Whites. The current service system has...not provided appropriate mechanism and enabling support systems to ensure the rejuvenation of the SANDF's HR composition.... The result is that a large number of the SANDF's Privates, Lance Corporals and Corporals...are by far exceeding the reasonable age-rank utilisation criteria applicable to fighting soldiers in the respective ranks. This leads to such members being ineffective for operational utilisation and deployments and contributes to stagnation and low morale.<sup>92</sup>

Thanks to the integration process and the general adjustment to the recommendations set out in the Defence Review, the SANDF has experienced a number of very acute personnel challenges that need to be addressed. The demobilisation process meant that the yearly intake of new personnel in the SA Army was reduced to 400 per year, while a number of non-statutory force members were of advanced age when they were integrated into the army in 1994-2002.<sup>93</sup> Besides the general upgrading of staff to meet basic joint criteria – a consequence of the merger of the statutory and non-statutory forces, the demobilisation of 9,847 non-statutory force personnel, the retirement of 48,000 statutory force personnel since 1994 and the impact of affirmative action policies – the SANDF has had to deal with a serious problem of “aging soldiers”, a right-sizing of the force composition in terms of both race and gender, as well as in terms of function, and the challenge of increasing health problems within the force. The problem with the aging soldiers has been improved because of the MSDS program which means that the DOD in its annual report for 2004-05 could report, that the ration of soldiers between the age of 18-24 has improved with 27,4 % since 2003.<sup>94</sup>

According to the DOD's own publications, the objective of the HR 2010 plan is to create an affordable and flexible DOD HR composition, that is, to deal with the force's top heaviness.<sup>95</sup> The SANDF seems to have experienced an inflation of ranks, which has created a need to right-size the composition of the force, but also increased personnel costs.<sup>96</sup> Currently, the SANDF has a general to private ratio of approximately 1 to 300, compared to the average in the Western world of 1 to 1,500-

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<sup>92</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 10.

<sup>93</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 38.

<sup>94</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05, p. 28.

<sup>95</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2002/03, p. 16.

<sup>96</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 6.

2,000.<sup>97</sup> The force also suffers from vacancies in critical occupational areas, with more than 5,000 vacancies in sectors experiencing competition from the private sector such as aircrew, engineers and nurses.<sup>98</sup> At the same time, the SANDF has an excess number of employees in lower skilled and skilled roles of more than 3,000. For instance, an estimated 5,000 South Africans have signed up for private security positions in Iraq, often earning in a month what they would in a year with the SANDF.<sup>99</sup> This has become a huge problem for the force, where individuals are contacted directly and recruited.<sup>100</sup> It is on this sector that the DOD's Redeployment Agency has focused its attention to enable the DOD to reach the Defence Review's targeted force number of 70,000, while at the same time enabling recruitment. The SANDF has not been able to recruit sufficient personnel to rejuvenate the force structure or to retain staff in critical occupations. As a consequence, the average age of a private within the regular force is now 32, though decreasing, or in other words, 52% of privates are between 30 and 60 years of age, while the corresponding figure for junior non-commissioned officers is 50%.<sup>101</sup> The average age in the conventional reserves is currently 35.<sup>102</sup> More importantly, only 0.28% of privates in the army was between 18 and 22 years of age in 2003, which according to the HR 2010 plan ideally should constitute the bulk part of the rifleman and privates.<sup>103</sup> But although the SANDF urgently needs to rejuvenate its force structure, this process has been slowed by a lack of permanent staff, primarily the excess number of white officers and middle-aged black privates, accepting the retirement packages on offer. The retirement scheme has so far been offered on a voluntarily basis. One of the major obstacles seems to be the high rate of unemployment in South Africa, which stands at approximately 40% of the total workforce, meaning that for huge numbers of SANDF personnel it will be more or less impossible to find new employment. Consequently, there is an urgent need for alternative employment opportunities to be created in other parts of the public sector if the existing force structure is to be changed.<sup>104</sup> The DOD is working intensively on reducing the 2004 personnel costs of 52% and has given the Redeployment Agency the task of helping staff who can no

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<sup>97</sup> ISS submission on the South African Review, p. 10.

<sup>98</sup> DOD Annual Report 2002/03, p. 19.

<sup>99</sup> A lot of uncertainty surrounds the actual number of South Africans working for PMC in Iraq and outside South Africa in general. However, 5000 was the number given to Parliament's Defence Portfolio Committee in January 2006. See, for instance, le Roux, "What are 5 000 South Africans doing in Iraq?", Mail & Guardian, 6 January 2006.

<sup>100</sup> One SANDF soldier the author talked to, who wished to remain anonymous, told me that he had been offered £400 a day more or less tax-free for a job as a bodyguard.

<sup>101</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 11.

<sup>102</sup> Briefing of the Portfolio Committee on Defence on the Status of Operation Phoenix.

<sup>103</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 38.

<sup>104</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 9.

longer be used effectively within the SANDF build new careers in other sectors of the public sector or in the private sector.

The decision in 1994 of the SANDF to introduce what it called the Flexible Service System was taken to ensure that the future force would consist mainly of young, deployable soldiers on short-term contracts, while smaller numbers of personnel would be offered medium to long-term contracts. However, while the ratio between the three categories was supposed to be 40 – 40 – 20, the actual ratio in 2004 was 13 – 39 – 48.<sup>105</sup> This was because, as part of the integration process, a large number of non-statutory and statutory force personnel were offered long or medium-term contracts. Although it was never the intention of the FSS system to create an expectation of life-long employment to evolve within the SANDF, in practice this has turned out to be the case. The 2004 defence hearing showed that there is much focus on the living conditions of the veterans, partly due to their alleged involvement in organised crime, and the SANDF is therefore expected to take social aspects into consideration in its retrenchments policies, despite the fact that they are working against its interests. This is, of course, not official government policy, but the fact that a number of government ministers are veterans themselves makes this issue highly politicised. This has had a significant negative impact on the SANDF's deployment potential. According to SANDF Health Service Director Pieter Oelofse, 30% of soldiers going through health checks before deployment to international missions fail the minimum health standards required.<sup>106</sup>

As part of the HR 2010 scheme, the DOD started a Military Skills Development Program (MSDS) with an intake of 1,350 new recruits in January 2003, and by March 2005 there were a total of 6222 MSDS members in the regular force.<sup>107</sup> In 2005, 45% of these were transferred into the reserve force,<sup>108</sup> which is playing an important role in rejuvenating the force and increasing force readiness. The programme is supposed to offer school-leavers the opportunity to do voluntary military service for two years, after which the SANDF will accept a number of suitable applicants into the regular force, while most of the rest will be transferred to the reserves.<sup>109</sup> This should make the Reserve Force more useful to the SANDF under the One Force Concept, meaning that both the Permanent Force and Reserve Force are voluntary forces, structured under the constitution. According to the HR 2010 strategy, already by

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<sup>105</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 10.

<sup>106</sup> SANDF Health Service Director Pieter Oelofse, in AllAfrica.com, 20 August 2004.

<sup>107</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05, p. 49.

<sup>108</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05, p. 49.

<sup>109</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2002/03, p. 16.



2006/07 the MSDS component of the force should constitute approximately 32% of the total force, the final target being 40%. Hopefully, this will result in the rejuvenation of and improved health standards within the SANDF, and it should also reduce current personnel costs from the current 52% to 45% of the total defence budget or by a total of R 1.3 billion per year. On average, an MSDS recruit costs R 36,203 per year, while the averaged cost of privates in the current FSS system is R 49,303.<sup>110</sup>

However, to be able to reach these objectives, more than 21,000 employees on medium- and long-term contracts must retire.<sup>111</sup> Within the SA Army an estimated 18,000 soldiers, primarily of the rank of private and corporal, 98% of them black, need to be re-skilled and redeployed to other jobs outside the SANDF.<sup>112</sup> The political will to force this through is not there, and the policy seems to be to 'wait it out', that is, wait until the surplus personnel retires in the normal way. In the meantime, total force numbers have been allowed to exceed the ceiling of 70,000 described in the review, though the additional personnel costs are to be covered by the DOD itself. This of course increases the risk of creating an armed welfare organisation and not a functional armed forces as previously argued by Lamb

However, the new HR policy will prepare all new recruits, from the day they start their service, to be prepared to leave the SANDF, meaning that when an individual's career in the military comes to an end, he or she will be re-skilled and re-deployed in another career. An important element of the New Service System is that only 20% of the Regular Force will be allowed to serve until retirement as part of the Senior Career System, as compared to the current rate of 40%.<sup>113</sup>

#### **4.4.2: The Role of the Reserve Force**

Once more, I must confirm the dependence of the SA Army on the part-time system, including both the conventional and territorial organisations, to prevent the development of an unaffordable full-time component.<sup>114</sup>

Historically, the South African armed forces have always consisted of a relatively small permanent force backed up by a large mobilisation capability. As described in Chapter 3 of the dissertation the White Paper on Defence and the Defence Review,

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<sup>110</sup> Updated Response to the Final SETAI Report on the Progress in Transformation in the SANDF, 2 (4).

<sup>111</sup> DOD Human Resource Strategy 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, p. 33.

<sup>112</sup> SETAI Committee Report, p. 29.

<sup>113</sup> SETAI Committee Report.

<sup>114</sup> Cilliers, Opening Remarks from a Conference on the Future of the Part-time Forces, CSIR Conference Centre, Pretoria, 28 March 1996.

the reserve force was to be integrated and remain a central part of the new force design. The reserve force capability is a rather inexpensive way of retaining a conventional territorial defence capability that can be mobilised in the event of a conventional attack, or even function in PSOs, as suggested in Figure 5.5 (above). Already in 1996, Jackie Cilliers warned against the risk of creating an unsustainable permanent force by forgetting the permanent force reliance on the Reserve Forces in attempting to build up sustainable armed forces. As shown in Chapter 3, the Defence Review opted for a relatively large reserve force component, but this has for a long time been neglected by the SANDF. As has been argued above, the current structure of the SANDF has been declared unsustainable by the DOD itself, while the Reserve Force components have been neglected and some regiments only exist on paper. The Reserve Force suffers from the same kinds of structural problems as the permanent force, such as ageing personnel and a lack of resources. Furthermore, formal structures to provide training for new reserve officer candidates have not been put in place, and it has proved impossible to attract new candidates. The DOD has therefore launched Project Phoenix, which is supposed to come up with a proposal for a new reserve force design.

The reserve force will become increasingly important for the future sustainability of the SANDF. The idea behind the so-called 'one-force concept' is precisely that all the different branches of the SANDF should be treated as one. The SANDF's mission, as outlined in the strategic plan 'to support the people',<sup>115</sup> is in future to be carried out mainly by members of the conventional reserve forces, while the conventional reserve is also being rotated into international PSOs.<sup>116</sup> This should relieve the regular forces to focus increasingly on conventional military tasks and PSOs in particular. This, however, presupposes that the missions and the quality of the reserve units are properly matched, which has not been the case so far.

In 2005, the SANDF reserve force structure consisted of a conventional reserve component of approximately 9,000 personnel, and the territorial force/commandos one of approximately 59,000, which are in the process of being closed down.<sup>117</sup> The army's conventional reserve units have not had a proper exercise since 1996, and some of the units merely exist on paper. It can be argued that, after six to eight years without any training, a unit must be considered to be non-existing. The commando units are to be phased-out as part of a phasing out of the SANDF area defence

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<sup>115</sup> DOD Strategic Business Plan, FY 2004/05 to FY 2006/07.

<sup>116</sup> Chief of the Army Report to the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Defence, 18 November 2003.

<sup>117</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05.

capability by 31 March 2009 and are either being transferred to the SAPS Security Services division as new reserve units to help the police deal with border control and to support heavily burdened police units or being sent to the conventional Reserve Force units.<sup>118</sup> This coincides with the target date set by Defence Minister Lekota for the SANDF's withdrawal from its domestic deployment in support of the SAPS. The defence force is not equipped or trained for police operations, constant deployment to which is damaging its core capacity. However, it is doubtful whether the SANDF will be able to withdraw totally from Operation Intexo, and discussions on how to secure the borders are ongoing.<sup>119</sup> The ANC government's decision to phase out the commandos is a political one involving confrontation with the old Boer commando tradition and history.<sup>120</sup> This decision works partly against the aims laid out in the White Paper and the Defence Review, namely that:

The SANDF must comprise a relatively small regular component, backed up by a sufficiently large part-time component. This structure is cost-effective and will promote regional confidence.<sup>121</sup>

However, since 1994 the territorial forces have mainly been involved in police operations and border control. According to the Progress Report on Project Phoenix, they have accordingly lost their conventional military function as the "rear area defence capability".<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, the commandos will not be playing any role in the SANDF's future PSO tasks and have therefore lost their military usefulness, taking the military challenges facing South Africa into consideration.<sup>123</sup> This means that the Defence Review's conclusion that the SANDF should have a sufficiently large part-time force have so far failed to materialise, and the SANDF's reserve component is in the short term basically non-existent or on the verge of being phased out. Closing down the commandos also poses a direct problem for the government because of their role in support of the police in the crime-ridden rural areas of South Africa.<sup>124</sup> In his 2005 budget speech, Defence Minister Lekota promised that the

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<sup>118</sup> Chief of the Army Report to the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Defence, 18 November 2003.

<sup>119</sup> Koornhof, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Government*, p. 9.

<sup>120</sup> The Boer Commando tradition goes a long way back in history. It was based on small, part-time mobile units, which during the Boer war from 1899 to 1902, fought a fierce guerrilla war against the British colonial army. For further details on the commando system, see, for instance, Steenkamp, *Two Architects of SA's Armies: Shaka of The Zulus and Prince Morits of Orange*; Seegers, *The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa*, ISS booklet 'The Commandos'.

<sup>121</sup> Defence Review ; Chapter 3 (para. 9.6).

<sup>122</sup> Reserve Force Council Report on Project Phoenix, 18 November 2003.

<sup>123</sup> For further details on the dismantling of the Commandos, see Steinberg, *After the Commandos*.

<sup>124</sup> A survey of 2003 showed that farmers in South Africa had the highest risk of being murdered of any occupational group, in a country that experienced more than 16,000 murders and 25,000 attempted murders in

SANDF, including the commandos, would not withdraw from its domestic operations before the police had the capacity to take over the function.<sup>125</sup> According to the Progress Report on Project Phoenix, it is doubtful whether commando members will accept transfers to the SAPS Reserves, mainly because of a difference in culture between the army and the police service. This could leave the police with a capacity problem and prolong the integration process. The experience of the integration and transformation processes in the 1990s shows that it will be difficult for the SANDF to reach its HR 2010 objectives because of the problems involved in encouraging people to resign from the force. This process will take longer unless the DOD resorts to compulsory retirements and dismissals. The high personnel costs, including rising medical costs due to increased health problems, divert resources away from maintenance and new equipment, thus undermining morale and the force's ability to fulfil its tasks under the constitution. The SANDF's capabilities have also been weakened by the neglect of the reserves, which could potentially be a relatively cheap addition to the permanent force. It remains to be seen whether the aims of the Defence Review and the DOD's plans to use the reserves in international missions in the years to come will be successful.<sup>126</sup> However, the political will has so far been absent in the attempts to create an effective military capacity that will be able to undertake the international military tasks that lie ahead for the SANDF. The problems seen in the permanent force concerning the right sizing of armed forces personnel is blocking attempts to create a capable and effective armed force, including the reserves. The political level still needs to show commitment, that is, a willingness to reduce surplus personnel and retain critical personnel, if its stated ambition to create an effective military support for its diplomatic drive in Africa is to be taken seriously.

#### **4.4.3: The AIDS/HIV Virus and its Consequences for SANDF's Capabilities**

The South African National Defence Force has not failed to meet any of its United Nations or African Union peacekeeping obligations because it was "running short of soldiers not infected with HIV/AIDS".<sup>127</sup>

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2003.

<sup>125</sup> Defence Minister Lekota's Budget Speech in Parliament, 8 April 2005.

<sup>126</sup> The first small reserve force elements have already been deployed with success in international PSOs during 2006. It also important to remember that many countries rely on reserve force soldiers for deployment in international PSOs, including Denmark.

<sup>127</sup> ANC Today, Volume 5, No. 4, 28 January–3 February 2005.

This comment was made by the governing party in its weekly newsletter as a response to an article in *The Economist* entitled 'A man of two faces'. Technically speaking, it is correct to say that so far the SANDF has been able to field the required number of soldiers to fulfil its international commitments.<sup>128</sup> However, as this section will show, the SANDF is strained in its capacity by the high number of infections among its personnel. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has hit South African society and its armed forces particularly hard. According to UNAIDS, South Africa has one of the highest numbers of individuals in the world of people living with the disease, approximately 20% of the population. According to these figures, life expectancy will drop from 59 to 45 years within the next ten years, with severe negative consequences for the economy. As a microcosm of society in general, therefore, the SANDF is being strategically weakened by the pandemic, approximately 20% to 40% of its personnel being HIV positive. According to newspaper reports citing the SANDF health director, the current official figure is 23%.<sup>129</sup> Although the first policy on HIV/AIDS was formulated back in 1988, it was not until 1999 that the DOD issued instructions on how to handle the crisis. However, awareness campaigns have been launched since 1996, and in 1998 HIV/AIDS was declared an issue of strategic importance.<sup>130</sup> Force readiness, force morale, and levels of training and experience are all suffering from the pandemic.<sup>131</sup> The capacity to deploy forces in international missions is therefore also suffering because of the weakened ability of many individual soldiers to act in a stressful environment. Furthermore, it is estimated that 40% of all SANDF personnel who fall chronically ill have HIV, though it is difficult to collect statistics on this.<sup>132</sup>

Therefore, one of the greatest challenges facing the SANDF is that posed by HIV/AIDS or by related diseases such as cancer and tuberculosis, which are threatening to undermine the force's capabilities. This challenge is very apparent at present at several levels. According to the DOD's annual report for 2002/2003, the number of personnel who died while on service increased from 457 in FY 1998/1999 to 851 in FY 2002/2003 or approximately 25% of the total number of personnel leaving the SANDF that year.<sup>133</sup> A number of these casualties have nothing to do with HIV/AIDS, but the sharp increase that can be detected in recent years makes a bleak prospect for the future, when the full impact of the infection rate will be seen.

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<sup>128</sup> AMIS is an exception, because South Africa could not provide the promised number of soldiers.

<sup>129</sup> SANDF Health Service Director Pieter Oelofse, in *AllAfrica.com*, 20 August 2004.

<sup>130</sup> Heineken, *Facing a Merciless Enemy: HIV/AIDS and the South African Armed Forces*, p. 285.

<sup>131</sup> Daniels, *HIV/AIDS and the Cultural Challenge with Specific Reference to the SANDF Peace Operations*, p. 2.

<sup>132</sup> Daniels, *HIV/AIDS and the Cultural Challenge with Specific Reference to the SANDF Peace Operations*, p. 4.

<sup>133</sup> SA DOD Annual Report 2002/2003, p. 21; SA DOD Annual Report 2001/2002, p. 22.

However, an ATV treatment programme has been initiated, which will reduce the number of fatalities caused by HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, according to Daniels' investigation, the pattern of sexual behaviour has not changed significantly, despite DOD HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. A culture of casual sexual behaviour among personnel still exists, especially while on deployment or on military courses.<sup>134</sup> According to the SANDF's own HIV/AIDS effectiveness campaigns, its "Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice" (KAP) survey, 80% of the respondents replied that they continued having casual sex during missions and while on courses, despite the campaigns.<sup>135</sup> Therefore, the SANDF has a difficult task on its hands. Its current campaigns, especially the Masibambisane project, from the Zulu for 'Let's work together', has so far not been able to alter the sexual behaviour of SANDF personnel. The increase in South African deployment in international PSOs will also expose troops to the risk of contracting the virus. The South African Military Health Service has opened a HIV/AIDS counselling hotline for the soldiers stationed in Burundi, as a reaction to the risk that the soldiers are exposed to and that they themselves represent to local populations. Lessons learned from Cambodia, Sierra Leone and the former Yugoslavia show that soldiers on deployment have contact with the local population, including professional sex workers, which is also why UNAIDS has issued awareness books to all UN soldiers. There has been a lot of debate about the legality of deploying untested and/or HIV-positive soldiers on international missions. According to UNAIDS there is no UN requirement that soldiers be tested before being deployed into a mission area. UNAIDS itself strongly recommends not introducing mandatory testing, but only testing on a voluntarily basis:<sup>136</sup>

In accordance with the current medical and human rights guidelines, the UN does not require that troops at any time be tested for HIV in relation to deployment as peacekeepers.<sup>137</sup>

This means that the SANDF cannot use UN regulations as an excuse to continue the mandatory testing of new recruits, which has been its policy so far. This has created a fierce debate in South Africa, where the DOD's policy has been criticised by activists for violating human rights and the South African constitution. Despite the recommendations of the UN, the Department for Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) still maintains its recommendation not to deploy HIV/AIDS-positive soldiers on UN

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<sup>134</sup> Newspaper reports on SANDF troops deployed in African PSOs confirm this. See Chapters 7 and 8 for further details.

<sup>135</sup> Heineken, *Facing a Merciless Enemy: HIV/AIDS and the South African Armed Forces*, p. 295.

<sup>136</sup> UNAIDS Expert Strategy Meeting on HIV/AIDS and Peacekeeping: Recommendations.

<sup>137</sup> UNAIDS Fact Sheet No. 4.

missions. For the SANDF, the HIV/AIDS pandemic underlines the structural problems facing South African society in general and the armed forces in particular. The pandemics mean that the pool of staff deployable for international missions is significantly smaller than the eleven infantry battalions comprising the PSO capacity of the SANDF. Between 20% and 40% of these forces are not deployable in international missions, leaving the SANDF with a pool of six to a maximum of eight battalions available for international deployment, that is, with the 2005 deployment level, a rotation of one to one, or six months deployment and six months home. This leaves no room for proper preparation and training, let alone for leave or skills development, unless HIV/AIDS positive soldiers are deployed anyway. The MSDS program might help increase this capacity and solve some of the problems SANDF faces from the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

#### **4.4.3.1: HIV/AIDS, Recruitment and the Constitution**

In the autumn of 2003, a considerable dispute arose concerning the SANDF and the DOD because Defence Minister Lekota stated that no one with HIV/AIDS could be recruited to the SANDF. The South African cabinet tried to distance itself from Lekota's statement by saying that there was no policy to prevent the recruitment of HIV-positive individuals to the SANDF merely because they were HIV positive.<sup>138</sup> However, this means that applicants to the SANDF are not refused because they are HIV/AIDS positive, but because of the medical problems that may accompany the condition. In reality, the SANDF has many thousands of applicants every year, of which it only accepts a very small percentage. Among the potential recruits, the SANDF chooses the best applicants, the medical test being just one of many criteria. In the long run, this should mean that the present crisis within the force should come under greater control, provided, of course, that there is a change in the sexual behaviour of the personnel.

There seems to be two tendencies at work concurrently. Given the improved possibilities for dispensing anti-HIV/AIDS medication, concern has also arisen regarding the risks of discrimination. Human rights NGOs and certain sections of the UN system seem to be supporting the view that a HIV/AIDS-positive status should not disqualify soldiers from being deployed in international missions. However, at the same time there is also an increased focus on the level of medical fitness among such personnel. Being HIV positive is seen as a reason for failing medicals in the

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<sup>138</sup> Irinnews, 29 October 2003, South Africa: HIV-testing row in the military.

same way as, for instance, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, uncontrolled TB or chronic asthma.<sup>139</sup> Even though activists claim that excluding HIV-positive recruits from the force itself or from the SANDF staff being deployed on international missions is a violation of their constitutional rights, it can be argued that HIV/AIDS patients will be in poorer physical shape than their healthy peers. This means that a HIV/AIDS-positive soldier, depending on the stage of his or her illness, will not be able to perform the same tasks as a fit soldier and that the HIV-infected soldier is *ipso facto* less qualified for the job. It would be a dangerous development for the force's readiness levels if the SANDF were to lower its general health requirements to be able to recruit HIV/AIDS-positive personnel. On average, for the first five years of an infected individual's life, he or she should be able to live a relatively normal life and function as a soldier on equal terms with uninfected soldiers.<sup>140</sup> Today, the progress of the illness can be stopped by antiviral (ATV) drugs, and after a couple of months of adjusting the body to these drugs, the patient should in principle be able to resume work again. However, complications can arise and medical support units need to be near at hand, which is also why states in the West do not deploy soldiers in that phase of the illness.<sup>141</sup> This raises a number of challenges for the SANDF and for South African society in general. The present policy, under which staff and new recruits are tested for their HIV status, states nothing about the stage of their illnesses. The problem in the South African case is that antiviral drugs are very expensive and unavailable to the general public. This means that, if a new recruit with HIV were to be accepted, he would on average only be able to function as a combat soldier for a maximum of five years, depending on the stage of his illness. However, since the introduction of the new MSDS candidate system, it can be argued that HIV-positive soldiers in the early stages of the disease would be able to function on equal terms with non-infected members. This would require that the SANDF not only tested whether the new recruits are HIV/AIDS positive, but also checked their CD4-T lymphocyte cell counts and viral load levels, which are rather expensive.

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<sup>139</sup> Heinecken, *Facing a Merciless Enemy: HIV/AIDS and the South African Armed Forces*, note 23.

<sup>140</sup> The critical stage arises after the infected person's CD4 T-Lymphocyte cell count has become so depleted that the immune system no longer works properly and the body starts to succumb to certain infections and different sorts of cancer. This is also the point at which the patient goes from being just HIV positive to having AIDS. Another indication of the state of the illness is to test the viral load, which indicates the rate of disease progression. Telephone interview, 11 August 2004, with Professor Peter Skinhøj, Department of Epidemiology, Copenhagen University Hospital; also Judgement in the Namibian Labour Court: *Naditume v. Minister of Defence*, 10 May, 2000.

<sup>141</sup> Telephone interview, 11 August 2004, with Professor Peter Skinhøj, Department of Epidemiology, Copenhagen University Hospital.



#### 4.4.3.2: HIV/AIDS and its Implications for the SANDF Capacity?

Given the policy only to deploy HIV/AIDS-negative soldiers, the SANDF has been left with a tremendous capacity problem. As Heinecken concludes, this will occur when, for medical reasons, the SANDF has to reconfigure its units before deploying them internationally because 30% of the force fails the medical test.<sup>142</sup> This may severely undermine the force's capabilities if the central element in a unit has to be replaced immediately before deployment. Another side to this problem is whether it is necessary and right to exclude individuals just because they are HIV-positive. It could be argued that the SANDF would be serving both its own and the country's interests if the criteria for non-deployment were that the individual had already developed AIDS or that there was a risk that he or she might have to be repatriated during the deployment.<sup>143</sup> This would solve the question of discrimination without negatively affecting the capabilities of the forces that have been deployed to the same extent. As long as the individuals concerned do not need medical treatment for their condition, they should be seen as assets. However, that would risk reflecting negatively on the South Africa's international standing, especially as long as the force facing the problems with its personnel that has been witnessed during the present international operations.<sup>144</sup>

The SANDF also needs to consider the fact that most staff members catch the virus while in the service. As Heinecken argues, this is an area where the SANDF needs to act because catching HIV/AIDS is connected with patterns of sexual behaviour among its personnel.<sup>145</sup> In the coming years, the SANDF will lose 20-40% of its capacity due to HIV/AIDS-related deaths or early retirements, and not necessarily among the pool of surplus staff. We have only just begun to see the impact this will have on the SANDF and its consequences for national security. Although HIV/AIDS is not a security problem in itself, therefore, its effects are. Thus, a defence force or a state can lower physical requirements to avoid discrimination, but in doing so it is also reducing the force's capabilities. As the sections on the HR 2010 strategy show, the SANDF suffers from severe HR-related problems as it is and therefore cannot

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<sup>142</sup> Heinecken, *Facing a Merciless Enemy: HIV/AIDS and the South African Armed Forces*, p. 292.

<sup>143</sup> There is always the risk that HIV/AIDS-infected individuals could become infected with a new strain of the virus, worsening their medical condition significantly. The Danish armed forces do not deploy HIV/AIDS-positive personnel because of the risk that, like other chronically ill persons, they might require repatriation. Another issue is that in a combat situation they might constitute a risk to their colleagues, for instance, from wounds sustained during combat.

<sup>144</sup> See Chapters 7 and 8 for further reading

<sup>145</sup> Heinecken, *Facing a Merciless Enemy: HIV/AIDS and the South African Armed Forces*, p. 296.

use its scarce resources to accommodate HIV/AIDS-sick personnel if it is to carry out the tasks expected of it. Such personnel need to be re-skilled and redeployed to other careers. This is a political problem in relation to which the government needs to show political will if it is serious about South Africa's international military involvement. However, the problem so far has been that other state departments have been reluctant to hire the staff that the SANDF can no longer use. The South African armed forces also have a moral responsibility towards staff members who contracted the disease while in service. The DOD has therefore launched Project Phidisa to complement the Masibambisane awareness programme and offers AVR treatment to HIV/AIDS positive staff and their relatives. This programme is seen as a pilot project on how to handle the distribution of AVR drugs in South African society in general.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, this is seen as a means to improve the military readiness of the SANDF because the provision of AVR drugs will enable HIV/AIDS sick soldiers to function alongside their colleagues, at least in domestic tasks. The problem for the SANDF is that this will increase its health costs dramatically and put additional pressure on a tightly strapped budget. According to the 2002 Defence Bill, Chapter 56, Article 4a, all SANDF personnel are entitled to medical treatment for all injuries and illnesses contracted while in its service.<sup>147</sup>

#### **4.5: Concluding Remarks**

The SA Army is finding it increasingly difficult to provide affordable and sustainable readiness levels for the increasing CJ Ops operational output requirement (internally and externally) and simultaneous joint and combined training requirements due to the current health status and ageing HR profile of serving members, which is compounded by a lack of aligned additional funding.<sup>148</sup>

The recent political will to commit South African troops to African PSOs has shown that there is a severe danger of over-extending the SANDF's capabilities. It is highly probable, given the nature of the security situation in sub-Saharan Africa, that the current deployment level of 3,000 at the minimum will continue in the foreseeable future. The present strength at a time of full mobilisation is eleven battalions, including civilian volunteers, of which 30% have officially been declared medically

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<sup>146</sup> Matanga, Effective HIV/AIDS Management is Vital, in SA Soldier Vol. 11, No 1, January 2004, p. 20.

<sup>147</sup> MoD, Defence Bill Chapter 56, Article 4a.

<sup>148</sup> DOD Strategic Business Plan for FY 2004/05 to FY 2006/07, Chapter 6, p. 36.

unfit.<sup>149</sup> This means that the future effectiveness of the SANDF depends on the success of the HR 2010 plan in improving the number of deployable troops. A lack of training time will also have a severe long-term impact in this regard. National tasks are reducing the ability of the SANDF to commit troops to international missions. The problem here seems to be that, according to the DOD's strategic plan for 2002/03–2004/05, both support for the SAPS and involvement in regional peace-keeping will be prioritised, in accordance with “balanced force” concept described in the Defence Review.<sup>150</sup> It is also important to note that ANC's members of the Portfolio Committee, meeting at a conference in Pretoria on 11 August 2004, argued that because defence planning deals with both potential and latent threats, long-term planning for defence against aggression must remain the basic function of the armed forces, hence the notion of an effective defence for a democratic South Africa.<sup>151</sup> The SANDF's primary task is still to protect South Africa. Taking the volatile situation in Africa into account, South Africa still faces a very real potential threat to its borders and stability, primarily from non-conventional soft security sources. It is impossible to predict what kind of challenges might face the country in ten years' time. Security integration into the AU and the signing and ratification of SADC MDP will help create an institutional framework to work as a deterrent against threats to the state. Even though SADC MDP has been criticised for its collective defence nature, it will place interstate relations within an institutional framework, thus creating a sense of security. Yet although this increase in security integration will further reduce the already low conventional threat to South Africa, the arrest of two suspected South African Islamic radicals in Pakistan in July 2004 for allegedly planning terrorist attacks in Johannesburg underlines the fact that other types of security challenge and ‘attacks’ still exist or might even increase, for instance, among the small radical Islamic community in South Africa.<sup>152</sup> It should therefore also be asked to what extent the SANDF, like most other modern defence forces, is prepared for tasks other than conventional warfare. However, the major sources of instability are still social inequality in South Africa itself and the overall instability in the region.

It can be argued that the new concept of societal and military readiness does not differ much from what South Africa has tried to move away from, namely the French General Beaufre's total strategy concept, though it is no longer the military effort

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<sup>149</sup> Quoted in Mail and Guardian online, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2003. Lamb sets the figure higher than 50 %, see Lamb, *Fighting for the Future*, p 13

<sup>150</sup> DOD Strategic Plan for the Financial Year 2002/3 – 04/5, pp. 4-5.

<sup>151</sup> Koornhof, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Government*, p. 12.

<sup>152</sup> See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the spectrum of security challenges.

which is the focus. It can be argued that as long as the SANDF is heavily involved in domestic support for the SAPS, it represents both a continuation of the previous roles of the former SADF and a consequence of, for instance, Professor Sundelius's understanding of the concept of national security as an all-inclusive security challenge concept involving the whole of society. Of course, there is a delicate balance to be struck between militarising a society and merely preparing it for its future tasks, but it can also be argued that what happens in the neighbouring states is, and always has been, very important to South African national security. Although the primary objectives set out for the SANDF by the ANC government are aimed at direct military threats to South Africa, up to now the SANDF has 'protected' the state against different types of 'attack'. It is interesting to note that according to Dr Koornhof, the ANC member of the Portfolio Committee, the SANDF should prepare itself for what he terms 'developmental peacekeeping' when deployed in Africa, that is, an increased focus on human security issues, especially disarmament and demobilisation, while maintaining a focus on conventional national-based deterrence. In other words, the SANDF should be able to do everything.<sup>153</sup>

#### **4.5.1: The Capacity of the SANDF to Function as Lead Nation and Consequences for Regional Security Co-operation**

South Africa's military capabilities and its ability to function as a lead nation in PSOs and in the ASF may seem bleak. There seem to be two aspects to this. One is the force-to-force<sup>154</sup> ratio in future deployments, that is, how many and what quality of soldiers and equipment does South Africa need in order to fulfil its future African deployments? Conflicts in Africa are usually low-tech and low-intensity in nature. The technological level of the SANDF will exceed the forces it will encounter while deployed. It will therefore have technological advantages compared to most African armies or militias it will be faced with. Moreover, the SANDF is a relatively potent and disciplined force, though there is a general perception within the force of a lowered capacity and quality. The second aspect is the force-space ratio in relation to the tasks given to the SANDF. It is clear that this is potentially a problem for the SANDF due to its current limited deployment capacity. If the maximum sustainable force level that the SANDF can deploy is 3,000, this might well turn out to be insufficient to solve the tasks that South Africa will be expected to solve. However, as argued previously does the capacity to function as a lead nation is not necessarily tied to the capacity to

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<sup>153</sup> Koornhof, *Revolutionary Challenges for the South African Armed Forces: A Perspective from the Government*.

<sup>154</sup> Force-to-force ratios measure how big an international force must be to balance the indigenous force and enable it to fulfil its mandate.

deploy large force numbers.<sup>155</sup> The significant thing for South Africa is her ability to provide the critical functions and thus tie the operation together. South Africa is slowly expanding its capacity in the regard and will be able to undertake such a commitment. Nigeria, by comparison, has an army of 150,000 soldiers and a much larger deployment potential, but it lacks much of the critical function capacity required.<sup>156</sup> Due to South Africa's economic priorities and the structural problems of the SANDF itself, it seems unlikely that its capacity will exceed the current 3,000 during peacetime. In the event of a 'push', the capacity will evidently be much bigger.

It is important to realise that so far the SANDF has been able to carry out the tasks it has been allocated. It can be argued that this relatively limited armed force has shown an impressive ability to deploy more than 4,700 soldiers internationally and domestically simultaneously since the summer of 2003. Deployment in international PSOs has also given the SANDF valuable mission experience, which will be extremely useful in setting up SADC ASF. A process is under way within the DOD, where the force strengths of the SANDF and the other SADC members are being evaluated in an attempt to determine the individual force contributions of SADC members. This will most likely result in the SANDF being given the responsibility for the more specialised and critical functions within the ASF, for instance the medical corps, logistical support and the engineering role, as also envisioned in the plan for the operationalisation of the ASF.<sup>157</sup> The first phase of the SDP will also have made its impact felt, and thanks to the initiation of a second phase of the acquisition programme in 2010, the army will be able to benefit from an increased focus on its equipment needs. However, the problems it has in attracting and retaining personnel in this category of critical personnel will reduce its capacity to deliver such capabilities to the SADC ASF brigade.

The HR problems that South Africa's armed forces are currently faced with will have a severe negative impact on their capacity to deploy in PSOs in the short to medium term. However, the SANDF is aware of these challenges and has launched a number of initiatives to deal with them. The MSDS programme will help rejuvenate and right size the force's composition and will already have had a positive impact on the

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<sup>155</sup> Comment by Major Mads Rahbek, Danish Armed Forces.

<sup>156</sup> In AMIS, South Africa is the only contingent that brings its own equipment. The other force contributors have been provided with their main equipment from western donors, either directly or indirectly from a private military company.

<sup>157</sup> Interview with SANDF Chief Director Strategy and Planning, Rear Admiral Hauter, and Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General DOD Defence Secretariat Mr Motumi, in the DOD, 26 November 2003. See also Appendix 5.

army's ability to deploy by 2005/06. However, the MSDS will not solve the problem of the lack of critical function personnel. By 2010, when the ASF is supposed to become fully operational and the planned withdrawal from domestic deployment will have released 1,700 soldiers for deployment, taking some of the pressure off the rest of the force. The Phoenix project is also important because it will re-create a reserve capacity that could be useful in future PSOs. The unknown factor is the impact and handling of the HIV/AIDS crisis, which has rightly been termed a strategic issue by the SANDF. If the SA armed forces fail to remedy the causes and negative effects of the pandemic, it risks crippling the capacity of the SANDF and thus also South Africa's ambitions to contribute constructively to the creation of a more peaceful and successful continent. According to the objectives laid down in the HR 2010 strategy, a large number of older personnel on long-term contracts will be offered retrenchment packages, enabling the force to rejuvenate and right size its composition. In addition, there are the health-related problems, with at least 23% or more than 16,000 personnel being HIV-positive, most still in the early phases of the disease. This means that up to half of all SANDF personnel will have to be replaced in the short term so that the SANDF can carry out the tasks allocated to it under the constitution and as outlined in the white papers. The SANDF's distribution of AVR drugs to its infected members, might be an important step and could enabling them to continue to serve. However, this category of staff could still not be deployed to international PSOs because of their stage of their illness and the risk that they might need to be repatriated. This HR challenge might very easily lead to a loss of technical skills that could only be replaced with difficulty. The SANDF has already lost a number of highly skilled and experienced personnel who have left the force for careers outside the armed forces. This has left a perception of reduced capacity among the remaining force members, with a severe negative effect on their esprit du corps.

Another important area that politicians need to deal with is the consequences of affirmative action policies on the capabilities of the SANDF, and therefore its ability to deploy effectively in PSOs and then the need of creating a representative force. The rightsizing and colour-based promotion system has damaged morale among the more marginalised staff, and resulted in personnel being promoted without having the necessary experience and qualifications. It is not enough to state a willingness to have ethnic representation in the force – psychological room must be created for this in its promotion structure too. One issue that the present 'numbers game' system has thrown up is that it is negatively affecting the capacity of the force because

individuals lacking the necessary experience or even ability are being promoted beyond their capacity. This means that they have to be carried by others of lower rank. The problem is that in the process the SANDF is losing its most capable and experienced personnel, of all ethnic categories, to the private sector.

One area that has turned out to be an actual problem and will continue to be so in the years to come is the lack of resources. The SANDF has so far had difficulties in making ends meet in the daily running of the force. Due to a lack of resources it has a maintenance backlog, which means that it is very expensive to prepare equipment for deployment because it is not maintained properly on a daily basis. When the force is deployed, the lack of resources and, for the SANDF, operational capacity problems based on government policies mean that it is difficult to keep equipment operational. The lack of resources also means that the force is losing certain capabilities because the required resources are not available for purchasing necessary replacements. Over time this will probably be remedied, though not in the short term. The problem is also that, in hindsight, the defence planners and the politicians wrongly decided to spend large resources on renewing the navy's submarine capacity, while these resources could have been more useful being spent in other sectors, for instance, the army or air force. Another problem is that the SANDF has been and still is very bad at using the resources it does have, reflecting Le Roux's central point that it is difficult to argue effectively for additional resources if the available resources are not being used effectively. However, this is not entirely the SANDF's fault, because the political climate and regulations make it difficult for it to right-size. A number of political and social considerations have been at work, meaning that the SANDF has to make things work without being able to use the most efficient tools available. However, the force needs to reduce the proportion of its personnel in the support and staff functions and move more capacity to the sharp end, thus increasing the number of forces available for international deployment. The MSDS program and the reserve force are going to be pivotal in this process. This is also due to the fact that the current force structure target of 70,000 has been declared unsustainable by the DOD within the current budgetary framework. The task for the SANDF and the new defence review drafter is therefore to increase the number of available soldiers for international missions by solving the structural problems arising from the tooth-to-tail ratio while creating a sustainable force structure and thus improving the SANDF's overall capacity. This must happen within the existing budgetary framework because it is difficult to convince the political level that more money is needed for defence: the argument there is that "defence gets more than its share as it is".

## **Part 2: The South African National Defence Force in African Deployments**

### **Chapter Five: The South African Entry into the Peace Support Arena**

#### **5.1: Introduction**

*“Our country continues to provide hope on the continent, especially in the search for peace. We recall that during the two presentations to the United Nations Security Council for the deployment of a peacekeeping mission in Burundi, in 2002 and 2003, council members unanimously emphasised the importance that South Africa is playing in the continent. This view has been expressed in many other forums.”<sup>158</sup>*

When, in 1998, the South African government decided to launch Operation Boleas, its intervention into Lesotho, it also signalled the start of a new era in post-apartheid South Africa's foreign policy. It was the first time since the transition in 1994 that a large number of South African military units had been deployed outside the country's borders as a foreign policy tool, that is, an extension of political means. Operation Boleas stood out in many ways compared to missions in which South Africa participated later, but at the same time it did provide some important lessons, which were included in the 1999 White Paper on South African Participation in Peace Missions, especially the need for co-operation and co-ordination between government departments. South Africa's later involvements in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are examples of the government's foreign-policy strategy, which was developed following the White Paper on Peace Missions, according to which the SANDF should help implement South African-negotiated peace agreements and therefore secure the foundations of peace and stability in the volatile transitional phase from conflict to post-conflict, thus also shaping the possibility for development. Furthermore, participation in UN PSOs in the DRC and in the second phase of intervention in Burundi, known as MONUC and ONUB, illustrates South Africa's commitment to international multilateral solutions and to the UN in particular.

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<sup>158</sup> Statement by President Mbeki to the South African Parliament, 23 June 2004.



On the operational level, the deployment of the SANDF as part of MONUC and ONUB are examples of how the force is handling the new, broader concept of defence tasks held by politicians and shows how the two levels interact. This chapter will analyse how the African National Congress (ANC) government's ambitions for economic and political development are incorporated into national security thinking. It will also investigate how the Pretoria government has strategically used the SANDF as part of its general foreign policy approach towards the DRC and Burundi. The DOD has estimated that in the financial year 2005/06 it will spend R828 million on international deployments, money that the opposition in South Africa might argue would be better spent addressing domestic concerns. The question that remains to be answered is whether or not the SANDF has been able to function as an effective foreign policy tool. Disagreement exists within the government concerning the readiness level of the SANDF, and President Mbeki in particular seems to believe that, given current levels of investment, the SANDF will be able to contribute to the government's foreign policy drive. By examining three separate cases, Part 2 will attempt to establish to what extent South Africa's broadly defined peacemaking role has been securitised in South Africa.

The role of the Chapter in the dissertation is firstly helping to investigate the first claim in the dissertation: that post-apartheid SA foreign policy is characterized by efforts to change South Africa's image from "pariah" to "peacemaker". This has already partly been done in the introduction and in Chapter 2. However, the Chapter outline the seven basic principles in the government's White Paper on Participation in Peace Mission's, which constitutes the requirement for deployment of the SANDF in PSOs. These seven criteria will be used as a part of the analytical framework, together the findings from Chapters 3 and 4, for investigating the government's deployment of military force in the three cases as part of its strategy of being a benign peacemaker. The Chapter consequently also help answering the main question in the dissertation, which is, that it is unclear to what extent SANDF will be able to continue to play this role because of a gap between goals and objectives, and what the impact of this is for South African foreign policy role. The Chapter outline the government's policy on PSOs, which can then be directly tested in the three cases, combined with the findings in Chapters 3 and 4. The Chapter therefore help a model for measuring what the SANDF according to policy should be able to undertake, and what it in reality have been asked to do.

## **5.2: The Conditions for South African Deployment in international PSOs<sup>159</sup>**

In 1999, the government, despite vague recommendations, presented its policies on future South African participation in PSOs for the first time through its White Paper on South African Participation in Peace Missions. In reality the paper had a dual purpose, as domestically it set out an institutional framework and relevant criteria to government institutions concerning the future distribution of responsibilities. At the same time, the White Paper sent a message to the international community concerning the nature of the commitment that it could expect from South Africa. This was, of course, a natural consequence of the high expectations regarding South Africa mentioned previously, which followed the 1994 transition and necessitated an indication from Pretoria concerning its future role. On 1 November 1999, Foreign Minister Zuma stated in an address to the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) that:

The fact that South Africa now has a policy on peace keeping and has made a practical commitment to start participating in multinational peace missions makes it incumbent on the Government to recognise the role that the Defence Force will play. This puts a new dimension to the Defence Force in terms of South Africa's international obligations.<sup>160</sup>

One of the pressing issues which led to the publication of the White Paper was the national and international debates on what could be expected of South Africa in relation to participation in PSOs. The function of the paper was to provide coherence between foreign policy and international military involvement. The paper therefore outlined the foreign political objectives and framework of the ANC government, which should direct the potential deployment of the SANDF. The six basic principles were:

- A commitment to the promotion of Human Rights;
- A commitment to the promotion of democracy;
- A commitment to justice and international law in the conduct of relations between nations;

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<sup>159</sup> I have chosen to focus on the 1999 White Paper on Peace Missions, despite the fact that a new White Paper was to be published in the second quarter of 2006. The 1999 White Paper was at the time of writing the only such paper available, despite being declared out of date by the DOD leadership. The operations referred to in this dissertation all took place under the auspices of the 1999 White Paper and should be evaluated with this in mind.

<sup>160</sup> Speech given by Foreign Minister Zuma at SAIIA, 1 November 1999.

- A commitment to international peace and internationally agreed-upon mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts;
- A commitment to the interests of Africa in world affairs;
- A commitment to economic development through regional and international co-operation in an inter-dependent world.<sup>161</sup>

These principles were in reality a continuation of the principles outlined in the DFA's 1996 workshop paper, which, until the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions, functioned as the only official policy paper produced by the DFA concerning South Africa's post-1994 foreign-policy strategy. Furthermore, the White Paper aimed at outlining what could realistically be expected of South Africa in terms of participation in peace missions, and it aimed at drawing up a national policy strategy for the SANDF to prepare for and implement. In the paper it is stated:

Although South Africa acknowledges its global responsibilities, the prioritisation afforded Africa in South African foreign policy makes Africa the prime focus of future engagements. South Africa has an obvious interest in preserving regional peace and stability in order to promote trade and development and to avoid the spill over effects of conflict in the neighbourhood.<sup>162</sup>

The White Paper states that in principle South Africa is willing to participate in all kinds of international PSOs, including peace enforcement and humanitarian assistance, primarily in Africa. However, Pretoria's recent commitments to African PSOs show that the government has moved beyond the force number of one battalion<sup>163</sup> anticipated in the White Paper on Peace Missions. Moreover, the paper has furthermore been declared to be out of date by the DOD itself.<sup>164</sup>

In March 2005, South Africa deployed more than 3000 SANDF personnel as part of African and UN PSOs.<sup>165</sup> The Pretoria government has increasingly focused its attention on external structural challenges, and in 2004 the primary function of the SANDF was, apart from protecting the state against foreign aggression, to support

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<sup>161</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 13.

<sup>162</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace missions, p. 21.

<sup>163</sup> In theory a South African extended battalion consists of approximately 1000 soldiers, however, in reality it often only consists of 600-800 soldiers

<sup>164</sup> Interview with SANDF Chief Director, Strategy and Planning, Rear Admiral Hauter and Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General DOD Defence Secretariat Mr Motumi in the DOD, 26 November 2003.

<sup>165</sup> DOD, Briefing of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, 28 November 2005.

the government's diplomatic drive in Africa. Furthermore, it has decided to phase out the SANDF's permanent support for the police.<sup>166</sup>

In March 2006, the army published its own vision for the future, a paper called Vision 2020, which addresses the future tasks and development in the SAA. Chief of the Army Lt Gen. Solly Shoke stressed that this was a vision and not a plan, and should be treated accordingly. Vision 2020 does, however, set down the SAA's view of future developments within the army, both in terms of the acquisition of future military equipment, and concerning the force design. The vision paper argues that the SAA's future tasks should be seen as primarily;

- To provide combat-ready land forces for the pursuance of national defence and the prevention of war, failing which, to jointly and preferably multinationally, swiftly and decisively achieve national security goals; and collaboratively promoting peace and stability internally and externally in concurrence with international obligations.
- To contribute to the development and upliftment of South Africa, its people, and the African continent.<sup>167</sup>

This means that the SAA still foresees that it will have to continue to function both in domestic and international operations, and that the political level does not seem to want to prioritise. In the paper focus is furthermore on creating professional, disciplined, well managed, and cost effective forces with a high quality human resource component.<sup>168</sup> This should be achieved within a restrictive budget, which again stresses that the SAA and the SANDF in general properly will not see an increase in the defence budget.

South Africa is politically and militarily involved in actual African PSOs and in establishing new continental and regional collective security structures in Africa in an attempt to limit tensions and perceptions of threats between African states. However, even though several apparently securitising moves have been made in presenting diplomatic efforts in Africa and subsequent military involvement as being of

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<sup>166</sup> Since 1994 the SANDF has had between 1700 and 3000 soldiers permanently deployed in domestic operations. However, this number, as shown in Chapter 4, is decreasing and should according to the plan be phased out by 2009.

<sup>167</sup> SAA Vision 2020 presentation, accessed via [http://www.army.mil.za/corebusiness/strategy2020/Strat%202020%20Slides\\_files/frame.htm](http://www.army.mil.za/corebusiness/strategy2020/Strat%202020%20Slides_files/frame.htm)

<sup>168</sup> SAA Vision 2020 presentation, accessed via [http://www.army.mil.za/corebusiness/strategy2020/Strat%202020%20Slides\\_files/frame.htm](http://www.army.mil.za/corebusiness/strategy2020/Strat%202020%20Slides_files/frame.htm)

existential importance to South Africa, this has not led to political moves and initiatives beyond what constitutes normal politics.

### **5.2.1: The List of Conditions for South African Deployment**

In the White Paper on Peace Missions, a list of conditions has been formulated, before the SANDF ideally can be deployed into PSOs. According to the paper, these principles have been derived from the lessons learned from other contributors' experiences from participating in UN PSOs. These principles are:

- A clear international mandate;
- Sufficient means;
- A domestic mandate and budget;
- Volunteerism;
- Clear entry and exit criteria;
- Regional co-operation; and
- Foreign assistance.<sup>169</sup>

These principles are, of course, only guidelines, and the actors will often be forced to compromise on one or more principles because other considerations, such as political or security issues, are deemed to be of greater importance. Before every deployment, the South African government and the other actors included in the decision-making process will have to weigh these basic principles against the 'other' issues before deciding whether or not to contribute, and what should be the nature of any such contribution.<sup>170</sup> This could for instance be consideration's dealing with South Africa's international prestige as a mediator and benign leader, as was seen with the decision to deploy troops to Burundi.<sup>171</sup>

#### *The Mandate*

According to the White Paper, the mandate should basically be realistic, that is, there should be a correspondence between means and ends. All conflicting parties and international bodies involved should be in agreement on the mandate and the mission. Furthermore, the paper concludes that because UN missions are not static, South Africa as a contributor of troops should always be consulted before any

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<sup>169</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 26.

<sup>170</sup> See above, Chapter 2, on South African foreign policy for further details on this issue.

<sup>171</sup> See Chapter 7 for further reading on the Burundi operation.

changes in the mandate of an ongoing mission are decided. This, of course, is to avoid mission creep and open-ended missions with ambiguous and insufficient mandates.<sup>172</sup>

### *Sufficient Means*

The principles of sufficient means fall under two main points. At the international level, South Africa will not deploy forces to missions that are under-resourced and ‘do not have the sufficient means to achieve the set mandate.’<sup>173</sup> Domestically, the required personnel should be available and not committed elsewhere. Moreover, the SANDF’s other secondary tasks,<sup>174</sup> for instance, support to the SAPS, should be prioritised before committing troops to international operations. This means that participation in international missions is to be given a lower priority than participation in domestic obligations. However, as mentioned in previous chapters, sections of the paper have been officially described as out of date. Defence Minister Lekota has declared that preparation for and participation in international PSOs are primary objectives of the SANDF.<sup>175</sup> The transfer of domestic tasks from the SANDF to the SAP has already begun in an attempt to relieve the SANDF of its domestic duties over time. However, at least until 2009 the SANDF will be expected to contribute to domestic tasks, that is, primarily support to the police and border control.

### *A Domestic Mandate and Budget*

The White Paper stipulates that the decision to participate in international peace missions is a shared responsibility of several government departments, parliament and the president’s office. However, the DFA has the overriding responsibility, both as regards co-ordinating effort and securing the necessary bridging funding. By passing the White Paper in 1999, parliament simultaneously authorised the executive to deploy individuals without prior authorisation. However, the decision to deploy whole contingents has to be approved by parliament, which also has the responsibility of allocating the necessary funding for the operation.<sup>176</sup>

### *Volunteerism*

According to the White Paper, the deployment of forces to PSOs must be based on volunteerism, that is, both civilians and SAPS personnel have to volunteer for deployment. It is stipulated in the Defence Act that military personnel can only be

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<sup>172</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 26.

<sup>173</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 27.

<sup>174</sup> For further details of the SANDF’s primary and secondary tasks, see Chapters 3 and 4, above.

<sup>175</sup> See above, Chapters 3 and 4 for further details.

<sup>176</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 28.

compelled to serve outside South Africa's borders in time of war. Any individual who wants to deploy into international missions must therefore transfer to those units that are earmarked for international deployment. This is because of the need for pre-deployment preparation and training. Individuals already in the designated units must be given the opportunity to transfer to other units if they do not want to perform international service.<sup>177</sup> The 1957 Defence Act stipulates that

(1) A member of the South African Defence Force may in time of war be required to perform service against an enemy at any place outside the Republic.

In time of peace, therefore, international deployment is optional. This has created problems for the South African armed forces in many instances. During the beginning of the so-called border war in Angola, the killing of conscripts inside Angola became a domestic political problem for the Pretoria government.<sup>178</sup> However, the 1957 Defence Act was repealed in 2002 and replaced by a new Defence Act in 2002, which stated that the SANDF could be asked to do service outside the borders of the republic. The Defence Act 42 of 2002 section 50(5)(b) states:

Members of the Defence Force may, while in service, be required and ordered to serve, move or reside anywhere in the Republic and the rest of the world.<sup>179</sup>

This is, therefore, also one of the areas where the White Paper has become obsolete because it did not foresee this change in the law.

### *Clear Entry and Exit Criteria*

The decision to deploy forces to a mission depends on the existence of two basic criteria, namely clear entry and exit strategies. The White Paper stipulates that a broad intelligence assessment concerning the nature of the conflict into which the force is going to be deployed should be made prior to deploying South African forces into the mission area.<sup>180</sup> In addition, it argues that there is a need for an assessment

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<sup>177</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 29; see also the Defence Act 1957, Article 95.

<sup>178</sup> See Mandrup Jørgensen, "Speak Softly, but Carry a big Stick.", for further reading on the SADF experience in Angola.

<sup>179</sup> DOD, Defence Act 42 of 2002 section 50(5)(b).

<sup>180</sup> The dissertation does not make any estimate on the capacity of the South African intelligence community, whether of the military branch or the National Intelligence Service. There are several reasons for this, but mainly because the nature of the intelligence community makes it difficult to make an accurate assessment of the capacity of these services.

concerning how participation correlates with South Africa's national interests and capacity.

Concerning the exit strategy, the White Paper stipulates that clear criteria must be in place regarding the political objectives and realistic timeframe of the deployment. The White Paper stresses that South Africa will not go into open-ended missions and that a withdrawal will not be considered a political and diplomatic failure. This has to be communicated to political decision-makers beforehand.<sup>181</sup>

#### *Regional Co-operation*

South Africa hopes to increase regional co-operation and thus eventually enable the SADC to launch joint operations. The White Paper stresses that South Africa's contribution to international missions is primarily a national one, though co-ordination initiatives must be taken with the UN, OAU (now AU) and SADC secretariats.<sup>182</sup> This part of the paper has also become out of date because of the increased co-operation on security at the continental, regional and regional levels. This means that in the future SANDF elements can expect to be deployed as part of the SADC ASF brigade.

#### *Foreign Assistance*

Finally, the White Paper states that South Africa has and will continue to welcome the international assistance that the country and the region have received. However, such assistance must never be seen as a threat to South African or regional interests.<sup>183</sup>

### **5.3: The White Paper Criteria and the Three Cases**

The seven areas were presented in the White Paper as basic criteria which need to be in place before a South African deployment could be considered. Thus, the three cases will be investigated by means of these seven criteria in order to establish what role the listed principles have played in determining whether or not to deploy. Despite being deemed out of date, the White Paper is the only existing government document to provide some kind of criteria for South African deployment into international operations. It therefore provides some guidelines as to what the ANC government characterises as important before deployment can take place. In June 2004, the Deputy Minister of Defence, Madlala-Routledge, stated the following concerning the

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<sup>181</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 29.

<sup>182</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 30.

<sup>183</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 30.



1998 Defence Review Paper and the 1999 White Paper on Defence in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP):

To date, these two fundamental documents have guided the transformation of the defence function. The foundation on which they were based remains sound, but there are certain aspects that need to be revisited and adjusted.<sup>184</sup>

Any breach of these principles indicates the priority of the paper, but also that other interests must be in play. As with all policy documents it only provides a framework, and political realities might change the basis for such a framework. One basic problem with this investigation strategy is that Operation Boleas served as an inspiration and provided lessons in writing the White Paper, and it took place before the latter was published. These facts mean that it is reasonable to investigate this operation using the same framework as the two other cases.

The seven criteria focus primarily on the operational level. Thus, in the analysis of the three cases, there is a need for investigation at the strategic level of the relationship between the SANDF's doctrines and the government's foreign policy ambitions. Were the latter fulfilled in the three cases, and how does this fit the existing doctrines directing the SANDF's priorities. As described in earlier chapters, South Africa today has a role as a benign regional power. In these three cases, therefore, I shall investigate whether South Africa has used this supposed benign strategy and the role the SANDF has played.

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<sup>184</sup> The Deputy minister of Defence Madlala-Routledge during the Proceedings of the National Council of Provinces 29 June 2004

## **Chapter Six: Operation Boleas - The South African-Led Military Intervention into Lesotho**

### **6.1: Introduction**

Although initially accompanied by immense controversy, the South African military and diplomatic involvement was to prove crucial to a restructuring of Lesotho's previously recalcitrant Defence Force, and to the promotion of inter-party negotiations that led to the adoption of a new and more appropriate electoral system.<sup>1</sup>

On 22 September 1998, a new chapter was added to the long history of violence between Lesotho and South Africa. A troika consisting of Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa, supported by Mozambique, which had led the SADC diplomatic footwork in Lesotho during the 1990s, decided to intervene militarily after the democratically<sup>2</sup> elected government asked the SADC for help. A long-term constitutional crisis in Lesotho culminated in the South African-led Combined Task Force (CTF) Boleas, a so-called SADC intervention into Lesotho deploying a total of 800 soldiers, a force number that was quickly expanded so that at a certain stage in October 1998 there were as many 3500 SANDF and 800 Botswana soldiers in Lesotho.<sup>3</sup> By November 1998 the SANDF force number had been reduced by 800, and a Zimbabwean contingent was brought in to help initiating the new training mission of the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF), the so-called Operation Maluti that replaced CTF Boleas. The combined SADC force, including the South African contingent, stayed in Lesotho until May 2000. It was this dual process of the interventionist Operation Boleas and the subsequent post-conflict reconstructing mission, Operation Maluti, which made Southall conclude that the combined military and diplomatic involvement had been crucial in restructuring the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) and the electoral system, and by the elections in 2002 a firm foundation for democracy had been laid in Lesotho.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Southall, *An unlikely success: South Africa and Lesotho's election of 2002*, p. 269

<sup>2</sup> The election process in Lesotho was criticized because of irregularities. The term democracy is therefore very much a relative term.

<sup>3</sup> The force consisted of 600 South African and 200 Botswanan soldiers. Southall, *An unlikely success: South Africa and Lesotho's election of 2002*, p. 279

<sup>4</sup> Southall, *An unlikely success: South Africa and Lesotho's election of 2002*, p. 269

There are two major reasons why this operation in a small state like Lesotho is interesting. It was the first time since 1994 that the SANDF was used as a foreign-policy tool in a “peacemaking” operation, and also the first time since the end of the apartheid era that South Africa was engaged in military hostilities outside its borders. It was therefore the first test of the new SANDF as to whether or not it was capable of undertaking a mission of this nature, that is, whether it had the necessary capacity to undertake and lead an intervention mission and sustain the subsequent peace effort. Furthermore, it appeared to represent a dramatic change of direction in South African foreign policy. It had been stated by the ANC-led government that coercive means were only to be used as a last resort. Moreover, the use of South African troops, many of them former white SADF personnel, outside South Africa’s borders was still a matter of great controversy. Thirdly the SANDF was asked to undertake the operation several years before it had finalised its internal transformation process. During Operation Boleas, the SANDF was used to pre-empt a threatened military coup. A reasonable question would be, was an enforcement operation the last resort, and did South Africa not break nearly all the foreign-policy goals it had set itself when it entered Lesotho?<sup>5</sup> Was this a return to the policies of a pariah state and of traditional South African interference into Lesotho’s domestic affairs?

The role of this chapter, and the first case study in the dissertation, is partly to investigate the second claim put forward in the preface: that the SANDF has played an important and somewhat overlooked role in the transition from “pariah” to “peacemaker”. Its transformation and its involvement in peace operations have been necessary to support this transition and it will remain necessary to sustain it in the foreseeable future. This was demonstrated partly in the literature review in Chapter 2, but also through a relatively detailed description in Chapter 3 of the transformation of the armed forces in South Africa. This Chapter and the two other case studies will illustrate the central role the SANDF has played in transition and why the deployment of the SANDF has been important for South Africa’s peacemaking strategy. The three case studies will investigate if South Africa has used its military power in accordance with principles of being a benign power.

The Chapter will furthermore help answering the question asked in the preface, that is, to what extent the SANDF will be able to continue to play this role because of a gap between goals and objectives, and what impact this will have for South African

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<sup>5</sup> Cilliers, “The Lesotho intervention was not strictly legal”, *Sunday Independent* 1998. In an interview in 2000, Col. Serfontein stated that Operation Boleas had to be seen as an exception.

foreign policy role. This question was investigated first in Chapter 3, which demonstrated that the defence force in contemporary South Africa is no longer high on the list of government priorities, which means that other government departments have easier access to economic resources. The question was furthermore scrutinised in Chapter 4, which showed that the SANDF generally has got a capacity problem, which placed severe question marks over the SANDF's ability to function as a lead nation. The findings in Chapter 4, combined with the role of the seven criteria produced by government in 1999 for the deployment of the SANDF into international PSOs presented in Chapter 5, will be further investigated this chapter and the two other case studies. These analytical findings in the chapter will help investigate the ability of the SANDF to function as a lead nation in actual operations, while at the same time it will demonstrate to what extent the criteria presented by the government have also been instructive in the decision to employ the SANDF in PSOs. Finally this chapter will also try to establish, using the insights from Chapter 3, to what extent Operation Boleas was politically prioritised.

## **6.2: The Background to Launching Operation Boleas**

South Africa has a long history of intervening in Lesotho's internal affairs. In December 1982, the apartheid government sent in the SADF to "root out" ANC guerrillas threatening South Africa itself. This operation was part of a larger scheme of South African destabilization in the region, and it was parallel to military attacks made by the Lesotho Liberation Army, which fought against the then Chief Leabua Jonathan's government.<sup>6</sup> In the period after the signing of the Nkomati accord between South Africa and Mozambique in 1984, pressure was put on the Lesotho government to accept a similar non-aggression agreement. The Pretoria government threatened to repatriate the many Lesotho migrant workers living in South Africa and blocked weapons shipments destined for Lesotho. In 1984, the main opposition party received funding for its election campaign from South Africa.<sup>7</sup> It was only Mozambique and Swaziland which eventually signed an agreement with South Africa. Lesotho refused even informal agreements. For Lesotho the situation was special because South Africa needed the migrant workers in the mining industry, and the High Land water project would also benefit South Africa.<sup>8</sup> The direct "costs" for Lesotho of refusing to sign an agreement were relatively low because South Africa

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<sup>6</sup> Davenport, *South Africa: a modern history*, p. 474.

<sup>7</sup> Davies, *South African Strategy Towards Mozambique in the Accord Phase*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>8</sup> The High Land water project is supposed to secure water for South Africa's industrial heartland in Gautang Province. South Africa suffers chronically from water shortages and even more so in the future.

needed Lesotho's co-operation.<sup>9</sup> In 1986, Chief Jonathan's government was overthrown by a military coup, which led to years of political instability. However, the new military government still refused to sign a treaty with the Pretoria regime.

In 1994, the decision to take the so-called Lesotho initiative was taken in the SADC as an attempt to use preventive diplomatic means to prevent a constitutional crisis from evolving in Lesotho at that time. The SADC Summit in August 1994 strongly criticised Lesotho's King Mogantla and the security forces, and called for the King to reinstate the democratically elected government.<sup>10</sup> SADC members had given a troika consisting of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana the task of acting as mediators in the conflict and attempting to negotiate a peaceful solution following a coup d'état. The attempts were successful, and the governing party, the LCD, was reinstated in 1994.

The decision to intervene in 1998 was made after political instability had erupted following alleged electoral fraud made by the LCD governing party, which won 79 out of 80 seats in the May 1998 elections. One of the problems for the opposition was Lesotho's Westminster-type constitution, with its winner-take-all principle. This led to demonstrations among opposition supporters and a mutiny among a group of soldiers. The opposition called on King Letsie III to use his powers and dissolve parliament.<sup>11</sup> Lesotho has a history of military takeovers, and it was only with the constitutional changes in 1993 that the role of the king was reduced to being more ceremonial in nature. The government of Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili had lost control with the country, and it was against this background that the decision to intervene was made after he on 12 September 1998 asked SADC to intervene.<sup>12</sup>

The actual decision to intervene militarily in Lesotho was made at a SADC Defence Ministers meeting in Gaborone on 15 September 1998, just seven days before the operation took place. What made this decision remarkable was that the only states present at the meeting were Botswana and South Africa, because neither Zimbabwe nor Mozambique was able to attend.<sup>13</sup> This was possible because a legal framework directing the operations of the Organ of Politics, Defence and Security was lacking.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Davies, *South African Strategy Towards Mozambique in the Accord Phase*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>10</sup> SADC Summit Communiqué, August 1994.

<sup>11</sup> Neethling, *Military Intervention in Lesotho: Perspectives on Operation Boleas and Beyond*, pp.1-2.

<sup>12</sup> Nieuwkerk, *Implications for South Africa's foreign policy beyond the Lesotho crisis*, p. 2.; See also Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>13</sup> Coning, *Lesotho Intervention: Implications for SADC*, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> For further reading on the problems concerning the SADC Organ, see for instance Nathan, *Organ Failure in*

It was minister for the Interior and acting South African President at the time Mangosuthu Buthelezi (IFP) who, on behalf of the South African government, made the decision in South Africa because both the President and the Deputy President were travelling at the time. However, in the process the acting president forgot to provide information to the parliamentary oversight committee, for which the government received criticism.<sup>15</sup> The opposition also argued that it did not believe that all the peaceful means available had been exhausted before the decision to launch the operation was taken.<sup>16</sup>

The operation had a mandate based on a request for assistance made by Lesotho's Prime Minister, Mosisili, to all four members of the SADC troika+, not to the SADC as such. Therefore, the South African government used the same loophole in the SADC Organ which it criticised the DRC task force for using. The intervention had a legally fragile SADC mandate, and the UNSC only approved of the operation after it had been launched. The fragile mandate was also visible during the operation; where the deployed forces had not received clear guidelines concerning for instance their mandate to arrest civilians, which created problems during the riots that followed the intervention.<sup>17</sup> This insecurity concerning the mandate legitimising the operation created a lively debate in South Africa, where, for instance, the then head of the SADC desk in the DFA argued that there was no such mandate.<sup>18</sup> However, the important issue was how this affected South Africa's standing in the international community because the ANC government had made great efforts to exchange South Africa's reputation as a pariah state for one of a benign regional power. Any doubts about South Africa's intentions and mandate for launching Operation Boleas could have had a devastating effect on these ambitions. This is also why the Botswana contribution was so important, even though it arrived a day late.

### **6.3: The SANDF in Lesotho**

The SANDF force that was deployed into Lesotho consisted of 600 soldiers, its task being to:

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Laakso eds, *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; Europe, SADC and ECOWAS ; Bremmer, *The Operationalisation of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security*

<sup>15</sup> Ngculu in Williams et al eds. , *Ourselfs to Know* p. 182f; See also Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>16</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>17</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Horst Bremmer, Pretoria, January 2000.

intervene militarily in Lesotho to prevent any further anarchy and to create a stable environment for the restoration of law and order.

The battle concept was described as:

the deployment of forces in order to locate and identify destabilisers and destabiliser resources, to disarm and contain them and to strike where applicable with the necessary force to eliminate threat.

The objective of the operation was to:

create a stable environment in Lesotho; and to restore law and order to enable negotiations to take place between the political parties in Lesotho.<sup>19</sup>

In many respects this was a classical enforcement operational mandate, where the SANDF was allowed to use all means necessary to reach its objectives, for instance by eliminating threats. The commanding officer for CTF Boleas, Colonel Ronnie Hartslief stated that the mission he received from the DOD was to stabilise Lesotho by disarming the dissidents. For this purpose three priorities were identified.

1. To create a stable environment in Maseru – secure the border post, secure the Lesotho Defence Force bases, secure the Lesotho Radio Broadcasting station; and secure the embassies.
2. The second priority was to secure the royal palace and the airforce bases.
3. Lastly the aim was to secure the operational areas such as Maseru and the Katse dam as a whole. Information had been received that the Lesotho Defence Force dissidents might attack around the Katse dam where there are two villages with 198 South Africans. These had to be secured.<sup>20</sup>

Hartslief concluded that it was important to remember that this was not a PSO, but a military intervention. The military objectives of the operation had been reached, but had experienced a number of shortfalls, especially after phase 2 of the operation.

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<sup>19</sup> Neethling, Conditions for Successful Entry and Exit, page 1, see appendix 6 to see the composition of the force

<sup>20</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

Coning concluded that the operation achieved all its objectives and it spared Africa from yet another military coup, and it finally showed the sacrifices South Africa was willing to make in the attempt to ensure that the vision of the African Renaissance was not derailed.<sup>21</sup> One of the reasons for this apparent military success was that the operation, despite tactical errors made in its second phase, was not hampered by political indecision, unclear mandates and objectives. Neethling argues that:

From a military point of view, it would seem that, unlike many other previous multinational operations on African soil, the SANDF was not hampered by political uncertainty over the political and strategic objectives of the operation. It is quite clear that the intervention was intended to establish control over the South African-Lesotho border, to protect South African assets, and to stabilize Maseru in order to create a safe environment in which Lesotho's problems could be negotiated. Accordingly, the military planners of Operation Boleas were able to define a clear mission, a battle concept and a desired result for the operation.<sup>22</sup>

On the first day of the operation, the CTF Boleas attempted to secure strategic points such as government buildings, broadcasting stations, embassies, border posts etc.<sup>23</sup> However, it was met by surprisingly fierce resistance from mutinous Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) units, and the fighting left eight South African soldiers dead and seventeen wounded.<sup>24</sup> The international community strongly criticized the SANDF's handling of the operation, especially the fact that the force had been met by strong resistance from the LDF and had to fight its way into the country. The consequence was a relatively high number of casualties, eight killed SANDF, and serious damage to the commercial centre of the capital, Maseru. One Lesotho scholar argued afterwards that this marked a return to old South African habits of dictating and interfering in internal Lesotho affairs.<sup>25</sup> On the positive side CTF Boleas managed on 2 October 1998 to get the political parties to accept and establish a multiparty Interim Political Authority (IPA) that helped oversee the transitional phase.

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<sup>21</sup> Coning, *Lesotho Intervention: Implications for SADC*, p. 1

<sup>22</sup> Neethling, *Military Intervention in Lesotho: Perspectives on Operation Boleas and Beyond*, p. 2

<sup>23</sup> SANDF press announcement, 22 September 1998.

<sup>24</sup> The Lesotho Defence Force had 29 dead and 51 wounded

<sup>25</sup> See Dr. F. Makoa in *Foreign Military intervention in Lesotho*, p. 85. The conclusion is that it was not in the interests of Lesotho for South Africa to intervene. It was a question of self-interest, and a continuation of the old apartheid approach to conflict management.



There were disagreements concerning the Lesotho operation among different South African government departments. The DFA had not been included in the acting president's decision on sending in the SANDF and was caught by surprise. It was the office of the president which, on 16 September 1998, had ordered the SANDF to prepare the operation, and only on the 21 September 1998 had finally cleared the operation. This recalled the beginning of the South African campaign in Angola in September 1975, Operation Savannah.<sup>26</sup> Presumably because of insufficient intelligence, the SANDF was unprepared for the resistance it met from the LDF and therefore went in with a relatively small force. Many rumours evolved concerning the operation and South Africa's objectives and it has even been claimed that some soldiers carried blank ammunition.<sup>27</sup>

### **6.3.1: Lessons Learned for the SANDF**

For the SANDF there were a number of lessons to be learned from Operation Boleas. It was an ill-prepared operation which had been decided and launched in haste by the South African government. The SANDF was in the middle of its post-apartheid transformation and at the time seemed unprepared and lacking the capacity to conduct this kind of operation at such short notice. The SANDF concluded that the operation had shown that the force had been given too short time for proper preparations. For operations of this nature it needed at least seven days, while it for PSO's would need at least eight weeks. The operation had also shown that the drastic budget cuts was having serious consequences for the capacity of the force, where several units were not combat ready when the order was given, and the logistical support element for the operation did not function properly.<sup>28</sup> The intelligence available to the force before the operation was launched was from 1994, and the newest aerial photo was from 1971. Because of the short preparation time the units arrived unprepared and stocks of first aid equipment were insufficient, and the DOD in general had a stockpiling problem, that is, not enough basic stocks of basic equipment and supplies were available to support the operation properly. The operation furthermore showed that in the future resources needed to be released for logistic – something that had turned out to be a problem for CTF Boleas.<sup>29</sup> On a more positive note the SANDF concluded that the force had showed good morale and

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<sup>26</sup> Seegers, *The Military in the Making of South Africa*, p. 212.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with SANDF Col. Serfontein, January 2000.

<sup>28</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>29</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

discipline during the operation, and had reached its objectives despite the above deficiencies.

The operation was initiated without the participation of the Botswana contingent, which only arrived a day after the first SANDF units had gone in. The force lacked the necessary projection of power to “intimidate”<sup>30</sup> the opposition and was unable to control looters in the centre of Maseru. However, the force succeeded in meeting the objectives of securing South Africa’s strategic assets and supporting the legitimate<sup>31</sup> government. The decision to initiate the intervention without the Botswana contingent meant that the force was perceived and in the media described as a South African force, and not multinational SADC force. This was unfortunate because of the history between the Lesotho and South Africa, and was not received well in Lesotho.<sup>32</sup>

Domestic and international criticism of the operation was harsh, and the evaluation of the South African efforts in Lesotho was not positive. Nonetheless South African military officials maintain that, from a military point of view, the operation was a success.<sup>33</sup> The mistakes that were made were seen as a consequence of the lack of precise intelligence. The SANDF conducted itself as well as could be expected considering the level of information and intelligence made available to it. It did not anticipate any resistance from the LDF when entering the country and had calculated its force numbers on the basis of that assumption. However, speaking with representatives from different parts of the administration, it seems that efforts were made to take credit for the successful parts of the operation, while at the same time blaming the mistakes on other departments within the government. The question of liability has been a central issue within South African government circles. Who was responsible for the operation? Who gave the order? What was the mandate, if any? Was the operation a success etc.?

It has been argued that the cuts in the South African defence budget have had a substantially negative impact on the capacity of the SANDF. However, its capacity at any particular time has to be evaluated within the context in which it has to function. In this perspective, South Africa still had one of the most modern and capable

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<sup>30</sup> Col. Mosgaard of the Danish army and a former adviser at the RPTC in Harare argued that, in order to avoid confrontation and secure a positive result, it is necessary to deploy a superior force to intimidate hostile opposition. He used the NATO intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 as an illustration of this point.

<sup>31</sup> Legitimate is here used solely as an analogue term for the internationally recognised political leadership in Lesotho at the time.

<sup>32</sup> Coning, *Lesotho Intervention: Implications for SADC*, p. 7

<sup>33</sup> Interviews with SANDF Col. Serfontein in January 2000 and Col. (Rtd) Henri Boshoff at ISS in December 2003.

defence forces in SSA. It is true that the SANDF did not have the same resources and fighting experience as the SADF during the war in Angola in the late 1980s, for instance. But in relative terms, if not by NATO standards, it was still a very potent force.<sup>34</sup> However, the SANDF concluded in its lessons learned process after the operation that the government's lack of a clearly defined national security policy meant that both the SANDF and the intelligence community was caught by surprise by the government's decision to deploy CTF Boleas. The operation also showed that the SANDF's logistical functions did not support the launching of a rapid reaction force.<sup>35</sup>

### **6.3.2: The Question of the Mandate**

According to statements made by the South African government after Operation Boleas, this was not an invasion but an intervention which had a proper SADC mandate<sup>36</sup>, based on a 1996 SADC decision that mandated the troika to have a watching brief vis-à-vis the Lesotho crisis and on top of that an direct invitation from Lesotho Prime Minister.<sup>37</sup> It was therefore argued that the decision had been justifiable because it was made in response to a direct request from the democratically elected Lesotho government, and therefore did not need a mandate from the UN and/or SADC. However, after Operation Boleas the South African government tried to come up with other arguments in support of its decision against the criticisms of the international community and the domestic political opposition. It is interesting to note that the press statement issued on 22 September 1998 stated that the operation was undertaken following a written request from the prime minister of Lesotho, though President Mbeki after the intervention, in his address to the Defence Force Parade on 27 April 2000, argued that it was in response to orders from the SADC.<sup>38</sup>

The problem for the South African government was that, at the time of the intervention, it was claiming to be operating within the framework of the mandate given to the troika by the SADC, which is not correct. This was underlined at the SADC Summit in 1999, when it was stated in the Communiqué that the military action was undertaken in response to a request for assistance from the Lesotho

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<sup>34</sup> However, the SANDF is as shown in the previous Chapters in the midst of a transitional phase and is experiencing serious structural difficulties, bottlenecks and underfunding and therefore lacks the ability to sustain its current force structure.

<sup>35</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>36</sup> Neethling, Conditions for successful entry and exit, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> Coning, Lesotho intervention: Implications for SADC, p. 3

<sup>38</sup> SANDF press statement, 22 September 1998; speech by President Mbeki, 27 April 2000.

government, not on the basis of a mandate given to South Africa by the SADC.<sup>39</sup> In 1994, the SADC council had given the troika a mandate to function as a mediator, not to engage in a proactive enforcement operation by the military.<sup>40</sup> This was a decision made by the members of the troika exclusively. Furthermore, this was confirmed in the interview with Horst Bremmer in the DFA, who stated that there was no mandate for the operation. At the beginning of 2000, the DOD was still struggling to find what legal basis it had for launching the operation. What is true is that CTF Boleas did not need a UN mandate because it had received a formal request from the legitimate, though disputed, government of Lesotho. The problem for the CTF Boleas members was that it tried to announce the operation as a SADC operation, though it is questionable whether this fell within the mandate given to the troika. The only mandate which existed before Operation Boleas was the request for assistance made by the Lesotho premier, who was faced with a potential military coup and domestic instability. Thus, Operation Boleas was launched to protect one side, the legitimate leader of Lesotho recognised by SADC, in a domestic political dispute in Lesotho that had been going on for several years.

According to Coning the actual decision to intervene was taken at the SADC Defence Ministers' meeting in Gaborone 15 September 1998, where only South Africa and Botswana were present. South Africa was made responsible for the actual planning of the operation, and the final decision was taken after consultations between the at the time acting President Mangosothu Buthelezi, and then President Mandela and Vice-President Mbeki, who were both away on travel.<sup>41</sup>

#### **6.3.2.1: The Question of National Interest**

Did South Africa violate its own foreign-policy objectives during Operation Boleas, and if so why? The answer to the first question is possibly yes. An answer to the last question could be national interest. Lesotho is a small state surrounded and dominated by South Africa, within what could be said constitutes South Africa's natural sphere of interest. Economically it is totally dependent on its relationship and trade with South Africa, and a large percentage of its citizens live and work in South Africa. There is also a large ethnic Basotho minority living inside South Africa. The links to traditional institutions in Lesotho became visible when King Letsie III of Lesotho married in February 2000. The Free State Premier, Winkie Direko (ANC), declared on South African national television that she was a Basotho and therefore

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<sup>39</sup> Communiqué from the SADC Summit in Maputo, 17-18 August 1999.

<sup>40</sup> See, for instance, Communiqué from the SADC Summit in Gaborone, 29 August 1994.

<sup>41</sup> Coning, *Lesotho Intervention: Implications for SADC*, p. 3

the king was her king too.<sup>42</sup> Another important issue for South Africa was and still is the Highland Water/Katse Dam project, which is of vital strategic and economic interest to the country because it supplies the South African industrial heartland, Gauteng Province, with a large percentage of the water it consumes and is expected to do so even more in the future. Another important issue is the historical connections between the ANC and the LCD governing party, which led to accusations that the ANC was helping its friends instead of looking after South Africa's long-term foreign-policy interests.

Understanding the actions of the South African government involves realising the nature of Lesotho's political landscape, which has been dominated by the lack of a democratic political culture ever since the days of apartheid. Its awkward geographical position made Lesotho an obvious victim in the struggle between the NP government and its anti-apartheid opponents. Lesotho has since the 1970s experienced seven military coups and was experiences what seemed to be chronically political instability. The South Africa government had informed the mutinous soldiers in the LDF that SADC, and South Africa, would not accept another military coup.<sup>43</sup> This principles has later on become a central principles in the AU.

Part of the problem in Lesotho has been the Westminster-style constitution, which did not provide precise guidelines for the relationship between the king and the elected government. Lesotho would have continued having problems as long as it is unable to change its electoral system.<sup>44</sup> The IPA managed to get the parties in Lesotho to accept a proportional electoral system that for the first time during the 2002 election gave the opposition a substantial number of seats in parliament.<sup>45</sup> Thus it was not a new conflict that led to Operation Boleas, but the consequence of many years of political instability. From the South African point of view, the crisis in Lesotho was seen as an attempt by conservative forces within the army to reverse the democratic process. However, according to Makoah, the whole incident was distorted by a misconception of the nature of the conflict. He claims that the SA intervention was caused by the ongoing struggle in the SADC between Zimbabwe and South Africa, which threatened to isolate the latter. According to him, the intervention in Lesotho was a South African attempt to put itself back in the driving seat in the quest for regional supremacy, although it also signalled acceptance of the Zimbabwean-led

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<sup>42</sup> SABC 3 Evening News, 19 February 2000.

<sup>43</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Horst Bremmer in the South African DFA, January 2000.

<sup>45</sup> During the 2007 election a new opposition party manage to win the election and take over government.

intervention in favour of Kabila in the DRC.<sup>46</sup> However, it has to be stressed that the objectives of Operation Boleas and the Zimbabwean-led intervention into the DRC were very different in nature. Consequently, the South African government had a somewhat 'schizophrenic' attitude towards the Zimbabwean-led intervention in the DRC because it preferred a political, not a military solution to the conflict in that country.

After taking office, the ANC government quickly found that it had to compromise on some of its officially stated policies and adopt a more pragmatic approach.<sup>47</sup> In relation to Operation Boleas, the government stated that it was increasingly necessary for South Africa to play a role in regional peacekeeping efforts. The case for South Africa to focus on preventive diplomacy may therefore be true to an extent, but it had its limitations. Lesotho was and still is of national interest to South Africa, and that explains the way the operation was conducted. If South Africa's main objective had been to play the "fairy godmother", the operation would have been executed differently. The government would have tried to obtain a proper SADC mandate and would have conducted more negotiations with the different parties within Lesotho before sending in its military forces. Moreover, it was not a neutral military operation, but one in support of the government of Lesotho, which of course was considered legitimate by the ANC government and the SADC as a whole. Therefore South Africa did go into Lesotho supporting one side of a complicated conflict where the reason for entering the country was primarily based on assessments made by the LCD government. This was an enforcement operation with the purpose of securing the internationally recognised government of Lesotho and the interests of South Africa.<sup>48</sup> Operation Boleas was carried out without the necessary mandates because the government considered the above-mentioned objectives to be a higher priority. The democratic pretext was used to cover up and justify South African interference in Lesotho's internal affairs. No one will ever know whether there was, in fact, a real threat to democracy in Lesotho, and all political solutions was worn out?

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<sup>46</sup> Makoa, *Foreign Military intervention in Lesotho*, pp. 70ff.

<sup>47</sup> See Chapter 2 for further details of South Africa's foreign policy.

<sup>48</sup> According to Makoa, South Africa has continued her apartheid-inspired foreign policy towards Lesotho, that is, has continued to interfere in domestic politics of the country by military means, something that has happened many times before. The post-apartheid government in South Africa has pursued a foreign policy which seems to be indifferent to African affairs, and aggressive and bullish as regards its relations with its regional partners. Makoa, *Foreign Military intervention in Lesotho*, p. 81.

The operation was run so hastily through the political system that no check was ever made whether the operation had the necessary mandate. One of the consequences of this was that, in February 2000, the SANDF called the DFA to find out under which mandate and legal structures the operation had been launched. The DFA had to answer that they did not know because it was never involved in the decision-making process and that it probably never had a mandate.<sup>49</sup> This shows the ad hoc process on which the political decision to intervene in Lesotho was based.

The DFA described Operation Boleas as an example of “poor” foreign policy, and did not think that the operation had been very successful. But simultaneously it was argued that South Africa would be better prepared the next time.<sup>50</sup> The South African government defended itself in Parliament faced with critique from the opposition parties, and argued that the launching of CTF Boleas was a case of national security, and government did not have any other choice. Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad went as far and stated that he was:

...disgusted that opposition political parties in South Africa wanted to use a matter of national security as political capital.....the opposition’s actions came close to treason.<sup>51</sup>

In defence of the South African-led intervention, one must acknowledge that on 3 December 1999 a Memorandum of Agreement was signed by the different actors in the conflict and the Mozambican President as the representative of the extended SADC troika.<sup>52</sup> It can also be argued that the objectives of the operations had been attained, though at a high cost in terms of casualties and material destruction.

#### ***6.4: Concluding Remarks: Operation Boleas and the Creation of the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions***

Since the publication of the White Paper on Defence in 1996, the SANDF has been in the process of defining a new military doctrine because the government of the time did not have any policy within this field. With the publication of the White Paper on Peace Missions in February 1999, the lessons learned from Operation Boleas were

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with Horst Bremmer in the South African DFA, January 2000.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Horst Bremmer in the South African DFA, January 2000.

<sup>51</sup> Joint meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee; Security & Justice Select Committee, 2 November 1998; REPORT ON SITUATION IN LESOTHO

<sup>52</sup> South African Yearbook 2000/01.

included. Furthermore, the paper provided a framework and some kind of guidance for SANDF force planners to work after. The Defence Review of 1998 had already taken the task of international PSOs into account.<sup>53</sup> However, the force planners had focused on the primary functions of the force and did not take into account the fact that secondary functions often constitute the force's day-to-day responsibility. Neither the review nor the White Paper on Peace Missions anticipated to what extent the SANDF was going to be used for international missions in future. Experiences with Operation Boleas were used directly in creating the White Paper on Peace Missions, which was therefore of pivotal importance in shaping the South African government's future policy on its international military deployment. Operation Boleas therefore played a pivotal role in establishing the criteria mentioned in Chapter 5, making it also the key to understanding the two other cases. The criteria would probably have looked different had it not been for Boleas.

The most important lesson learned was, of course, the issue concerning the mandate: there has to be a clear mandate beforehand, which cannot be questioned afterwards. The experience of Operation Boleas shows this with all clarity. Another important lesson was that an operation needs to have sufficient resources before being launched. Boleas may have attained its military objectives and therefore have been declared a military success, but it failed politically. The relatively high number of casualties and the vast amount of destruction in the centre of Maseru meant that the operation was seen as having been excessively violent, not the 'clean' political and military operation that the politicians had hoped for. This created reminders of the role played in the not so distant past by South Africa. Operation Boleas lacked sufficient up-to-date intelligence, and the response of the LDF came as a surprise to the SANDF. In retrospect, should the force have been more robust in nature, able to limit the extent of the fighting and thus also the number of casualties and destruction of property? This lesson was included in the White Paper as well, which states that there must be a correlation between the mandate given and the resources provided. Operation Boleas also provided lessons regarding co-operation between the civilian political level and the armed forces. Military operations are inherently potentially violent, very quickly becoming difficult to 'sell' politically to the domestic audience witnessing them. Operation Boleas taught an important lesson in dealing with the consequences of and limits on the use of the military tool. Even the successful military completion of an operation might represent a political defeat and lead to limits on where and how to use the tools. In the new democratic South Africa, the press

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<sup>53</sup> For further details of the recommendations contained in the 1998 Defence Review, see Chapter 3.



reported directly from the battle scene, and the armed forces could not close off an operational area as it did during the war in Angola in 1970-80s. The importance of creating public support and understanding domestically for the operation was also stressed in the White Paper. This was lacking in the case of Operation Boleas, which caused an outcry because of the SANDF's eight deaths.

Another issue that Operation Boleas highlighted was that there should be close co-operation and distribution of power between the different government departments. Boleas was run as a military operation and the DFA complained that it was not properly informed beforehand, hence the concern over the mandate. Therefore, the White Paper stipulates that, in the case of peace missions, the DFA is the co-ordinating institution. The relevant question in relation to Operation Boleas is, of course, whether this operation fell within the framework of the White Paper on Peace Missions, or whether it was a regular military operation requiring rapid action? The White Paper does include "*preventive diplomacy*" or "*peace enforcement*" as areas in which South Africa, within the limits of its capacity, will be willing to contribute.<sup>54</sup> However, it is doubtful whether Operation Boleas would fall within the framework of the White Paper because of the short time available for preparation and the more offensive nature of the mission. However, according to former Colonel Boshoff the operation was conducted after an operational plan which the SANDF had on its "shelf's".<sup>55</sup> Despite the initial tactical errors the operation demonstrated that the SANDF in relative terms, and despite being in an internal transformation, was still a capable fighting force, and was able to sustain its deployment. It had the responsibility for planning and leading the Task Force and it successfully participated, together with other SADC forces, in the post-conflict reconstruction process. However, it failed to cooperate with the DFA, and the government failed to inform the international institutions and secure beforehand the foundations for the mandate of the operation, creating unnecessary uncertainty concerning the legality of the operation.

Moreover, the operation underlined the importance of regional co-operation, especially in preparation, but also during the post-conflict reconstruction phase. Here Boleas was partly a military failure. The Botswana force arrived a day too late, leaving the initial fighting to the SANDF. This left the image that this was only a South African operation, despite the attempt to dress it up as a SADC mission. It also

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<sup>54</sup> DFA, White Paper on South African Participation in Peace Missions, p. 19.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Col. (Rtd) Henri Boshoff at ISS, Pretoria December 2003

showed how difficult regional military co-operation is, and how well it must be prepared. Since then regional military and security co-operation has become a cornerstone in South African foreign policy towards the region, where co-operation surrounding SADCs Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre (RPTC) in Harare, despite the difficulties regarding issues of financing and reaching an agreement on the status location of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation (OPDSC) inside or outside SADC, and the creation of the SADC AFS Brigade have become crucial for South Africa.<sup>56</sup> Operation Boleas showed that regional security co-operation covers not only actual military co-operation on the ground, but also on the policy side. The whole issue regarding the doubts concerning the mandate coincided with the other issues regarding the Zimbabwean-led intervention in the DRC. The two operations showed that regional co-operation must be institutionalised and formalised in order to reduce the risk of misunderstandings and unclear interpretations.

The intervention in Lesotho could be seen as an example of the post-apartheid government's attempt to pursue a proactive foreign policy. The new South African government would no longer accept military takeovers, especially within its sphere of influence. However, as Southall argues the apparent South African foreign policy success in Lesotho is based on its exceptionality, and only gives few pointers to South Africa's foreign policy conduct in general, except in the area of forceful diplomacy.<sup>57</sup> However, Operation Boleas became despite that an important signal to other armed forces in the region. South Africa has also subsequently introduced this position into the AU, in the form of the policy of the non-tolerance of unconstitutional changes of government, at least, as argued by de Coning, in its own backyard.<sup>58</sup> The decision to deploy CTF Boleas also signalled an important shift in South African foreign policy because it was the first time since the transition in 1994 that the country's armed forces had been used as a foreign-policy tool. The ANC government decided to use the military option after diplomatic means seemed to have been exhausted.

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<sup>56</sup>For further reading on dilemmas and problems concerning security cooperation in SADC and AU see for instance Nathan, *Domestic Instability and Security Communities*; Hammerstad, *Domestic threats, regional solutions?* Vale, *Security and Politics in South Africa*; Cilliers, *Building security in Southern Africa, An update on the evolving architecture*; Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*; Solomon eds., *Towards a Common Defence And Security Policy in the Southern African Development Community*; Nathan, *Organ Failure: A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security* in Laakso eds., *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; Europe, *SADC and ECOWAS*; Söderbaum, & Taylor Eds., *Regionalism and Uneven Development in Southern Africa*.

<sup>57</sup> Southall, *An unlikely success: South Africa and Lesotho's election of 2002*, p. 295

<sup>58</sup> Coning, *Lesotho Intervention: Implications for SADC*, p. 1

It also turned out to be indicative of the pragmatism and the checks and balances in the system that have directed South African foreign policy ever since. The official objective for the South African government in intervening was to prevent a military coup and a civil war within its natural sphere of interest. However, Operation Boleas showed that the use of the military option in foreign policy has to be carefully planned in relation to the possible disadvantages that might follow a military operation. It showed that the use of force is very seldom pretty, and that political decision-makers must be ready to deal with the consequences of their actions. For the SANDF the operation showed that its "rules of engagement" had also changed with the transition in 1994. This meant that it had to make political considerations before initiating missions, be able to handle critical media, and not just do as it saw fit to obtain the operational objective. The public followed the mission closely through the press, which created much debate in the South African public sphere. This was also the result of the uncertainty that the transition had created as regards the role of the armed forces in the new post-apartheid society.<sup>59</sup> The fact that the number of South African casualties became a topic within the public sphere was nothing new to South African decision-makers and defence chiefs, as this issue had already arisen, especially during the last years of the Angolan campaign in the 1980s.<sup>60</sup> However, the new openness of South African society changed the operational conditions for the SANDF because it had to succumb to public scrutiny and potential criticism. It was no longer enough to refer to threats to national security as reasons for the use of force because the task of the defence force in general, and particularly in the case of Lesotho, had been desecuritized.

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<sup>59</sup> See Chapter 3 for further details of the new role of the SANDF in society.

<sup>60</sup> For further details of the South African war in Angola, see Mandrup Jørgensen, *Speak Softly, but Carry a big Stick*.

## Chapter Seven: The SANDF and the Deployment into Burundi

### ***7.1: Introduction: Paying Tribute to South Africa...***

The SANDF has been the pivotal instrument of stability in Africa south of the Sahara. The Peacekeeping Mission to Burundi is a shining example. Today, the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) has become a United Nations mission (ONUB) whose mandate is "to support Burundi's efforts to re-establish sustainable peace". This is due to the pioneering role of the SANDF, and later in collaboration with Mozambique and Ethiopia, creating the conditions for the United Nations to take over.<sup>61</sup>

If one accepts the argument of the White Paper on Peace Missions that all participation in peace missions is an extension of South African foreign policy, then the intervention in Burundi appears a classic example of this policy.<sup>62</sup> It is also a case where the Department of Foreign Affairs, through its mediating role, and in co-operation with the facilitator of the peace process, took the lead in organising the joint South African involvement, as was also envisaged in the white paper.<sup>63</sup> The deployment of troops in Burundi was also a test case with respect to the principles of distribution of tasks between different government departments in South Africa, allowing us to assess how well the co-ordination between the different branches of government worked, the allocation of funds etc.

Seen from the outside, South Africa's involvement in Burundi is an example of a process in which a broad range of domestic institutions and actors were involved. However, the government's decision to assume the role of a lead nation in the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) must also be understood as a doctrinal shift away from the recommendations set out in the White Paper because the PSOs were launched into a hostile environment.<sup>64</sup> This was recognised by Defence Minister Lekota when he stated to the Joint Committee on Defence (JCD) that the deployment into Lesotho was special because no comprehensive ceasefire agreement had been signed, two rebel groups were still not participating in the transitional government, it

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<sup>61</sup> Defence Minister Lekota's Budgetary speech in Parliament June 2004

<sup>62</sup> White paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 27.

<sup>63</sup> White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 27.

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Nick Sendall, DOD, 24 September 2003.

was not a UN mission, and it did not have a chapter VI or chapter VII mandate.<sup>65</sup> This means that the ANC government chose to deploy its special protection unit without a clear entry and exit strategy, a comprehensive peace agreement, a clear mandate or any international support. Seen from the outside, it seemed as if the Pretoria government had chosen to disregard more or less every principle it had presented in its White Paper on Peace Missions as prerequisites for South African deployment into international missions.

Moreover, South African involvement in the peace process in Burundi was the first example of multifaceted South African peace diplomacy, that is, the first attempt to negotiate, lead and implement a negotiated peace settlement, followed by a South African-led military involvement. The SANDF was used as a tool in attaining a stated South African foreign-policy objective. This chapter will provide an overview of South Africa's involvement in the developing peace process in Burundi and link the diplomatic initiatives and ambitions with the country's military involvement. It will also investigate how the relationship between South Africa's foreign-policy aims and its military involvement materialised on the ground during this process. It will not go into an in-depth analysis of the Burundian peace process, but only touch on it if it has bearing on the above-mentioned issues.

The role of this Chapter, and the second case in dissertation, is partly to investigate second claim put forward in the preface: that the SANDF has played an important and somewhat overlooked role in the transition from "pariah" to peacemaker. Its transformation and its involvement in peace operations have been necessary to support this transition and it will remain necessary to sustain it in the foreseeable future. This was demonstrated partly in the literature review in Chapter 2, but also through a relatively detailed description in Chapter 3 of the transformation of the armed force in South Africa. This Chapter and the two other case studies will illustrate the central role the SANDF has played in transition and why the deployment of the SANDF has been important for South Africa's peacemaking strategy. The three case studies will investigate if South Africa has used its military power in accordance with principles of being a benign power.

The Chapter will furthermore help answering the question asked in the preface, that is, to what extent the SANDF will be able to continue to play this role because of a gap between goals and objectives, and what the impact this will have for South

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<sup>65</sup> Lekota statement to the JCD, 14 November 2001.

African foreign policy role. This question was investigated firstly in Chapter 3 which demonstrates that the defence force in contemporary South Africa is no longer high on the list of government priorities which means that other government departments have easier access to economic resources. The question was furthermore scrutinised in Chapter 4, which illustrated that the SANDF generally has got a capacity problem, which put severe question marks on the SANDF's ability to function as a lead nation. The findings in Chapter 4, combined with the role of the seven criteria produced by government in 1999 for deployment of the SANDF into international PSOs presented in Chapter 5, will be further investigated this Chapter and the two other case studies. These analytical findings will in the Chapter help investigate the ability of the SANDF to function as a lead nation in actual operations, while at the same time will demonstrate to what extent the criteria presented by government also have been instructive in the decision to employ the SANDF in PSOs. Finally this Chapter will also try to establish, using the insights from Chapter 3, to what extent the military involvement was politically prioritised.

## **7.2: The Burundian Peace Process: a Short Overview**

After long and difficult negotiations, the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi was signed on 28 August 2000. The parties agreed on setting up a transitional government, which was to function for a total period of 36 months. However, the two main rebel movements, the FNL and the FDD, were not parties to the agreement, which meant that the armed conflict continued. The peace process was only consolidated with the signing of the so-called Pretoria protocols at a series of ceremonies in October and November 2003, which led to the signing of a comprehensive ceasefire agreement between the transitional government and Pierre Nkurunziza, the current president of the main rebel movement, the CNDD-FDD. Agathon Rwaswa's PALIPEHUTU-FNL did for a long time not participate in these negotiations, but eventually signed a ceasefire agreement in September 2006.<sup>66</sup> A fragile peace was therefore created, negatively influenced by the continued fighting between the army and the FNL. Furthermore, the mistrust that existed between the parties delayed the demobilisation, repatriation and confidence-building initiatives that were launched. The proposed election, which was scheduled to take place in October 2004, was delayed but eventually occurred in July 2005. This was due to the deadlock in the continued negotiations between the different factions over the

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<sup>66</sup> Agoagye, *The African Mission in Burundi*, p. 9.

drafting of a new constitution. However, the main issue was for a long time the continued fighting between the government forces and the FNL under the leadership of Agathon Rwasa. Nonetheless the extended transitional period ended on 26 August 2005 with the inauguration of Nkurunziza as Burundi's new president. Plans for the reduction of the UN peacekeeping force have been put in place and attempts to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the FNL are continuing alongside the fighting.

### ***7.3: Background to the South African Involvement in the Burundian Peace Process: the Process of Political Negotiations***

In late 1999, Nelson Mandela was asked to assume responsibility as the chief mediator and facilitator in Burundi on behalf of the international community, the OAU and the regional parties. The efforts of the former facilitator, the late Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere, had already set out the framework for the negotiations, and Mandela was able to continue his efforts along these lines, leading to the Arusha Agreement in 2000. This accord stressed that the conflict was basically of a political and ethnic nature, but with the political class struggling for power. The agreement provided for the setting up of a transitional government, but, as mentioned above, this was boycotted by two of the four main rebel groups. The future role of the facilitator, first Mandela and later Jacob Zuma, was written into the agreement, where it was stated that

the facilitator shall continue in his role as moral guarantor, recourse authority and conciliation agent.<sup>67</sup>

South African mediation has been characterised since then by a tireless effort to bring together the parties and encourage them to accept and implement the agreement. In May 2006, President Mbeki took over the role of mediator before the final round of negotiations with the FNL.

The South African mediating strategy has been characterised as an attempt to keep close contact with all the parties involved in the conflict. This also meant maintaining contact with the two remaining rebel movements outside the Arusha agreement. This strategy was illustrated by the previously mentioned statement of Horst Bremmer that South Africa would even talk to the devil if it thought it would help. As argued by, for

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<sup>67</sup> The Arusha Agreement, Protocol V, Article 4.

instance, Chris Landsberg, the continued contact with all parties to the conflict helped minimise criticism concerning South Africa's impartiality.<sup>68</sup> Attempts were also made to co-ordinate matters with the regionally appointed mediator, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and the other parties involved, such as President Omar Bongo of Gabon and the Tanzanian government.

From a strategic point of view, there was a great deal of prestige tied to the South African involvement in Burundi. Nelson Mandela had been appointed international facilitator for the process and therefore had great responsibility for future developments. President Mbeki chaired the AU and played a central role when in 2003 the continental body decided to launch an African peace mission into Burundi, known as AMIS.<sup>69</sup> The South African DFA had a pivotal role in supporting the role of the facilitator, and it also played an important part in hosting some of the later negotiations, leading to the signing of the so-called Pretoria protocols in 2003.

#### ***7.4: The Initial Military Deployment***

Through the Arusha agreement, the international community was asked to send a peacekeeping force to facilitate its implementation by the parties. In Protocol V, Article 8, section d, the international community was asked to provide security for public figures. The personal protection of the leaders of the opposition especially was an integral part of the Arusha agreement and a condition for encouraging them to take up their seats in government. Accordingly, on 29 October 2001, South Africa was asked by the UN Security Council under Resolution 1375 to provide VIP protection teams for the returning opposition leaders as part of the implementation of the agreement. The South African Protection Support Detachment (SAPSD) was deployed in November 2001, with the task of providing protection for members of parliament. The force consisted of a headquarters, a protection unit, a guard and security unit, and a mission support unit. In addition, the SAPSD also had personnel to deal with health issues, military policy, logistics and engineering. The protection unit primarily consisted of Special Forces units and was deployed on a four-month rotational basis. Initially the SAPSD consisted of 680 personnel of different categories, but it was increased to 754 during the financial year 2001/2002 due to an

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<sup>68</sup> Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation*, pp. 169ff.

<sup>69</sup> Kent & Malan, *Decisions, Decisions – South Africa's foray into regional peace operations*, p. 6.



increase in the number of VIPs from 13 to 26.<sup>70</sup> This meant that the protection force had to be expanded from 75 to 150 at the first rotation in March 2002.

The SAPSD was not a PSO operation and only had a mandate to provide VIP protection in co-ordination with the Burundian Army. The second tier of the tasks was the training of an ethnically balanced Burundian protection unit to take over the VIP protection tasks. However, this could not be initiated before the implementation of the comprehensive ceasefire agreement in November 2002. Continued fighting between the FNL and the national army also made it difficult to initiate the training programme after that date.

### ***7.5: The Establishment of the African Mission in Burundi***

On 2 April 2003, the AU Ambassadors decided to deploy the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB).<sup>71</sup> The force was to consist of up to 3500 soldiers and was to be deployed for an initial period of one year. AMIB was placed under South African leadership. South Africa was also expected to contribute the bulk of the force itself.<sup>72</sup> Ethiopia and Mozambique were the other troop contributors. AMIB has been described as a model for future ASF operations. As rightly pointed out by Kent et al., this lead role also included the provision of operational support, which was normally provided by the UNDPKO. This was due to the fact that this was an AU mission and that the AU did not have the necessary support structures in place.<sup>73</sup> The operation was under African leadership, consisted of African troops, and had the primary objective of preparing for a future UN PSO. Therefore, there were many lessons to be learned for the ASF as regards the attempts to create an effective and capable structure for the future. From a South African point of view, the deployment of AMIB also served as a test because it was the first time that South Africa and the SANDF had the chance to act as the lead nation in an international PSO. Apart from regular infantry forces, South Africa was to provide a number of specialised functions, such as the headquarter facilities, the specialised protection units for the returning politicians, engineering and health services etc.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> South African DOD, Annual Report 2001/2002, p. 124.

<sup>71</sup> Communiqué of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution 91st Ordinary Session, 2 April 2004.

<sup>72</sup> Communiqué of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution 91st Ordinary Session, 2 April 2004.

<sup>73</sup> Kent et al., *Decisions, Decisions: South Africa's foray into regional peace operations*, pp. 6f.

<sup>74</sup> South African DOD, Annual Report 2004/2005.

The mission's primary task was to oversee the implementation of the 7 October and the 2 November 2003 ceasefire agreements and the 16 November 2003 comprehensive ceasefire agreement, which included assisting the DDR and contributing to peace and stability in Burundi.<sup>75</sup> The AMIB force was to support the DDR process by securing the assembly areas and access to them. Moreover, AMIB was also given the task of creating favourable conditions for the deployment of a UN mission. The South African troops provided as part of the protection team had their own mandate, and they were later incorporated as an integral part of AMIB. However, with the transfer of the mission to the UN, the protection force was once more run as a separate operation outside ONUB.

The deployment of AMIB started on 27 April 2003 with the setting up of the headquarters company. AMIB was declared fully operational with the deployment of the majority of the Mozambican and Ethiopian forces by mid-October 2003. By that time, the total strength of the force was approximately 1600 SANDF troops, including the SAPDS units, 858 Ethiopians and 228 Mozambicans. AMIB, like ONUB later, had a South African force commander. South Africa regarded this task as giving it a lot of prestige. South Africa had been the facilitator for the negotiations and had now been designated to lead the mission until a UN force could take over. Furthermore, de facto it had also had been given the task of providing operational support. The AU mandate stipulated that the lead nation should, within the mandate, provide guidance concerning the planning of operations, the mission structure, command and control, administration and logistics, health care etc.<sup>76</sup> However, the South African contribution was hampered because it was experiencing problems with the serviceability of its main equipment and having problems getting hold on the needed spare parts in time.<sup>77</sup>

### **7.5.1: The Transfer of AMIB to the UN Mission in Burundi**

The African mission in AMIB, Burundi, has become a United Nations mission whose mandate it is to support Burundi's efforts to re-establish sustainable peace. This is due to the pioneering role of the SANDF, and later collaboration with Mozambique and Ethiopia, thus creating conditions for the UN to take over.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Porto, Situation Report: Mozambique Contributes to the African Mission in Burundi, p. 1.

<sup>76</sup> AU Communiqué of the Ninety First Ordinary Session of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution at the Ambassadorial Level, 2 April 2003.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with SANDF WO I A. Meier, member of the UN inspection team, in Camp Iveco, 11 November 2004, who had operational experience from the Burundi mission.

<sup>78</sup> Deputy Minister of Defence Madlala-Routledge to the Proceedings of the National Council of Provinces, 29

The AMIB operation was also seen as a model for future operations, where an African-led force could be deployed in the first instance and be replaced by a traditional UN force. On 1 June 2004, the AMIB force in Burundi was 're-hatted' and turned into a UN mission in Burundi under the French acronym (ONUB). UN Security Council Resolution 1545 of 21 May 2004 gave ONUB the mandate to operate under a Chapter VII mandate, using all means necessary.<sup>79</sup> Its authorised strength was 5650 military personnel. In his role as facilitator, Jacob Zuma had already in December 2003 called for the transformation of AMIB into a UN mission. This was followed by a similar call by AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) in March 2004.<sup>80</sup> The reasons for this decision have to be understood from different angles.

From the economic point of view, South Africa was providing the bulk of the AMIB force and was finding it difficult to have its costs reimbursed. As described earlier, the SANDF's outstanding costs from international deployment passed one billion rand. The SANDF found it difficult to obtain resources of this magnitude within the framework of its own budget. The AU received support for its deployment from a number of states and the EU, but not enough to cover the costs of the operation. Another aspect of the decision lay in the Arusha peace agreement, which called for a UN peacekeeping force to be deployed. By March 2004, the security situation on the ground had improved to such an extent that it was now possible to deploy a real UN PKO.<sup>81</sup>

However, the problem for the SANDF was that the SAPDS's task was not covered by the new UN mandate, and, because of its political nature, it had to continue as a separate mission with an AU mandate. The bulk of the South African force therefore operated as an independent operation alongside ONUB. One of the problems with this was that the force was faced with difficulties concerning its mandate and its ability to operate outside Bujumbura. The Air Force helicopters had been withdrawn in 2003, thus making it difficult for the soldiers to deploy because there was no backup available.<sup>82</sup> Despite having announced that the SAPSD force was to be scaled down, this had not happened by the beginning of 2005. This year was also of critical importance for the peace process in Burundi because of the elections

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June 2004.

<sup>79</sup> UNSC Resolution 1545, 21 May 2004.

<sup>80</sup> Communiqué of the Peace and Security Council, 25 March 2004.

<sup>81</sup> Communiqué of the Peace and Security Council, 25 March 2004.

<sup>82</sup> Briefing of the Defence Portfolio Committee on SANDF deployment into AU and UN missions, 25 February 2005.

scheduled for July. The successful completion of the transitional phase meant that the UN could initiate a downscaling of ONUB in September 2005. South Africa had, however, committed a force of 1400 soldiers in Burundi until at least March 2007.

### **7.6: The Political Decision-Making Process in South Africa**

As described in the previous chapters, the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions includes a detailed description of the ideal decision-making process related to the deployment of the SANDF into international missions. It is required that, in the case of the deployment of isolated individuals, the Cabinet and the MFA do not need authorisation from parliament. However, when dealing with the deployment of whole contingents, approval by parliament is required.<sup>83</sup> Parliament has to ratify the decision made by the President and the Cabinet before it can be launched.

In the case of Burundi, the process has to be divided into two phases. During the deployment of the first batch of South African troops in November 2001, there had been a debate and a ratification process in parliament on the issue of deployment. However, several members of parliament felt left out of the decision-making process during the deployment of the first SAPSD force, as well as later, when it expanded into AMIB. Members of the JCD and parliament claimed that they had not been informed in advance and only learned about the decision from the media.<sup>84</sup> In the minutes of the meeting of the Defence Portfolio Committee, the day before the debate in Parliament concerning additional financing, several members of the Committee across party lines expressed frustration with the DOD and its ministers because they had not received any briefing on the situation in Burundi. It was argued that they had not been able to make a decision the following day because they had not received prior information about the situation.<sup>85</sup> This was despite the recommendations put forward in the White Paper on Peace Missions, arguing that public debate and parliamentary ratification should precede deployment.

Other issues revolved around the need for a clear mandate, consent from the parties involved, funding etc. None of these elements were in place before the deployment of AMIB. In other words, the guidelines set out in the White Paper on Peace Missions had not been followed. However, at the meeting of the JCD on 14 November 2001,

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<sup>83</sup> White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 27.

<sup>84</sup> See, for instance, criticism raised by Adv Z L Madasa during the debate in parliament on 15 March 2002.

<sup>85</sup> Minutes of the meeting of the Defence Portfolio Committee, 12 March 2002.

only two members of the Democratic Party, now the DA, expressed opposition to the deployment, arguing that it was difficult to understand how the government could authorise approximately R500 million for protecting 7 (which turned out to be first 13 and later 26) Burundian politicians returning from exile. The DA members of the JCD even argued that this money would be better spent on poverty alleviation in South Africa, thereby making a reference to tense debate in South Africa concerning guns versus butter.<sup>86</sup> The government response was that the costs of the operation would be covered by donor funding and reimbursements from the international community. Lekota went even further and argued that

South Africa must not wait until everybody in the country has had something to eat before committing itself to world peace.<sup>87</sup>

This was, of course, a strong statement and stressed the importance with which the ANC government saw the SANDF deployment not only as a vital element in trying to create peace in Burundi, but also as a piece of the larger jigsaw puzzle concerning the creation of a framework for peace and stability on the continent. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the ANC government sees South Africa's destiny as closely intertwined with that of the continent as a whole. However, it seems that it was only the DA that opposed the deployment of the SANDF to Burundi. During a debate in 2002 in NCOP concerning additional funding for the Burundi mission, Mr Matthee of the NNP argued that

We in the New NP also take pleasure in supporting this legislation, and we want to convey the hope that the presence of our military personnel there will be able to play a really effective and positive role in ultimately bringing real and lasting peace to Burundi. We also want to send, from this Council, a message to all our soldiers and our military personnel who are deployed there, and say to them that they are in our thoughts, and that they must know that they have our full support at all times. We want to assure them of the great and important work they are doing, not only in the interests of Africa and all its people, but also in the interests of each one of us, and each one of our voters<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Minutes of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence, Select Committee on Security and Constitutional Affairs, 14 November 2001.

<sup>87</sup> Minutes from the Joint Standing Committee on Defence; Select Committee on Security and Constitutional Affairs, 14 November 2001.

<sup>88</sup> Statement by Mr Matthee, NNP, in the NCOP, 20 March 2002.

This type of statement was followed by similar statements from, for instance, the UDM and ACDP. However, the DA was very critical of the government's decision to deploy forces to Burundi in the first place, and Mr Theron argued that, in deciding deployments:

There are three basic questions which should be asked: In the first place, which countries or territorial areas are of vital importance to South Africa? Secondly, which countries have a direct influence on South Africa? Thirdly, which countries are of interest to us?

and he continued:

Surely the countries that are of vital importance and have direct influence on South Africa are the SADC countries. Here we should play a full role to ensure peace and stability and economic growth, but South Africa cannot be responsible for the whole of Africa and all its problems.<sup>89</sup>

The DA's position resembles that put forward in the JCD four months earlier and focuses more on a narrow understanding of what constitutes South Africa's national interests. Burundi is by DA standards not of direct national interest to South Africa. Mr Matthee of the NNP had argued, earlier in the debate, that of course the House should support the efforts of Mandela as facilitator by providing the required funding for the SANDF. This touches upon one of the most important issues here, namely the prestige and legacy of the former president and thus of South Africa itself. The intervention did not take place because Burundi was of any direct importance to South African national security. Rather, the success and failure of the peace process was important for the role that South Africa would be able to play in the future. It was important for South Africa's reputation as a mediator and peacemaker on the continent. The DA did in the end support the allocation of additional funding. Mr Theron argued that:

In future we will have to determine our role very carefully and strategically. In the meantime our troops are there, where they are to be accommodated, fed and paid allowances and provided with various other support services. We cannot rescind on our commitment but we request that proper estimates and

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<sup>89</sup> Statement by Mr Theron, DP/DA, in the NCOP, 20 March 2002.

plans be made to ensure that for the future we have the military resources and funds to get involved in these external operations.<sup>90</sup>

It was therefore a concern for the forces that had been deployed and the fact that the SANDF was on the ground at the time that became the decisive factors for the DA in endorsing the deployment.

Another important point that was raised during the JCD briefing was that the deployment of the SANDF to Burundi was only to be for six months, maybe a year, after which the Burundian army and other African nations would take over.<sup>91</sup> However, at the time of writing (mid-2006) the South African contingent is still deployed in Burundi. This issue was raised by Mr Theron when he concluded that the SANDF seemed to be stuck in Burundi for at least the rest of the financial year 2002/03 because the promised African replacement had been withdrawn. Seen from the outside, the nature of the debate in the NCOP concerning the financing of the SAPSD is interesting. First of all, the opposition's criticisms of the government for deploying the SANDF into an open-ended mission, despite promising the opposite, are very limited. Criticism was in the beginning of 2002 directed towards Defence Minister Lekota and his deputy for having promised the JCD in November 2001 that the funding would be covered by the international community. The government then went to Parliament four months later to ask for resources to cover the mission. In March 2002, Deputy Minister Madlala-Routledge argued in Parliament that members did not have to worry about the issue of financing from the international community because promises had been received from a wide range of donors. However, Adv Z. L. Madasa of the ACDP argued that members of parliament needed assurances concerning financing, not promises from the minister that everything would be fine.<sup>92</sup> In his reply to Parliament, the Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, dealt with the harsh criticism that had been directed towards the government by arguing that the government had done what it had to do, namely attempting to create peace in Burundi. It did not have time to sit down and wait for peace in Burundi to come because then the Arusha accord would have fallen apart.<sup>93</sup> By stating this Manuel also implies that the deployment of the SANDF was seen as a necessity in securing the diplomatic efforts of the South African mediation. Concerning the criticism of the missing funding, he stated that

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<sup>90</sup> Statement by Mr Theron, DP/DA, in the NCOP, 20 March 2002.

<sup>91</sup> Minutes of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence, Select Committee on Security and Constitutional Affairs, 14 November 2001.

<sup>92</sup> Statement by Madasa in Parliament, 15 March 2002, during the debate on the SAPSD.

<sup>93</sup> Statement by Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel in Parliament, 15 March 2002.

We had to act, and act correctly. I would like to submit to all members of this House that, having considered all the issues at hand, we acted timeously and dealt with the other issues. Similarly, if we had to wait until all of the EU commitments 'put their money where their mouth is', we would not have secured peace in Burundi<sup>94</sup>

He thus recognised that the government had a problem since the international funding was not in place. However, at the same time he also made it clear that this was important in the case of the Burundi intervention. Kent et al. quotes the DOD's Rauties Rautenbach for stating to the Joint Committee on Defence that there is normally no budgetary provision for peace missions, and that it is often wrongly perceived that when the President signs for deployments, there is money automatically available.<sup>95</sup>

Another dimension to the debate was Theron's statement of what was considered strategically important for South Africa. Mr Thaba of the ANC argued that no one state in Africa is more important to South Africa than any other.<sup>96</sup> However, the Deputy Minister of Finance pointed out that Burundi was part of the Great Lakes region, which was important to South Africa for economic and security reasons.<sup>97</sup> However, Thaba's argument was based on an understanding and perception of Africa as a whole, which was founded through Nkrumah's Pan-African vision. For Thaba, the suffering of the Burundian people was just as important as events in the SADC because Africa has to be understood as a whole. Therefore, Theron and Thaba were unable to debate or understand each other's arguments.

For the ANC government, the success of the Burundian peace process was seen as a test case for South Africa's future role in Africa. If successful, South Africa could claim to have facilitated, sustained and secured a peace process and a transitional period towards stable civilian government. Defence Minister Lekota argued that the South African participation could be used to create a framework for the stabilisation of the continent as a whole.<sup>98</sup> However, if it failed, it would also be seen as a failure

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<sup>94</sup> Statement by Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel in Parliament 15 March 2002.

<sup>95</sup> Kent and Malan, *Decisions, Decisions*, South Africa's foray into regional peace operations, p. 11

<sup>96</sup> Statement by Mr Thaba, ANC, in the NCOP, 20 March 2002.

<sup>97</sup> Statement by the Deputy Minister of Finance, ANC, in the NCOP, 20 March 2002.

<sup>98</sup> Minutes of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence, Select Committee on Security and Constitutional Affairs, 14 November 2001.



for South Africa and a setback for the provision of African solutions to African problems. In June 2004 President Mbeki stated in Parliament that

Hon members of the National Assembly, let me emphasise the fact that we have sent troops to countries like Burundi and the DRC because we know that we will never develop and be happy forever all by ourselves while wars and poverty are prevalent in our neighbouring states.... It helps South Africa to work for peace so that we increase the number of countries we can trade with while developing the economy of our country and of Africa as a whole. We are prepared to work for peace in Africa so that no Africans live in poverty and fear.<sup>99</sup>

Much more was at stake for the government than the usual playing of foreign-policy 'games' because the intervention would be considered a test of whether South Africa had the capacity to act as a great power in the African regional setting. The idea of an African Renaissance was, among other things, also tied to the ability to provide credible solutions to the conflicts on the continent.

### ***7.7: The Financial Burdens of a Mission***

According to figures handed to me by the spokesperson for Defence of the DA, the expected cost of our troops in Burundi will be about R679 million in 2003. It could cost a further R564 million in 2004, R577 million in 2005, and R600 million in 2006. There are no timeframes in Burundi, and South Africa has, therefore, become involved in an open-ended process with no apparent exit criteria in place.<sup>100</sup>

One of the basic criteria for South African participation in PSOs is that sufficient means should be available for the operation.<sup>101</sup> In the White Paper on Peace Missions, which has been passed by both Parliament and the Cabinet, it is also stated that Parliament must authorise finance for South African participation in peace missions and that such funds must be included within the department's annual funding.<sup>102</sup> In addition, the White Paper states that it is the responsibility of the DFA to take the lead in securing funding within the government. On the instructions of the

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<sup>99</sup> Statement by President Mbeki in Parliament, 23 June 2004.

<sup>100</sup> Statement by Dr P. J. Rabie, DA financial spokesman, in Parliament, 25 November 2003.

<sup>101</sup> White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 26.

<sup>102</sup> White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 28.

president or the deputy president the Ministry of Finance will release the funds for the operation. The DOD<sup>103</sup> will only be responsible for budgeting for six months' pre- and post-deployment costs because of the delays in the reimbursement from the UN system that are expected.<sup>104</sup> This is an important rule because the reality has turned out to be somewhat different.

In the case of AMIB, the SANDF was deployed into an AU mission, not a UN one. Consequently, the reimbursement owed had to come from the AU or donor contributions, not the UN, as envisaged in the White Paper. This turned out to be difficult. In 2002, the DOD stated in its briefing to the Defence Portfolio Committee that the deployment in Burundi amounted to R1604 per soldier per day, or a total budget of R240 million in 2002, of which the department had received R144 million from donors.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, the DOD had experienced budgetary challenges, as the bridging money from the national budget had proved difficult to obtain at the beginning of the deployment because the donor contributions went into the national treasury, from which the DOD had to obtain the money. In addition, the reimbursements received were directed to the Reconstruction and Development Programme, not the DOD. This arrangement would have been fine if the bridging funds had been made available. As a result, the DOD had to cover large parts of the costs of the operations because Parliament and the Cabinet refused for long time to allocate additional resources. As shown earlier, the attitude was that the SANDF had already received enough funds.

According to the DOD's Annual Report for 2004/05, the deployment of the SANDF into Burundi cost R381.636 million. The South African state received R12.907 million from the UN and R58.248 million from the AU as reimbursement. On top of that, the Belgium government donated R3.923 million to help cover the expenses of the VIP protection operation.<sup>106</sup> The remaining R305.668 million was funded by the National Revenue Fund. However, this is something new and shows a change in the government's priorities in relation to defence diplomacy. In December 2003, the Chief Director of Operations, Adm. Hauter, stated that the DOD had to compete with other government department for funds to cover the additional expenses that followed the

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<sup>103</sup> The same goes for the Department of Safety and Security.

<sup>104</sup> White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 28.

<sup>105</sup> SANDF budgetary briefing to the Defence Portfolio Committee, May 2002.

<sup>106</sup> As described in a previous chapter, the money reimbursed does not go back to the defence department, but to the RDP. The SANDF has to apply to the National Revenue Fund to cover its extra expenses from international deployment.

growing international involvement.<sup>107</sup> The department was not being very successful at that time. In November 2004, in its mid-term review, the DOD threatened that it might be forced to withdraw its forces from Burundi if it did not receive additional funding.<sup>108</sup> However, this never materialised, and in 2005 the Cabinet and the DOD signed a MOU estimating the DOD's external budget as in excess of R800 million.

### **7.8: The South African Contribution to the Peace Effort in Burundi**

One of the lessons we have learnt in Burundi is that it is not sufficient to bring combatants into a cantonment area to disarm and register them. Beyond that they have to see a future for themselves wherein they can maintain their families and be part of the development and construction of a peaceful society. They have to have somewhere to go and something to do after they lay down their arms. We refer to this as sustainable peacekeeping. Sustainable peacekeeping must be driven by the host government, who must take the lead within a conglomerate of local NGOs and international development organisations. The dynamic interaction between the political and the military processes is therefore ongoing.”<sup>109</sup>

This was how, in 2004, the then Deputy Minister of Defence Madlala-Routledge described one of the lessons the government had learned from participating in the peace mission in Burundi. South African participation in the peace mission in Burundi has indeed been a learning process for both the government and the SANDF. The government has concluded that the criteria listed in the White Paper on Peace Missions have had to make way for the realities of the world. As a regional power, South Africa been forced to bear some of the costs of the operation in attempting to reach its political goals. This is what often characterises the benign power in a regime, where the costs of maintaining the regime's objectives are borne by the dominant power itself. This, of course, being part of a process of regime formation and maintenance, helps South Africa obtain certain larger goals, for instance future market access, control over and access to natural resources, and political support at the international level. The deputy minister of finance stated this directly when he argued that the Great Lakes region is important to South Africa for two reasons: first,

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<sup>107</sup> Interview with SANDF Chief Director, Strategy and Planning, Rear Admiral Hauter, and Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General DOD Defence Secretariat, Mr Motumi in the DOD, 26 November 2003.

<sup>108</sup> Mid-term financial statement presented to parliament November 2004.

<sup>109</sup> The Deputy Minister of Defence Madlala-Routledge during the Proceedings of the National Council of Provinces, 29 June 2004.

stability in Africa and thus its future markets, and secondly, the abundance of resources in the region. President Mbeki also pointed in that direction in his state above where he argued that creating peace and stability is important for South Africa's development. Peace in Burundi is seen as a piece in that larger jigsaw puzzle. Politically, the experience in Burundi also provided some important insights for future African military co-operation. As a model for future African-African and African-UN co-operation, the SAPDS, AMIB and ONUB experience was important for a number of reasons.

First, it provided valuable insights into the ability for co-operation between African forces with very different command structures, levels of training and capacities. It showed that the SANDF was, despite resource scarcity, able to function as the lead nation for an African PSO. It provided specialised functions such as engineers, a brigade HQ, logistics, patrol boats on Lake Tanganyika and medical facilities. However, the SAPDS/AMIB deployment also showed that the critical issue for African-led PSOs in the future is the requisite financing of operations. The intervention in Burundi also showed that South Africa could not rely on promises made by its African partners to, for example, take over responsibility for missions. The initial plan for the SAPSD to have been replaced by forces from a number of other African states never materialised and left South Africa with the main responsibility. Moreover, South Africa had to cover much of the cost of the operation itself, as it could not expect to receive reimbursement from the AU. This is an important lesson for future initiatives by the ASF, since it will limit its operational capacity severely.<sup>110</sup> A third political lesson was that the UN is more concerned with its potential political role during a deployment. This meant that the SANDF was stuck with the UNSC-mandated SAPSD task, including funding, because the UN thought VIP protection during an election year to be too risky an undertaking for ONUB.

The involvement of South Africa in Burundi was also the first time that the policy directives in the White Paper on Peace Missions were tested in a real mission. This turned out to be an important process because the criteria for deployment were overruled by other political considerations. It can be argued that, when the Pretoria government decided to deploy forces into Burundi, it broke several of its own criteria for deployment. No comprehensive peace agreement was in place, no external funding had been secured, and no exit strategy had been drawn up. Politically the government did receive support in Parliament, though also widespread criticism for

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<sup>110</sup> The recent experiences of the African Mission in Sudan support this tendency.

its handling of the situation. In retrospect it is interesting to note that the timelines for the deployment, that is, a maximum of one year and a promise of full international financing, turned out to be incorrect. South Africa initially had to cover a large proportion of the deployment costs itself, thus putting the DOD under severe financial pressure. The deployment of the military in Burundi show that government regarded the above-mentioned political factors as more important than the criteria set out in the White Paper. However, more important was the decision not to provide the required funding to enable the DOD to cover its costs. The DOD and the SANDF had to make do with the funding available through the additional R500 million provided by Parliament and the regular budget. However, despite these constraints, seen as a combined effort the SANDF in Burundi proved itself to be an efficient tool in supporting the diplomatic efforts of the South African government.

From an operational point of view, in all its three phases the SANDF deployment in Burundi was negatively influenced by the overall resource constraints and structural problems that face the SANDF generally.<sup>111</sup> This led the main opposition speaker in parliament to state concerning the Burundi operation that

Besides the astronomical costs and the apparent lack of exit criteria, huge logistical problems exist due to long distances, the lack of political planning and risk assessment. Troops on the ground endure inadequate accommodation and medical facilities. It is reported that the low serviceability of vehicles has also become a constraint.<sup>112</sup>

As described in previous chapters, the experience of the Burundi deployment has shown that the structural problems facing the SANDF in general have been visible on the ground in Burundi. One problem was the lack of helicopter support for SAPSD personnel since 2004. Another is the lack of serviceability of equipment in all SANDF deployments. A third is the lack of critical function personnel, which has had a direct bearing on the forces deployed, especially medical personnel and engineers.<sup>113</sup> General problems of a lack of discipline within the SANDF were also visible during Operation FIBRE, with several incidents occurring of sexual misconduct, corruption and the mismanagement of funds. For instance, South African Army uniforms were sold and later found in the possession on the FNL.<sup>114</sup> Another indication of

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<sup>111</sup> See Chapter 4 for further details of the SANDF's structural problems.

<sup>112</sup> Statement by Dr P. J. Rabie, DA financial spokesman, in Parliament, 25 November 2003.

<sup>113</sup> See, for instance, Annual Report 2004/05, briefing to Defence Portfolio Committee, 8 November 2005.

<sup>114</sup> For further details on the disciplinary problems in the SANDF see for instance, Gibson, 4 top SANDF staff on

disciplinary problems was the fact that the tour of deployment had to be reduced from six months to four, which, according to the then Chief of Defence Nyanda, was due to the volatility of the Burundian situation and the lack of facilities in the country, leading to boredom among the personnel deployed.<sup>115</sup> This, of course, put an extra strain on the SAA because the frequency of the rotation was increased.

However, despite the shortcomings of the SANDF, it has been able to fulfil its mandate, functioning as lead nation for AMIB, as well as the envisioned foreign-policy tool in supporting the government's diplomatic drive into Africa, though not meeting the standards of, say, NATO. The shortcomings of the force have now been recognised by South Africa's international and African partners. This means that the somewhat mythical status that surrounded the armed forces of the former apartheid regime in Africa has been replaced by a more realistic picture of South Africa's military capabilities. So far, the South African government has been able to cite a lack of experience in PSOs as one of the reasons for the shortcomings. However, this claim is becoming rather hollow after five years of deployment in Burundi. The SANDF and the South African government need to show that they are able to deliver. Being present is not enough: the force also needs to perform.<sup>116</sup> South Africa needs to remedy the critical shortcomings, that is, the lack of discipline, the shortage of critical personnel, the low serviceability of the equipment, and the low resource allocation for the SANDF, if it is serious about using the SANDF as an effective foreign-policy tool in future.

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sex raps; Gibson, SA abuses in Burundi claimed; and SAPA, SA troops 'lack discipline'

<sup>115</sup> Kent et. al., *Decisions, Decisions: South Africa's foray into regional peace operations*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>116</sup> The AMIS operation in Darfur is living proof of this.

## **Chapter Eight: South Africa the 'African Peace Broker' and Force Contributor to MONUC**

### **8.1: Introduction**

South Africa is the father of transition in the DRC<sup>117</sup>

South Africa is the dominant power in southern Africa and is increasingly expected to play a predominant role in bringing peace, stability and development to the continent. The South African government is, as shown in the previous chapters, aware of and increasingly accepting this role, both through multilateral and bilateral channels. Therefore, it is acting, but benignly, as an increasingly confident regional power. It also needs both local and international recognition to be able to play this role as a benign regional power in southern Africa, but also as a mediator and peacemaker.

However, at the same time the South African political project in Africa is linked to extensive reformist ambitions, something that works directly against the interests of the autocratic leaders on the continent. The promotion of initiatives such as NEPAD and its African Peer Review Mechanism, the new AU treaty and the Peace and Security Council have built-in requirements that, if accepted, will compel African states to initiate political, social and economic reform, something the late Laurent Kabila angrily termed 'Pax Pretoriana'. An important element in Pretoria's new Africa policy is the ambition to put an end to the many conflicts that have plagued the continent, because war and conflict are seen as major causes of underdevelopment and poverty.

The DRC conflict has been called the first African 'multilateral' war because by 1999 it involved ten or eleven foreign states,<sup>118</sup> a large number of rebel factions in the DRC itself and a broad range of multinational companies exploiting the country's resources. At the time, there was a risk that the conflict would escalate into a conventional interstate African war. Fortunately, it has not yet spilled over into the region and has so far been contained within the borders of the DRC.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Report of the Portfolio Committee's oversight visit to the DRC, quoting DRC Chief of General Staff Gen. Kisempia, p. 1.

<sup>118</sup> DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, CAR, Sudan, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and partly Libya and Chad.

<sup>119</sup> This is not to say that domestic conflicts in Angola, the Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda were not linked with the conflict in the DRC, but merely to stress the point that the fighting that took place

Despite the fact that it did not participate in the so-called SADC intervention in 1998, South Africa has been involved at several levels of the DRC peace process. It played an instrumental role in mediating and negotiating what became the Global and All Inclusive Agreement in December 2002. Through Operation Mistral, it contributes a large military force to the UN mission in the DRC, while through Operation Teutonic,<sup>120</sup> in co-operation with Belgium, it is involved in security-sector reform in the DRC, for example, the training and sensitisation of the DRC national army, FARDC. The purpose of this chapter is to examine South Africa's political and military involvement in the DRC since the start of the 'modern' conflict in 1996. It will attempt to investigate how South African diplomatic initiatives in the DRC were supported by its military commitment.

The chapter will describe the role the SANDF has played in the joint South African involvement in the DRC peace process. It will show that, even though South Africa is now consciously playing the role of the regional power, its capacity to fulfil this role is partly hampered by the SANDF's structural and financial problems, already described. This raises some serious questions concerning the SANDF's, and therefore South Africa's, capacity to function as the lead nation in PSOs according to the lead-nation requirements as set out in Chapter 4. In this regard, the chapter will also investigate the role that the criteria in the White Paper on Peace Missions have played in planning and directing South Africa's contribution to MONUC. The role of this Chapter, and the third case in dissertation, is partly to investigate the second claim put forward in the preface: that the SANDF has played an important and somewhat overlooked role in the transition from "pariah" to peacemaker. Its transformation and its involvement in peace operations have been necessary to support this transition and it will remain necessary to sustain it in the foreseeable future. This was demonstrated partly in the literature review in Chapter 2, but also through the relatively detailed description in Chapter 3 of the transformation of the armed force in South Africa. This Chapter and the two other case studies will illustrate the central role the SANDF has played in transition and why the deployment of the SANDF has been important for South Africa's peacemaking strategy. The three case studies will combined investigate if South Africa has used its military power in accordance with principles of being a benign power.

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inside the DRC between the parties did not lead to interstate military confrontations outside the DRC.

<sup>120</sup> Operation Teutonic is partly financed by the Dutch government.



The Chapter will furthermore help answering the question asked in the preface, that is, to what extent the SANDF will be able to continue to play this role because of a gap between goals and objectives, and what the impact this will have for South African foreign policy role. This question was investigated firstly in Chapter 3 which demonstrates that the defence force in contemporary South Africa is no longer high on the list of government priorities which means that other government departments have easier access to economic resources. The question was furthermore scrutinised in Chapter 4, which illustrated that the SANDF generally has got a capacity problem, which put severe question marks on the SANDF's ability to function as a lead nation. The findings in Chapter 4, combined with the role of the seven criteria produced by government in 1999 for deployment of the SANDF into international PSOs presented in Chapter 5, will be further investigated this Chapter and the two other case studies. These analytical findings will in the Chapter help investigate the ability of the SANDF to function as a lead nation in actual operations, while at the same time will demonstrate to what extent the criteria presented by government also have been instructive in the decision to employ the SANDF in PSOs. Finally this Chapter will also try to establish, using the insights from Chapter 3, to what extent participation in MONUC was politically prioritised.

## **8.2: South Africa and the DRC in the Historical Context**

South Africa cannot and will not walk away from the Congo; we will remain true to the prophetic words of Patrice Lumumba until his final days when he said: 'We are not alone. Africa, Asia, and the free and liberated peoples of the globe will remain at the side of the millions of Congolese who will not abandon their struggle.... I want my children, whom I leave behind and perhaps will never see again, to be told that the future of Congo is beautiful and their country expects them, as it expects every Congolese, to fulfill the sacred task of rebuilding our independence, our sovereignty....' The words of this great African were relevant then as they still are today.<sup>121</sup>

The DRC has traditionally been outside South Africa's direct sphere of influence, although South African mining conglomerates, for instance De Beers, had lucrative concession agreements with the Mobutu regime.<sup>122</sup> During the first stages of Angolan independence and the civil war from 1974-78, the country was a sort of ally of the

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<sup>121</sup> F.M.D. Zuma in her budget speech, 28 May 2002.

<sup>122</sup> These concessions were lost first to Israeli and later Zimbabwean companies when Laurent Kabila became president.

apartheid regime,<sup>123</sup> even though it was a prominent member of the OAU and therefore officially an enemy of the racist South African state. Furthermore, Mobutu's 'Africanisation' policy of 1974 emphasised his stated nationalist ambitions, which worked directly against those of the regime in Pretoria.<sup>124</sup> It should also be remembered that Mobutu was an unstable ally in the sense that he could not be controlled, as, for instance, the Americans and the French both experienced during his rule. In addition, politically he could not afford to be associated directly with the regime in Pretoria, even though he personally bought houses in Cape Town. Large South African-based industries such as De Beers, SASOL and ESKOM had economic interests in the DRC.<sup>125</sup> Later, after the ANC takeover in 1994, the relationship was contaminated by South Africa's lack of understanding of the nature of the crisis in the DRC, and in the short term the failed attempt to seek a negotiated settlement proved disastrous for relations between the new Laurent Kabila regime and South Africa.

The Mandela-led initiative in the spring of 1997, aimed at finding a political settlement to the conflict, received broad international backing, but was in the end rejected by Kabila because he did not need a political solution. The ANC-led government tried to use its political prestige internationally to solve the conflict, though disregarding the fact that it had already been decided on the battlefield. Mandela's late attempt in April and May 1997 to get the two parties to negotiate onboard the South African naval vessel SAS Outeniqua is particularly striking in this respect. The attempts to get the parties to sign a ceasefire agreement failed, and Kabila's forces, supported by Rwanda and Uganda, easily gained control of the DRC.

In Zimbabwe, South Africa's diplomatic failure in the DRC was seen as a unique opportunity for Zimbabwe to regain some of the political influence it lost after South Africa's re-emergence on to the international stage, especially after 1994. In Harare, access to the DRC's markets and resources was seen as potentially providing much needed assistance to the besieged and troubled Zimbabwean industrial sector. According to the then First Secretary I.B. Petersen at the Danish Embassy in Harare, the attitude expressed in newspapers and the government became positive.<sup>126</sup> This first naive attempt by the Pretoria leadership to extend the country's sphere of

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<sup>123</sup> Both South Africa and Mobutu's Zaire supported the Bakongo-dominated FNLA Angolan rebel movement, which fought the Marxist-dominated MPLA during the period of Angolan independence in 1975. For further reading on this "partnership" see for instance Mandrup Jørgensen, *Speak Softly, but Carry a big Stick*

<sup>124</sup> For further details of this topic, see for instance Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr Kurtz*.

<sup>125</sup> Landsberg, in Clark, *The African Stakes of the Congo War*, p. 170.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with I.B. Petersen, Danish MFA, May 2000.

influence could be considered a major setback, but today South Africa seems to have regained its strength and become a pivotal figure in the peace process. In the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, the South African strategy of peace was even represented as having been the right approach all along.<sup>127</sup>

Another important element of South Africa's involvement in the DRC was the potential benefits of the DRC. Unused sources of water and electricity could supply the entire SADC with clean and cheap energy, as well as the water that South Africa is going to need badly in the near future. The plan is to link up all SADC members into a regional electric network with hydroelectric power plants along the Congo River as a central element. In addition, there has been talk of creating a water pipeline running from the DRC to South Africa to supply the latter with the water. These natural resources, and especially their control, have become a political priority for the government in South Africa and are seen as important to the new broader South African national security. In this respect the country's involvement in the DRC is similar to Operation Boleas, one of the strategic objectives of which for the SANDF was the security of the Highland Water project.

### **8.2.1: The current conflict in the DRC and South Africa's involvement**

They carried placards and banners that proclaimed their hopes and their dreams of a better future for themselves and the generations to come. One of the banners screamed: 'President Thabo Mbeki is bringing us peace and development'. These words carried both hope and a strong sense of confidence that South Africa would be able to help create the conditions that must lead to peace and stability. That an ANC Government would indeed be ready to help is a mandate that springs directly from the Freedom Charter. There are millions of people at home and abroad, Comrade President, who have internalised our political programme. They have unshaken faith in its great sense of purpose and ideological morality. The Congolese in the DRC and other nations on the African continent expect the ANC and its Government to follow to the letter the stipulations in the Freedom Charter that 'there shall be peace and friendship'.<sup>128</sup>

When, in late 1996, Nelson Mandela began his attempt to broker a peace agreement between the then President of Zaire, Mobuto Sese Sese, and the increasingly

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<sup>127</sup> Interview with H. Short and E. Castleman in the South African DFA, September 2003.

<sup>128</sup> Statement by the Minister for Safety and Security in Parliament, 10 February 2004.

successful rebel leader, Laurent Désire Kabila, it was seen as an example of the new role that South Africa was going to play in Africa. South African involvement in the conflict in the DRC<sup>129</sup> was characterised by the stated ambition of reaching a political solution to the military conflict. Negotiations and political settlement have since been the dominant strategy in South African foreign policy, and the military tool is only used to secure the political solutions, one the latter have been achieved.<sup>130</sup> The South African researcher, Chris Landsberg, characterised South African involvement in the DRC as "The Impossible Neutrality". His conclusion was that South Africa's involvement has often mistakenly been seen as biased in favour of Rwanda and Uganda because it supported a political settlement not favoured by Angola, Zimbabwe or Namibia.<sup>131</sup> There have been numerous allegations against South Africa for secretly siding with Rwanda and the anti-Kabila factions, starting with Pretoria's refusal to participate in the Zimbabwe-led "SADC" intervention in 1998.<sup>132</sup> Earlier there had been Mandela's belated attempt to save Mobuto's collapsing regime, followed by the sale of arms to Rwanda and Uganda, coupled with the refusal to sell any to the Kabila government.<sup>133</sup> Even today it is widely felt that the South African government is still siding with Rwanda.<sup>134</sup>

However, taking South Africa's basic foreign policy ideals into consideration, it seems unlikely that the Pretoria government is siding with any of the antagonists in the conflict. The ANC government's ambition is to negotiate with all parties to a conflict, as this is perceived to be the only way to reach a sustainable solution.<sup>135</sup> South Africa has, despite the criticisms, been able to continue being accepted as a mediator by the parties involved, and the responsibility for Third Party verification was assigned jointly to the UN Secretary General and the South African government.<sup>136</sup> The criticism, therefore, originates from the political interests of Zimbabwe and other countries, who have actively supported the Kabila regime. South Africa has refused

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<sup>129</sup> The name 'DRC' will be used throughout this chapter, also to describe the 'Zairian' era.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with H. Short and E. Castleman in the South African DFA, September 2003.

<sup>131</sup> Landsberg in Clark, *The African Stakes in the Congo War*, p. 170.

<sup>132</sup> See, for instance, UDM leader Holomesa's accusations during the debate in Parliament on 8 February 2000.

<sup>133</sup> Landsberg in Clark, *The African Stakes in the Congo War*, p. 174. However, South Africa did sell weapons to both Namibia and Zimbabwe, which supported the Kabila government.

<sup>134</sup> For instance, interviews with MONUC legal advisor Molina, 3 November 2004, and Grignon, 2 November 2004, at the UN HQ in Kinshasa.

<sup>135</sup> Horst Bremmer of the South African DFA argued in relation to this point that South Africa had been criticized for talking and contributing to many different and not very "sympathetic" regimes, but he stated that it was South Africa's firm belief that one cannot create peace without talking to all the parties involved. However, just because "you talk to the devil it does mean that you like him." The latest examples of this was South African resistance to the use of sanctions as a weapon against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and South Africa's dialogue with the rebel forces in the DRC. Interview with Horst Bremmer, Chief of the SADC section in the South African DFA, 16 February 2000.

<sup>136</sup> Presentation by the South African DFA to the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, 16 April 2003.

to take sides, which in the SADC was seen by the DRC alliance as siding with Kabila's enemies. The big change which came about in South African foreign policy in the post-Nzo and Mandela era as regards the situation in the DRC was its acknowledgement that no deal was ever going to be struck without the consent from the two major external backers, Zimbabwe and Rwanda. Thus, to a large extent the ANC government focused its attention on reconciling the differences between these two states. This was not an easy task because Mandela and Mugabe had a strained personal relationship. When Mbeki was inaugurated as president in 1999, the relationship between South Africa and Zimbabwe was characterised by mutual dissatisfaction. Mandela's more idealistic diplomatic approach was replaced by Mbeki's pragmatism and quiet diplomacy.<sup>137</sup>

The South African government's decision to deploy troops to MONUC must be seen not just as forming part of a general commitment, but also as a clear foreign-policy statement signalling that South Africa wants to take responsibility for its role in the UN and in the world in general. Choosing to be part of MONUC is also, of course, a way of serving South Africa's national security interests in the sense that its future developments are intertwined with developments overall in Africa. Furthermore, South African involvement must be seen as consisting of two interlinked parallel tracks, one political, including the training of the new army, the other being participation in MONUC. The close link between the two must be sought in the disarmament, demobilisation, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration (DDRRR) of the foreign fighters<sup>138</sup> in the Kivus. The other task is the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process of the domestic non-statutory forces numbering an estimated 300,000 combatants,<sup>139</sup> and the subsequent bilateral agreement between South Africa and the DRC on assistance in forming the new army. According to the South African Military Attaché in the DRC, this process is faced with two direct challenges:

1. The DRC lacks the necessary resources to perform the process.
2. At the political level, the actors in the transitional government have so far dragged their feet in creating the requisite institutional framework. The law for the new army, for instance, was not passed until October 2004 after long

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<sup>137</sup> Landsberg in Clark, *The African Stakes in the Congo War*, p. 179f.

<sup>138</sup> Also called the negative forces.

<sup>139</sup> Boshoff, *Summary overview of the Security Sector Reform Processes in the DRC*, p. 8.

negotiations, more than a year after the formation of the new transitional parliament and government.<sup>140</sup>

The process of passing the election laws has delayed the elections for the presidency and the National Assembly beyond 30 June 2006, which marks the end of the transitional period.<sup>141</sup>

There is by nature no direct link between the contribution to the UN mission, something that UN officials are very busy stressing, and the South African involvement in the DRC in general.<sup>142</sup> Nevertheless, the South African government repeatedly has stressed that its involvement in the DRC is part of an overall strategy to create peace and stability on the continent, a necessary condition for the creation of economic growth and development. Concerning the South African government's involvement in the peace negotiations in the DRC, ANC Member of Parliament Dr Jordan summed the South African effort up in the following way:

South African diplomacy minimised the capacity of non-African powers to interfere in the Congo, so as to give the Congolese and their neighbours a chance to resolve their problems. After three years of talks, interrupted by outbreaks of terrible bloodletting, the Congolese factions agreed to constitute a government of national unity. South Africa has invested millions of rands to keep hope alive in the Congo. Even today South African forces are serving as peacekeepers in that country and South African investors have committed themselves to the rehabilitation of the Congolese economy. That might not be much, but it is a beginning.<sup>143</sup>

### **8.3: The Conflict in the DRC: A Short Historic Overview**

The DRC conflict has been called the first African multinational war because, by 1999, it directly or indirectly involved the military intervention of nine foreign states,<sup>144</sup> a large number of multinational companies, which were taking advantage of the

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<sup>140</sup> Interview with South Africa's Military Attaché in the DRC, Lt. Col. Jack Khanye, 1 November 2004, at the South African Embassy in Kinshasa.

<sup>141</sup> Elections eventually took place in late 2006, with President Kabila as the winner.

<sup>142</sup> For instance, interviews with Director for DDRRR Peter Swarbrig, 29 October 2004, and Dep. Dir. Policy Grignon, 2 November 2004, at MONUC HQ in Kinshasa.

<sup>143</sup> Statement by ANC member of Parliament Z.P. Jordan 10 February 2004.

<sup>144</sup> Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, DRC, Angola, Central African Republic, Libya, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

chaotic situation in the DRC to extract natural resources,<sup>145</sup> and large number of rebel factions in the DRC itself. By then, there was a huge risk that the conflict might escalate into a conventional interstate African war. Fortunately, the conflict did not expand into the region as a whole and was contained within the borders of the DRC. During an interview in the Zimbabwean Ministry of Defence in 2000, the Zimbabwean understanding of the causes to the conflict was described in the following way:

The conflict in the DRC can be described as a little man standing next to an elephant. Because of the size of the elephant, the man would be nervous. He could do one of two things; one was to kill the elephant, the other was to reduce its size. That is what Rwanda and Uganda are doing in the DRC, trying to weaken the giant to make it controllable<sup>146</sup>

The conflict was caused by the coming together of a constitutional and an economic crisis, which put pressure on Mobuto's weakening regime, and the spilling over of the conflict in Rwanda in 1994. The more recent aspect of the conflict began in late 1996, when the combined anti-Mobuto rebel forces of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL) led by Laurent Désire Kabila, with support from Rwanda and Uganda, started their advance towards Kinshasa, and it ended with the ADLF taking control of the city by 16 May 1997. Officially, the conflict ended on 30 June 2003 with the formation of a transitional government. However, the underlying problems that caused the outbreak of violence remained and to a certain extent still remain unresolved.<sup>147</sup>

However, already in early 1998 a new rebellion started when East Congolese rebels, joined by Rwandan and Ugandan<sup>148</sup> government forces, started an offensive against Kabila's regime. Forces from Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia came to Kabila's rescue, which resulted in a military stalemate. When he took office, Kabila promised a sceptical international community that he would initiate a process of democratisation and call general elections within three years. In return, he received

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<sup>145</sup> Several UN reports have established the link between international corporations and illegal economic activity in the DRC.

<sup>146</sup> Interview with Col. Nyathi of the Zimbabwean MoD, January 2000.

<sup>147</sup> Vlassenroth and Raeymaekers, *The Formation of Centres of Profit, Power and Protection*, p. 3.

<sup>148</sup> Uganda and Rwanda both had their own strategic reasons for becoming involved. Uganda wanted to target anti-government rebels operating from Ituri Province, while Rwanda still had the former Hutu *génocidaires* operating from the Kivus to deal with. At a later stage in the conflict, other reasons, for example economic ones, became important. For further details of the role of resources in the DRC conflict, see the UN reports on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other forms of wealth in the DRC.

both international recognition as the new legitimate leader of the DRC and membership of the SADC. However, he failed to live up to these promises.

South Africa proposed a negotiated settlement<sup>149</sup> and stated that it would only consider supplying troops in the case of a peace-keeping mission with a UN mandate. The elements in the South African peace proposal later became the essential ingredients of the Lusaka Accord of 1999.<sup>150</sup> A few days after taking office, Foreign Minister Zuma set out on three weeks of intense negotiations in Lusaka, attempting to reach a ceasefire agreement.<sup>151</sup>

From phase one, South Africa chose the path of diplomacy in an effort to pave the way for a peace treaty between the belligerent parties in the conflict. Zambian President Chiluba's attempt on behalf of the SADC succeeded with the signing of the Lusaka accord on 10 July 1999, though the rebel movements did not sign the accord until 31 August 1999. This only happened after intense negotiating efforts by Zuma, who met with all the parties involved, including the rebel leaders, in an attempt to get them to accept the agreement.<sup>152</sup> The plan was for a UN peace mission, MONUC, to arrive to secure a peaceful transition. Zuma stated to the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, regarding the events leading to the Lusaka agreement, that:

...the problems with the Congo agreement were two-fold. Firstly the neighbours, Burundi and Uganda, had armed groups based in Congo, thus creating a military conflict. The major problem foreseen was dealing with the armed groups that were not signatories to the agreement and not committed to peace. Secondly there was no movement in terms of democratization in the Congo and the people were feeling despondent.<sup>153</sup>

Kabila was unwilling to implement the Lusaka accord because he still believed he could win the war outright by military means. The deployment of MONUC was therefore delayed, and in January 2000, Kabila launched a series of attacks against the South African government at the DRC conference in New York, claiming that it

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<sup>149</sup> In the paper "The Operationalisation of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security", p. 2, Bremmer states, "The false perception that diplomatic attempts to resolve conflict are slow and ineffective still prevails in several SADC states.... All conflicts eventually end in a peace treaty or some form of negotiated settlement. It is therefore contended that 'military solutions' to a conflict are a contradiction in terms".

<sup>150</sup> Selebi, Building collaborative security in Southern Africa, p. 12.

<sup>151</sup> Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee, 13 September 1999, Democratic Republic of Congo: Briefing by Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad. For further details of the principles set out in the Lusaka agreement, see Appendix 7.

<sup>152</sup> Statement by President Mbeki in Parliament, 10 May 2000.

<sup>153</sup> Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee, 15 February 2000, African Briefing By Foreign Minister Zuma.



was biased in favour of the rebel forces, and that he therefore could not accept South African participation in a future peace-keeping force. Zuma strongly denied these allegations and stated that the South African government was in favour of the accord. According to newspaper sources, the conflict arose because Kabila was being frustrated by South Africa's commitment to a negotiated settlement. He believed that the South African commitments to a negotiated settlement undermined the backing being given to the DRC government within the SADC. Another objective of his attack was to weaken the South African diplomatic position, in which he was temporarily successful.<sup>154</sup> The impression that Kabila wanted to delay the deployment of UN forces was strengthened when, on 4 January 2001, the official radio in Kinshasa announced that the Congolese people "should get ready for the final battle against Uganda and Rwanda". Kabila's assassination on 16 January 2001 therefore had a direct and positive effect on the peace efforts.<sup>155</sup> The new President, Joseph Kabila, Laurent's son, had a more open approach towards the rebel movements, which led to an initial dialogue between the parties. South Africa played an important role in facilitating contacts between the Kinshasa government and the rebels, and the South African strategy of trying to bring together all actors in the conflict appears to have been relatively successful.<sup>156</sup>

### **8.3.1: The Inter-Congolese Dialogue**

The conflict in the DRC has many layers and interlinked elements, which has made it difficult to broker any peace agreements. According to Ambassador Swing, the UN Secretary General's special representative to the DRC, the peace process in the DRC must be understood as consisting of three phases: first the negotiations in Lusaka, which led to an agreement on principle for the withdrawal of foreign troops, signed in July 1999; the second the Pretoria/Sun City negotiations or Inter Congolese Dialogue (ICD), ending in April 2002 with a partial peace agreement; and third what he terms the Kinshasa phase, that is, the implementation phase.<sup>157</sup>

The 1999 Lusaka agreement provided the basis for the withdrawal of foreign forces from the DRC, but it did not settle issues concerning the domestic conflict. The ICD resulted from the Lusaka agreement: it was initiated in Addis Ababa in October 2001 with active South African involvement, but subsequently suspended again.<sup>158</sup> However, it soon became clear that the required resources and framework for the

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<sup>154</sup> Mthembu-Salter, Kabila pushes SA on to back foot, *Daily Mail & Guardian*, 28 Jan 2000, p. 3.

<sup>155</sup> UNSG 7th report on MONUC 17 April 2001, p. 11.

<sup>156</sup> See also UNSG 7th report on MONUC, 17 April 2001 for further details of South Africa's role.

<sup>157</sup> Swing, in Malan and Porto, eds., *Challenges of Peace Implementation*, p. 2.

<sup>158</sup> Presentation by the South African DFA to the Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee, 16 April 2003.

negotiations were not in place, so the ICD was relocated to Sun City and partly financed by South Africa.

The negotiations were to be all inclusive under the supervision of the former South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma and Sir Masire Ketumile, who was appointed mediator by the SADC. A clear timeframe for the negotiations was agreed by all the parties.<sup>159</sup> The negotiations started on 25 February 2002 in the South African resort of Sun City and were scheduled to last for 45 days. However, the negotiations were prolonged and did not end until 18 April 2002, when a peace agreement between the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC) and the Kabila government was signed. Despite a late intervention by President Mbeki, the Rwanda-backed Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma (RCD-Goma) and a coalition of civil society groups refused to sign the agreement. This was partly due to heavy pressure from Rwanda, which wanted assurances from the Kabila government concerning the Hutu rebel forces operating in the Kivus, but also because of disagreements concerning the arrangements for power sharing during the transitional phase. Foreign Minister Zuma stated the following in parliament concerning the Sun City agreement:

The recently concluded Inter-Congolese Dialogue in Sun City provides the necessary impetus for the inclusive process towards peace and stability. Only an all-inclusive agreement that will lead to the re-unification of the Congo and a transition to democracy will create sustainable peace and spare the war-weary people of Congo more hardship. We are pleased that the Security Council has re-affirmed the importance of the inclusive Inter-Congolese Dialogue as the only way forward in the DRC.<sup>160</sup>

In her speech to Parliament in May 2002, Foreign Minister Zuma thus underlined that the government's strategy of all-inclusive negotiations had been and still was the only way forward in finding a lasting peace. In the months following the Sun City conference, the South African government, with President Mbeki in charge, worked hard to bring the remaining groups into such an agreement. This objective was only reached after a bilateral agreement had been signed between Rwanda and the DRC government concerning the conditions for the withdrawal of the Rwandan troops in the summer of 2002. Joint South African and UN-led negotiations were resumed in

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<sup>159</sup> In the UN handbook on international peace missions, it is stressed that 'the importance of a clear agreement on the process of the negotiations is extremely important'. Handbook on UN Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, p. 26.

<sup>160</sup> F.M.D. Zuma in her budget speech, 28 May 2002.

South Africa in October 2002 and were finalised with the signing of the so-called Global and All Inclusive Agreement in Pretoria on 17 December 2002. This provided for the establishment of a transitional government with Joseph Kabila<sup>161</sup> as president and four vice-presidents, each representing one of the two major factions, the government and civil society. The central areas of responsibility were also divided between the main parties. Multiparty elections were scheduled for June 2005, but have been postponed to July 2006 and eventually took place in late 2006.

One of the problems that has continued to impede the peace process in the DRC is the Kabila government's inability to fulfil its obligations towards Rwanda as agreed in the so-called 'Pretoria agreement' signed on 30 July 2002. As part of this agreement, Rwanda had withdrawn its troops by 5 October 2002, but so far the DRC government has proved incapable of disarming Hutu rebel forces in the eastern DRC.<sup>162</sup> This was one of the reasons why in December 2004 Rwanda for a short period of time chose to redeploy troops into northern Kivu. Another reason, however, was to secure Rwanda's significant economic interests in Kivu. The Kabila government's problem has been that it does not control Northern Kivu, and for a long time the RCD-G would not let the FARDC operate in that area. However, during 2005, joint MONUC and FARDC operations were launched in the two Kivu provinces to disarm the foreign groups operating from this area, mainly the Rwandan rebel group, the FDLR, and the Ugandan group, ADF/NALU.

### **8.3.2: Implementation of the Peace Agreement**

A central element in the peace agreements reached between the parties in the conflict relates to the disarmament, demobilisation, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration (DDR(RR)) of both foreign and domestic combatants. The DDR(RR) process has in several cases been deemed pivotal to ending the conflict and the instability in the eastern part of the DRC. In a report drafted by the UN Security Council in 2001 it is stated that

The disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement of armed groups is the key to ending the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Resolving the remaining problems would remove any need for foreign troops to remain in the east of the country, immeasurably improve the security and quality of economic life for the area's

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<sup>161</sup> Became President in January 2001 after the assassination of his father.

<sup>162</sup> Presentation by the South African DFA to the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, 16 April 2003.

inhabitants, and neutralize a dangerous source of conflict and instability in the region.<sup>163</sup>

South Africa has from the outset been closely involved in this process as part of the oversight and verification committees. As we have already seen, the South African involvement must be seen as consisting of three interlinked parallel tracks, one being the mediating role, another its participation in the UN PSO mission in the DRC, MONUC, and the third post-conflict reconstruction, for instance the screening and training of the new army, also known as Operation Teutonic. The close link between the second and third aspects must be sought in the areas of the DDRRR of the foreign fighters and the DDR process of the domestic non-statutory forces, numbering an estimated 300,000 combatants, and the subsequent agreement between South Africa, Belgium and the DRC on assistance in forming and training a new army.<sup>164</sup> However, the DDR(RR) process has progressed much more slowly than initially expected. The continued instability, especially in the eastern DRC, has meant that the combatants have been reluctant to hand in their weapons.<sup>165</sup> According to the South African Military Attaché, the DRC lacks the necessary resources to perform the process. At the political level, the actors in the transitional government have so far dragged their feet in creating the required institutional framework. The law for the new army, for instance, was not passed until October 2004 after long negotiations, more than a year after the formation of the new transitional parliament and government.<sup>166</sup> According to the South African Ambassador to the DRC, there is disagreement between the UN and the South African government concerning the DDRRR mandate provided for in resolution 1565.<sup>167</sup> In the minutes attached to the resolution it is stated that:

The Mission was...tasked with ensuring the protection of civilians, including humanitarian personnel, under imminent threat of physical violence, and to seize or collect the arms and any related materiel whose presence in the territory of the country violated measures imposed by resolution....The Mission

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<sup>163</sup> UN, Report of the Security Council Mission to the Great Lakes Region, New York, 15-26 May 2001, p. 16.

<sup>164</sup> However, the figure of 300.000 is distorted and a large number of these are so-called ghost soldiers. The purpose of this is a widespread attempt in the DRC by the officer level to secure an extra income by collecting the salary from these ghost-soldiers. It is estimated that up to two thirds of the 300.000 are in fact ghost soldiers.

<sup>165</sup> Interview with the South African Military Attaché in the DRC, Lt. Col. Jack Khanye, 1 November 2004, at the South African Embassy in Kinshasa.

<sup>166</sup> One of the main problems in the DRC transitional phase has been that the judicial process in parliament has been delayed. Part of the reason for this has been that, of the 500 members of the National Assembly, only an estimated 20% can expect to get re-elected to the new democratic parliament, which means that they have had a significant interest in delaying the transitional process and thus the planned election.

<sup>167</sup> Interview with South African Ambassador to the DRC, 3 November 2004, in Kinshasa.

was also tasked with...supporting operations to disarm foreign combatants led by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.<sup>168</sup>

The disagreement was concerned with how to interpret the mandate concerning the use of coercion in disarming primarily the so-called foreign fighters in the DRC. South Africa argued in favour of a more robust strategy, while the MONUC leadership has rejected this as impractical. UN officials argued that since the Rwandan army, with a stronger force, was unable to do this, it would be impossible for a smaller UN force. In September 2004, the UN SC expanded MONUC by an additional 5900 soldiers and the force reached a figure of 16,700, making it the largest UN mission, with an estimated budget of USD 900 million.<sup>169</sup> The South African ambassador, on the other hand, argued that there was no sense of reality in the DDR(RR) section in MONUC HQ, because the Hutu rebels would never give up their weapons voluntarily.<sup>170</sup> South Africa is not alone in supporting forcible disarmament. After the January 2005 meeting in Gabon, the AU Peace and Security Council likewise stated in a communiqué that it favoured the forcible disarmament of the estimated 10,000 Hutu rebels operating in the eastern DRC, if necessary by means of an AU force.<sup>171</sup> However, in February 2005, MONUC altered its strategy as a response to an attack that killed nine UN peacekeepers, and attacked a militia compound in the Northern Ituri Province, killing some sixty local militia members. This has turned out to be a turning point in the UN approach to the question of disarmament in the DRC, especially in Ituri province. The operation was conducted by Pakistani, Indian and South African forces, which are arguably among the most capable forces in MONUC.<sup>172</sup> However, MONUC is generally faced with similar kinds of problems that have plagued the UN since the failures in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia in the early 1990s, namely that the majority of the forces made available to the MONUC are third-world soldiers who are badly trained, ill-disciplined and insufficiently equipped.<sup>173</sup> Taking this and the South African government's stated strategy of peaceful means

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<sup>168</sup> UNSC Resolution 1565, New York, 30 September 2004.

<sup>169</sup> However, this is still short of the more than 23,000 recommended by the UN. The force number provided by Resolution 1565 was in reality short of the proposed Kasai and Katanga brigades. Interview with Dep. Dir. Policy Grignon, 2 November 2004, in UN HQ in Kinshasa, and UN SC Resolution 1565, 30 September 2004. However, the force number was increased again by 300 soldiers through Resolution 1635 of 28 October 2005, though it is still far below the figure requested by the Secretary General.

<sup>170</sup> Interview with South African Ambassador to the DRC, 3 November 2004, in Kinshasa. MONUC has estimated that one of the problems with the FDLR is the tight discipline with which the organisation is run by its commanders, meaning that, even if individual members of the FDLR wanted to disarm and repatriate to Rwanda, it would be difficult for them to leave the FDLR. At worst, they risk being shot by their own commanders.

<sup>171</sup> The exact size of the FDLR is unknown, but MONUC has estimated the figure to be around 10,000 fighters.

<sup>172</sup> See Chapter 5 for further details of the categorisation and capacity of the different contributors to UN missions.

<sup>173</sup> This does not even mention the language barrier, which creates tremendous problems during operations. Another issue is the frequent lack of fit between a mandate and the resources made available to that mandate.

into consideration, it may seem strange that the South African government favoured forcible disarmament.

#### **8.4: South Africa's Military Contribution to MONUC**

South Africa will not commit itself to participating in any peace mission which is patently under-resourced and which does not have sufficient means to achieve the set mandate.<sup>174</sup>

The South African contribution to MONUC could be seen as a natural extension of the involvement in creating a negotiated political solution in the DRC. The country's participation in MONUC and the important role it played in drafting the Lusaka peace treaty could be seen as a test of its foreign-policy strategy as regards promoting political settlements supported by both military and civilian peace-keeping and reconstruction efforts.<sup>175</sup> Its involvement should be seen as being located in the nexus between economic development interests and security concerns, which, within the new South African national security strategy, are issues that can only be separated with difficulty. In the White Paper on Peace Missions, it is stated that South Africa has an obligation to contribute to UN PSOs, especially on the African continent.<sup>176</sup> One of the conditions emphasised in the White Paper is that a clear exit strategy must be included as part of any mandate for an operation. However, as regards MONUC, the government was so determined to make a contribution that it chose to ignore these guidelines.<sup>177</sup> It was felt more important that South Africa should be present in the DRC than to abide by its own recommendations put forward in the White Paper on Peace Missions, especially that the mandate should be sufficient to achieve the objective, that all parties have already signed a peace agreement, and that clear entry and exit strategies exist. The initial South African commitment to the MONUC operation was limited, consisting primarily of support functions which minimised the potential risks for the SANDF forces and the political risks for the government. However, since the expansion of the South African contribution in 2003 within a chapter VII mandate, thus allowing the use of all necessary means, the potential risks to South African forces have increased.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> DFA, South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions. 1999, p. 17.

<sup>175</sup> In many respects, this resembles the so-called Nordic peacemaking strategy that dominated the UN's approach to peacekeeping, especially during the Cold War. For further details, see, for instance, Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations*.

<sup>176</sup> DFA, South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, pp. 13f.

<sup>177</sup> President Mbeki, State of the Nation Address, South African Parliament, Cape Town, 4 May 2000.

<sup>178</sup> Casualty capacity is an important element in this equation because the South African public has turned out to

MONUC has been too limited in scope to fulfil its mandate, and the risk of a resumption of fighting is a real one.<sup>179</sup> The SANDF and the government was aware of this and stated in Defence Joint committee in March 2003 that South Africa would probably have to deploy an additional battalion, but did not have the resources to do so.<sup>180</sup> The fact that MONUC is a potentially dangerous mission for the deployed contingent was, for instance, underlined in February 2005, when Bangladeshi soldiers were ambushed and nine were killed.<sup>181</sup>

Another lesson learned by the SANDF and South Africa is that, in missions like MONUC, the country must be expected to contribute more and play a larger role in the mission because of the poor quality of many of the other contributors. This increases the demands placed on the SANDF. The DRC case shows that the ANC government is willing to contribute more, especially in a conflict like that in the DRC, where the Pretoria government has invested a lot of political effort. At the same time, the SANDF is still faced with the capacity and resource problems mentioned previously, which are hampering the South African contribution. MONUC has shown that although the SANDF has the specialised functional capacity of a lead nation, it lacks the resources, in terms of both personnel and funding, to keep these functions operational. Some of this has to do with the reduced defence budget, but much of it must be blamed on structural and administrative deficiencies within the force itself. As Len Le Roux has argued is it difficult for the SANDF to call for additional finances when it has not dealt properly with its own structural problems.<sup>182</sup> The updating of the Defence Review and the White Paper on Peace Missions will be important documents framing the future role and capacity of the SANDF.

#### **8.4.1: Expectations and Realities of the South African Military Contribution to MONUC**

Even though South Africa is considered a regional power and has played a pivotal role in the drafting of the peace agreements in the DRC etc., the SANDF has been unable to live up to the initial expectations of the military leaders in MONUC HQ in Kinshasa. Its standards of training, discipline and equipment have turned out to be not much better than troops from the other African contributors.<sup>183</sup> This fits badly with

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be relatively sensitive to combat losses. Experience from the joint South African/Botswana intervention into Lesotho, Operation Boleas, in 1998 is very educational in that respect.

<sup>179</sup> This was confirmed by the fact that the UNSG did not receive the requested number of troops to MONUC under Resolution 1565.

<sup>180</sup> Minutes from the Joint Committee on Defence, White Paper On Peacekeeping: Discussion 26 March 2003

<sup>181</sup> By 1 April 2005 MONUC had had 45 fatalities since 1999.

<sup>182</sup> Interview with Len Le Roux at ISS October 2004

<sup>183</sup> Interview in MONUC HQ with Lt. Col. Iffland, MA to the Force Commander. November 2004

the government's stated political ambitions in terms of wanting to make significant contributions and thus make a difference by setting an example for others to follow. The conduct of the SANDF forces, especially when off duty, has become an embarrassment to the authorities in Pretoria, who have attempted to play down the seriousness of the situation in the local media. However, a parliamentary report of November 2005 concluded that the SANDF represents South Africa in the DRC and should therefore conduct itself in a professional manner. However, this has not always been the case.<sup>184</sup> Again this confirms the picture of a force that is not living up to the standards expected of it.

SANDF forces in the DRC have been deployed with equipment that has been declared 'non-operational' by several UN inspections, and vital strategic components are not available.<sup>185</sup> For instance, thirteen of the eighteen South African Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC)<sup>186</sup> deployed in the DRC in August 2004 were declared non-operational due to maintenance problems.<sup>187</sup> This pattern was confirmed at a re-inspection conducted in November 2004.<sup>188</sup> This picture was confirmed by the oversight visit by the Portfolio Committee on Defence, which in its report of November 2005, stated that the SANDF could not maintain its equipment, meaning that it forfeited its reimbursement from the UN for the equipment.<sup>189</sup> This indicates that the declared political commitment is not being followed up by actual commitment on the ground. Warrant Officer I (WO I) André Meier of the South African Special Forces stated that the problems faced by the forces in the DRC were merely a reflection of the day-to-day problems faced by the SANDF in South Africa.<sup>190</sup> The forces in the DRC are deployed with equipment that is not up to date in terms of maintenance, and a large percentage of it is deemed 'unserviceable'. Several UN expectation teams have declared the SA forces in MONUC non-operational, primarily

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<sup>184</sup> Report of the Portfolio Committee's oversight visit to the DRC, p. 7.

<sup>185</sup> Interview in MONUC HQ with Lt. Col. Iffland, MA to the Force Commander, and SANDF WO I A. Meier, member of the UN inspection team, in Camp Iveco, 11 November 2004.

<sup>186</sup> The Casspir armoured personnel carrier is the main vehicle used by the SANDF. This APC has been used by the force since 1980 and was battle-proved in Angola during the liberation/border wars. The quality of this APC was confirmed recently when Russia bought a hundred Casspirs because of its unique protection against mines.

<sup>187</sup> These inspections are part of standard UN routines, where deployed forces are inspected at least once every six months in order to check their force readiness (FR) levels. Furthermore, the UN inspects the state of the equipment during a separate inspection. During the two most recent FR inspections, the South African forces were found to be in an unsatisfactory state. Apart from the non-operational APCs, the camp was insufficiently protected, the soldiers had no bullet-proof vests or batteries for their binoculars, did not know their operational orders and procedures etc. The soldiers' personal equipment was also not in order and several soldiers did not have local area maps, medical kits, mortar grid maps etc. Interviews in MONUC HQ with Lt. Col. Iffland, MA to the Force Commander, and WO I Meier, member of the UN inspection team, 11 November 2004.

<sup>188</sup> Interview with SANDF WO I A. Meier, member of the UN inspection team, in Camp Iveco 11 November 2004.

<sup>189</sup> Report of the Portfolio Committee's oversight visit to the DRC, p. 6.

<sup>190</sup> Interview with SANDF WO I A. Meier, member of the UN inspection team, in Camp Iveco, 11 November 2004. This can also be confirmed by reading several SANDF reports and briefings on this issue. See also Chapter 4



because their equipment was not operational or particular strategic components were not available.<sup>191</sup> The MA to Force Commander MONUC, Lt. Col. Iffland, even argued that the South African government did not seem to take participation in MONUC seriously.<sup>192</sup> This is probably an exaggeration, but the priorities of the government have for a long time been aimed at supporting those forces on national deployment, meaning that the forces deployed on international missions are only a secondary priority and are left with only dysfunctional equipment. The major problem seems to be bottlenecks in the line of procurement in South Africa, as described in Chapter 4. If spare parts are available, delivery time is 7-21 days, if not, they often have to go out to open tender, which can take several months. Consequently, a high percentage of vehicles remain 'non- operational' for several months. The realities on the ground are in stark contrast to statements made by, for instance, Defence Minister Lekota, who in parliament argued that peacekeeping is a very serious task.<sup>193</sup> Dysfunctional equipment creates a series of problems for the South African government because the UN does not reimburse it. However, this does not affect the defence budget directly as the reimbursement does not go back into the DOD, but into the national revenue fund.<sup>194</sup> It could be argued that this removes an incentive from the cash-strapped DOD because it does not affect it directly. Nevertheless, the problem for the SANDF is that it does not have enough resources to ensure the daily maintenance of its equipment, which means that every time it has to deploy new forces, it creates an expensive maintenance backlog which must be remedied.<sup>195</sup> As part of the 2004/05 defence budget, the SANDF received an additional funding of little more than R800 million<sup>196</sup> to cover the extra costs of its international deployment. However, this figure does not cover the actual costs of the SANDF's international deployment, and the DOD has been forced to find the resources from within its normal budget, thus reducing the resources available for training and exercises. The problem for the DOD is also that as long as the department manages the resources, it has become so inefficient that it is difficult to produce a valid claim that the resources available are in fact insufficient.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Interview in MONUC HQ with Lt. Col. Iffland, MA to the Force Commander.

<sup>192</sup> Interview with Lt. Col. Iffland in MONUC HQ, 3 November 2004.

<sup>193</sup> Lekota, Statement by the Defence Minister in Parliament, South African Parliament, Cape Town, 8 June 2004.

<sup>194</sup> Indirectly it does affect the DOD because it has to apply to the National Treasury for additional funding to cover its additional costs from international deployment.

<sup>195</sup> Former SANDF Deputy Chief of Staff Admiral Trainer confirmed this at the defence hearing in Parliament in October 2004. In Defence Vote 21 2005, it is also pointed out that the maintenance backlog has left the SANDF with extraordinary expenditure.

<sup>196</sup> Approximately USD132 million; see also DOD, Briefing to the Portfolio Committee on Defence: Medium Term Budget Policy Statement, 5 November 2004.

<sup>197</sup> Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS in Pretoria, 21 October 2004.

### 8.4.2: MONUC Phase I

MONUC was formally established on 30 November 1999 as an observer mission. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan recommended in his report of 17 January 2000 (S/2000/30) that the operation in the DRC needed an initial deployment of more than 5,000 troops to protect and facilitate the work of 500 unarmed military observers.<sup>198</sup> In February 2000, in accordance with these recommendations, the UN Security Council authorised the deployment of a maximum of 5,537 peacekeepers and military observers within a chapter VII mandate.<sup>199</sup> However, deployment was delayed by continued fighting, and it was only after Laurent Kabila's assassination on 15 March 2001 that the various parties agreed to implement the Lusaka agreement and the Harare and Kampala sub-agreements, and as of 11 March 2001 only 367 troops had been deployed, including two South Africans.<sup>200</sup> This also meant that the initial deployment of MONUC forces could begin. Furthermore, it was agreed that from 22 February 2001, the foreign troops operating in the DRC had 180 days to pull out.<sup>201</sup> South African Foreign Minister Zuma argued that the deployment of peacekeepers was essential to the success of the implementation of the Lusaka peace accord. Much pressure was initially put on the South African government to contribute a contingent of troops to the MONUC deployment. According to a minute of a meeting of troop contributors on 31 May 2000, South Africa was asked to deploy a sector battalion and a helicopter unit, but chose instead to deploy specialised units such as an aero-medical evacuation team, two air-crash rescue and fire-fighting teams, six air cargo handling teams and a contingent command and support unit, making up altogether a total of a hundred personnel.<sup>202</sup>

The problem for the South African government in 2000/2001 was that the SANDF had yet to complete its transformation and integration programme, and was not prepared for conducting any international obligations. The capacity of the force was also limited by its roles in supporting domestic police operations and patrolling the national borders. This meant that more than 3,000 permanent force soldiers were deployed domestically at all times.<sup>203</sup> A third element was the focus within the White Paper on Defence and the Defence Review that defined the SANDF's primary objective narrowly as being to protect the territorial integrity of South Africa. The

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<sup>198</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, 17 January 2000 (S/2000/30).

<sup>199</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 1291, 23 February 2000.

<sup>200</sup> UNSG S/2001/373, Annex.

<sup>201</sup> As mentioned above, the Rwandan forces only left the DRC in October 2002, while the last Ugandan soldiers pulled of Ituri Province in June 2003.

<sup>202</sup> DOD Annual Report for the Financial Year 2000/2001, p. 39.

<sup>203</sup> DOD Annual Report for the Financial Year 2000/2001, p. 14.

SANDF had therefore mainly prepared for this kind of operation, not for the secondary role of participating in international missions.<sup>204</sup>

However, as already mentioned, the South African government was being subjected to increasing pressure to contribute more substantially. Foreign Minister Zuma stated that the South African contribution would be directed first by the needs of the UN and secondly by what South Africa would be able to send.<sup>205</sup> South Africa committed itself to provide whatever support it could to the MONUC operation.<sup>206</sup> The UN needed forces on the ground and specialised units, but in 2000 South Africa was only capable of providing the latter. One of the reasons why South Africa's initial contribution was so limited was that the SANDF was very reluctant to fulfil the politicians' wishes to contribute forces to international operations. The reduction in the defence budget had stretched its operational budget, and, combined with the force's still incomplete process of transformation and integration and the pressure of domestic operations, its capacity was limited.<sup>207</sup> Furthermore, did the narrow definition of the SANDF's primary task, stated in the White Paper on Defence, as protection of the territorial integrity of the state mean that all other tasks, including participation in international operations, were considered as of secondary importance? In its force planning and defence acquisition, with the blessing of the political level, the SANDF had focused on being able to conduct this primary task. However, a change appeared when Thabo Mbeki became president and started his diplomatic drive in Africa, and he did not accept the SANDF's claims that it did not have the required number of troops available. The South African government needed the SANDF to participate in international missions in order to make its own role as a peace broker credible, as well as its foreign policy drive in general. The South African Ambassador to the DRC claimed that this was a typical argument put forward by the defence force, and that it did not need any more resources.<sup>208</sup>

In December 2002, the MONUC force deployment of the mission was expanded to 8,700 in an attempt to support the implementation of the Lusaka agreement and the

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<sup>204</sup> However, in 1998 and 1999 South Africa had participated in the two SADC peace-keeping exercises, Blue Hungwe and Blue Crane. Furthermore it can be argued, as Boshoff previously pointed out, that the PSO does not differ much from the tasks that the SANDF have been undertaken in for instance Natal.

<sup>205</sup> IRIN, South Africa-DRC, p. 1.

<sup>206</sup> Address by DFA D-G Siphon M. Pityana to the SAIIA, 5 June 2000, p. 7.

<sup>207</sup> There seems to be a constant battle going on between the different government departments over how to cover the expenses of additional missions that fall outside the normal defence budget. It is very difficult for the DOD to get these extra costs reimbursed from the National Revenue Fund. Interview with SANDF Chief Director, Strategy and Planning, Rear Admiral Hauter, and Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General DOD Defence Secretariat, Mr Motumi, in the DOD, 26 November 2003.

<sup>208</sup> Interview with South African Ambassador to the DRC, 3 November 2004, in Kinshasa.

planned withdrawal of foreign forces from the DRC.<sup>209</sup> It was only after the signing of the Global and All-inclusive Peace Agreement in December 2002 and the subsequent expansion of MONUC force numbers that South Africa decided to expand its contingent with an additional 1,200 troops, primarily consisting of staff officers and infantry.

### 8.4.3: The Nature and Role of the SANDF Contingent in the DRC

In December 2004, the total South African military contribution to MONUC was 1,400 soldiers, consisting of thirteen military observers and a military contingent of 1,387 soldiers, consisting of everything from staff officers in MONUC HQ to two air cargo handling crews in Kinshasa and Mbanaga, to an infantry battalion in Kivu.<sup>210</sup> Since 2003, the South African military contribution to MONUC has consisted of:

- Task Force Headquarters
- Infantry Battalion Group:
  - Level 1 Medical Facility
  - 4 x Infantry Rifle Companies
  - 1 x Support Company
- Engineer Squadron
  - Level 1 Medical Facility
  - Construction Capability
- Ferry Unit (Engineers).
- Well Drilling Capability (Engineers).
- Military Police Unit
- Headquarters Support Unit

**Figure 8.1: SANDF troop contribution to MONUC since April 2003. Source: SA Portfolio Committee on Defence November 2005**

The South African contribution therefore consists of several specialised units which the other, predominantly third-world contributors to MONUC are unable to provide. South Africa does not have a lead role in MONUC, but the SANDF still plays an important role in MONUC, showing that on paper it has the capacity to contribute with several of the lead-nation requirements mentioned in Chapter 4.

In November 2004 during the authors visit, the South African contingent was in its fifth rotation, though several of the troops were on their second trip to the DRC due to a shortage of deployable soldiers. In November 2004, little more than 490 soldiers were stationed in Kindu, most of them in support functions, and only one company consisting of 142 regular infantry divided into three platoons. The rest consisted of a

<sup>209</sup> UNSC Resolution 1445, 4 December 2002.

<sup>210</sup> MONUC statistics and figures, updated 9/12-04. After the expansion of the mandate in September 2005 the force ceiling was increased to more than 18,000 soldiers, making MONUC the largest current UN mission.

medical unit, an engineering company and logistical support for all the SANDF troops deployed into Kivu, that is, it was responsible for all maintenance support and equipment servicing. The UN had given the infantry company the responsibility for securing Camp Basoko and the nearby airport and patrolling the mission area, which included assisting in the DDR(RR) process. In addition, one platoon from this unit functioned as a local 'Quick Reaction Force' with a maximum mobilisation time of ten minutes. The main component of the South African peace-keeping force was stationed in Goma, where the battalion commander, who exercises command over the South African infantry battalion, was stationed.<sup>211</sup> The commander for the whole South African contingent in MONUC was located in Kindu, where he had the task of being the national force provider for MONUC, that is, of functioning as the link between MONUC HQ and South Africa. As part of a larger restructuring of the MONUC mission, the role of the South African contingent was altered, and the bulk of the force moved into the Kivu provinces.

A large number of troops in the force were on their second trip to the DRC because the SANDF had missed a rotation, that is, it was unable to rotate its forces within a reasonable time span.<sup>212</sup> This was an important part of the lead-nation requirements and placed a serious questions mark over South Africa's lead-nation capacity. The ambition of rotating between three battalions has so far not proved sustainable, and experience from other forces around the world shows that even this frequency of rotation is unsustainable in the long run.<sup>213</sup> However, the first MSDS recruits<sup>214</sup> have been deployed, which has already significantly increased the capacity of the SANDF to provide troops. The revival of the reserve force has also meant that the reserve force units have been deployed to the DRC, replacing permanent force members. For the sake of stability in central Africa and its own influence and prestige, during the first couple of years of deployment in MONUC the South African government has found it more important to be present in the DRC than to abide by its own recommendations as set out in the 1999 White Paper on Peace Missions.

### **8.5: South African Lessons Learned from Participation in MONUC**

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<sup>211</sup> However, as mentioned above, the SANDF forces were to be moved to Kindu as a consequence of UNSC Resolution 1565. Another consequence of Resolution 1565 was that the military structure was to be divided into an Western and a Eastern military HQ.

<sup>212</sup> See Chapter 4 for further details of this issue.

<sup>213</sup> For further details of the structural problems within the SANDF, see Chapter 4.

<sup>214</sup> See Chapter 4 for further details of the MSDS programme.

It is also the responsibility of the Government to ensure that our peacekeepers are adequately equipped and that they receive the logistic support that is necessary to fulfill their mandate. The Government must take into account the true capacity of the SANDF before committing itself to international peacekeeping initiatives. Extending the mandate of the SANDF without proportionate funding is dangerous. To put it plainly, the SANDF is overstretched.<sup>215</sup>

Two immediate lessons have emerged from the ongoing South African deployment as part of MONUC. The first is that operationally the SANDF is overburdened and has so far found it difficult to keep the contingent operational while in mission. The SANDF no longer has the high military standards that the former SADF was (in-)famous for during the apartheid era. This has been a disappointment to the military leadership in MONUC, who had high expectations of the South African contribution. Ironically, only a relatively small additional commitment from the Pretoria government is needed in order to bring the equipment to functional order. However, the second lesson is that strategically the government does not deem the SANDF contribution to the combined effort in the DRC as being important enough to commit significantly extra funding to cover its additional costs from participation in international PSOs, since other pressing political issues are being prioritised by the ANC government. This means that the DOD must cope with the resources it has.<sup>216</sup> An interesting example concerning the government's priorities can be found in the DOD procurement system. One of the main reasons why the DOD is experiencing equipment problems in the DRC is because it cannot acquire the spare parts it needs. It can take from one to seven months to get spare parts from South Africa because government regulations stipulate that the DOD must place orders through open tendering, favouring black empowerment companies, which often have longer delivery times, thus prolonging the acquisition process.<sup>217</sup> This shows that the government considers it more important to pursue a black empowerment policy than ensure the fastest delivery time for spare parts for SANDF forces.

With respect to the criticism that the SANDF has received during its deployment in the DRC, Defence Minister Lekota stated in Parliament that he and the Department

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<sup>215</sup> Sayedali-Shah, Statement by Democratic Alliance spokesman on defence To the South African Parliament, Cape Town, 8 June 2004.

<sup>216</sup> In 2004, the DOD's budget constituted 1.6 % of South Africa's GDP, which is low compared to other SADC countries, or approximately R20 billion, i.e. USD 3.6 billion. Admittedly this debate concerning resources for PSOs is not unique to South Africa.

<sup>217</sup> Interview with SANDF WO I A. Meier, member of the UN inspection team, in Camp Iveco, 11 November 2004.

had received no reports from the UN concerning the SANDF's conduct and that "the SANDF was held in high esteem".<sup>218</sup> Taking into consideration the unsatisfactory force readiness, the ongoing investigations of sexual abuse investigation against SANDF personnel and the MONUC force commanders' complaints about the disciplinary record of SANDF troops, Lekota's statement may sound strange, even as an attempt to cover up the realities on the ground. One of the excuses used to explain the inadequate performance of the SANDF was that it was in the middle of a learning process, that is, learning how to function and operate in a UN PSO.<sup>219</sup> However, by November 2004, the South African forces in the DRC were in their fifth rotation, and several soldiers were stationed there for the second time due to rotation problems. Some even had experience of the Burundi mission. The SANDF cannot indefinitely claim to be 'inexperienced' and in the middle of a learning process. There must be a critical problem when the problems continue to resurface. Furthermore it also, because of the continued disciplinary problems, seems as if the officers continue to lack the capacity to exercise what the British Army calls 'good order and control'.<sup>220</sup> The SANDF does not, for instance, have what the British army calls 'the two-can principle', to pre-empt disciplinary problems caused by alcohol.<sup>221</sup>

In October 2004, the SANDF battalion commander, Col. Greyling, was summoned to Kinshasa by the MONUC force commander, who ordered the South African contingent to introduce strict disciplinary measures. Several cases involving South African soldiers were being processed by the military legal system during the author's visit in October-November 2004. Involvement in prostitution, excessive use of alcohol and violence were frequent occurrences. The lesson of MONUC seems to be that the problems facing the SANDF back in South Africa also occur during deployment. The financial constraints reduce the SANDF's capacity to operate, negatively influencing morale. This has to be combined with the poor health standards and the problematic force structure, which reduces the rotation interval.<sup>222</sup> Discipline is a serious issue that the defence leadership needs to take full responsibility for and deal with

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<sup>218</sup> Lekota, Statement by Defence Minister to the South African Parliament, Cape Town, 8 June 2004.

<sup>219</sup> This was stated both by the South African military attaché in Kinshasa and the commander of the SANDF contingent.

<sup>220</sup> In MONUC HQ in Kinshasa, the SANDF are known for having the worst disciplinary record in the entire mission. Interview in MONUC HQ with Lt. Col. Ifland, MA to the Force Commander. Two South African soldiers are to be charged in a pending sexual abuse case run by the UN, and a number of other soldiers have had to be repatriated.

<sup>221</sup> The two-can principle means that if a soldier drinks more than two cans of beer and gets into trouble, it will be considered his fault.

<sup>222</sup> The tooth to tail ratio have left too large a percentage of the force in support and staff functions, Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS in Pretoria 21 October 2004.

effectively.<sup>223</sup> On the positive side, it could be said that the SANDF has proved to be capable of operating within a UN mission and to be an effective force in an operational environment.

### **8.6: Concluding Remarks: Is South Africa's Involvement in the DRC Conflict a Government Priority?**

South Africa, working through the UN and OAU, is very involved in finding a long-term solution that will ensure stability in the DRC. This stability will allow the economic potential of the entire region to be recognised.<sup>224</sup>

South Africa's involvement in the DRC must be understood within the context of domestic politics. Economic inequality, unemployment and slow rates of economic growth have made it a priority for the ANC government to create peace and stability in southern Africa as a means to pave the way for trade and economic growth through a strategy of short-term investments for long-term gains.<sup>225</sup> Foreign Minister Zuma has argued in Parliament that South Africa's future depends on an Africa that is peaceful, democratic, free and prosperous.<sup>226</sup> Another aspect of this is South Africa's ambition to contain the conflict and prevent it from spilling over the DRC's borders, and thus to prevent the migration of refugees and illegal emigrants from the region into South Africa. The South African military attaché to the DRC argued that the government has tried to create a new policy framework for security in southern Africa as means of attracting new foreign direct investment. All these issues are integral parts of what constitute South Africa's national security.<sup>227</sup>

The war in the DRC and South Africa's involvement in finding a solution to it have consequently gained importance in the domestic political debate in South Africa. The news media contain more or less daily reports from the DRC, which of course has increased since the deployment of South African troops there in 2001. Interestingly enough, there seems to be a general consensus in Parliament on the need for South Africa to contribute to African PSOs. The government's argument, that political

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<sup>223</sup> See, for instance, statement by Maj. Gen. van Rensburg during the DOD's briefing of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, 25 February 2005.

<sup>224</sup> DFA, South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions.

<sup>225</sup> Clark, *The African Stakes of the Congo War*, p. 169.

<sup>226</sup> Foreign Minister Zuma in Parliament during the debate on the State of the Nation Address, South African Parliament, Cape Town, 16 February 2005.

<sup>227</sup> Interview with the South African Military Attaché in the DRC, Lt. Col. Jack Khanye, 1 November 2004 at the South African Embassy in Kinshasa.



solutions cannot be reached with military means, has broad support in Parliament.<sup>228</sup> The former Chief of Staff of the SADF, Gen. Constant Viljoen, argued in Parliament concerning the DRC that:

The military solution is not the solution to this problem. Hopefully time, stability and responsibility can be bought with that, but then, in my opinion, much more than four battalions of troops should be sent there. Without the real political solution the military effort will be a waste of money.<sup>229</sup>

Even though Viljoen recognises the government's approach, he is also warning the ANC leadership that the military contribution could be a waste of money if a political solution has not been found. South Africa seems to be caught between two major security incentives. On the political level, there seems to be an increased recognition and acceptance of what can be termed the special South African responsibility as the dominant regional power.<sup>230</sup> However, the opposition parties argue that the ANC government needs to consider the number of missions it commits itself to, as resources are still needed for domestic security.<sup>231</sup> This stresses the basic problem currently facing South Africa because any increased involvement in international missions requires increased resources or a reprioritisation of the SANDF's tasks, while the government still has to deal with unsolved crime pandemics domestically and must therefore constantly balance domestic and foreign policy concerns.

By formulating involvement in such situations as the DRC and Burundi as an aspect of what constitutes national security, the government has rhetorically attempted to increase the importance of these referent objects and remove them from the realm of what constitutes 'normal' politics and into being securitised. However, the audience, here primarily understood as political parties, research communities and the media, accepts that South Africa has an obligation to deploy into African PSOs, but has refused to securitize the deployment. There has been an increased focus on and prioritisation of the SANDF's international deployment, but this has remained within the realm of what constitutes 'normal politics'. International deployment differs significantly from the guidelines put forward in the defence white paper and the

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<sup>228</sup> Leon, Democratic Alliance Leader's statement during the debate in the South African Parliament, Cape Town, 8 February 2000.

<sup>229</sup> Viljoen's statement during the debate on the South African troop contribution to the DRC, South African Parliament, Cape Town, 10 May 2000.

<sup>230</sup> Interview with South Africa's Military Attaché in the DRC, Lt. Col. Jack Khanye, 1 November 2004, at the South African Embassy in Kinshasa.

<sup>231</sup> Sayedali-Shah, Statement by Democratic Alliance spokesman on defence in the South African Parliament, Cape Town, 8 June 2004.

subsequent defence review, where national security was defined as something that more or less ended at the national borders.<sup>232</sup> The deployment of the SANDF in the DRC and Burundi shows that, despite the government's attempt to present participation in international missions as part of what constitutes national security, it is merely part of a foreign-policy strategy.

This also shows the political consensus which exists in South Africa concerning the shift away from the old 'pariah' role which characterised apartheid South Africa's international relations into the role of a benign peacemaker which has an obligation to play a constructive role in solving the conflicts in Africa. This is due to both normative political considerations and the future economic interests of South Africa itself. The result of the political consensus has been seen on several occasions, when the government, personified first by Mandela, then Zuma and Thabo Mbeki, has had a pivotal role in brokering the Lusaka and Sun City Agreements. South Africa has subsequently signed a number of bilateral agreements with the Kabila-led government, including the future training of the army. South African businesses have started to invest heavily in the DRC in areas such as mobile telephone networks, energy and mining.

However, South African involvement in the DRC on all levels has been conducted within the framework of what, on a continuum, constitutes 'normal politics'. The country's involvement has no direct bearing on the short-term 'survival' of the South African state, and the issues have not been 'securitised' in South African political debates. The attempts to declare the conflict in the DRC as an integral part of 'national security' is in reality not security in terms of securitisation, but an expression of political interest. What the South African involvement illustrates is a conscious foreign-policy strategy in which South Africa increasingly sees its future economic growth and development as closely intertwined with that of the continent as a whole. The country's involvement in the DRC is part of a strategy to stabilise the continent in order to create peace and markets for South Africa, but not to the extent that the government has to use extraordinary means. The importance and prestige that the South African government places on its involvement in the DRC was also seen when it decided to contribute a helicopter unit to the European Union/French-led Operation

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<sup>232</sup> The DA, for instance, argues that the SDP should be replaced by a focus on preparing the SANDF for PSOs. The UDM called for an increased focus on the HR issues within the forces instead of the present focus on new equipment. Debate in Parliament, 8 June 2004.

Artemis in mid 2003 into Ituri province to prevent a potential genocide from occurring.<sup>233</sup>

The South African government's decision to deploy troops to MONUC must be understood not just as a part of a general commitment, but also as a clear foreign-policy statement indicating that South Africa wants to take responsibility for its tasks in the UN and the world in general. Choosing to be part of MONUC is also a way of serving South Africa's national interests in the sense that its future development is intertwined with development generally in Africa. There is by nature no direct link between the contribution to the UN mission and South African involvement in the DRC, something that the UN officials in MONUC were very keen to stress.<sup>234</sup> Nevertheless, the South African government has repeatedly stressed that its involvement, diplomatic, political, and military, in the DRC is part of an overall strategy to create peace and stability on the continent, a necessary condition for the creation of economic growth and development. This was, for instance, argued in the White Paper on Peace Missions, which states that any form of participation in peace operations is an extension of South African foreign policy.<sup>235</sup> This is a significant change in the role previously played by the South African Armed Forces. Prior to 1994, they were used to destabilise the apartheid state's enemies. However, the South African government's involvement in the peace negotiations in the DRC also has strong aspects of economic and political power, as underlined by Dr. Jordan's, statement above concerning South Africa's diplomatic role in the DRC. South Africa's involvement in the DRC is therefore also a statement to the international community that South Africa can and will play its role as a regional power, though always within the framework of normal politics. Nevertheless, South Africa's foreign policy is faced with problems because so far its military contribution to the UN mission in the DRC has had trouble living up to the standards set by the UN. While the government's diplomatic efforts have shown its ability and capacity to play the role of the new regional power, its military participation has shown the limitations on its current dominant position and the apparent discrepancy between operational realities and

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<sup>233</sup> On 30 May 2003, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1484, which authorised deployment of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia until September to contribute to the stabilisation of the security and humanitarian situation there, with the authority to take all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate. The UNSC requested the Secretary General to deploy a tactical brigade-size force in Ituri District as soon as possible, including the reinforced MONUC presence in Bunia by mid-August 2003 to replace the interim force. It also requested the Secretary General to deploy MONUC military observers in North and South Kivu and Ituri in order to report regularly on the position of armed groups, the presence of foreign military forces and information concerning arms supplies.

<sup>234</sup> For instance, interviews with Director for DDRRR Peter Swarbrig, 29 October 2004, and Dep. Dir. Policy Grignon, 2 November 2004, at MONUC HQ in Kinshasa.

<sup>235</sup> DFA, South African White Paper on Participation in International Peace Missions, p. 30.

South Africa's foreign-policy ambitions. The SANDF's involvement in the DRC amply indicates that in its current state it, using the lead nation criteria lined out in Chapter 4, does not possess the capacity to act as the lead nation for future African-led peace missions. South African involvement in the DRC has therefore been educational in the sense that it illustrates how South Africa's role and influence has expanded since the mid-1990s, but it also shows how the government has become dependent on the SANDF in winning and maintaining this influence. However, if the SANDF is to secure the 'African Renaissance', the politicians need to prioritise both its needs and the tasks given to it. The government and the DOD still have the chance to improve the reputation its current military commitment has undermined. This requires the will and the courage to cope with and act on the problems at hand, something no one has been willing to do so far.

To sum up the South African contribution to MONUC illustrate that the seven principles outlined in Chapter 5 only partly has been followed. The government has committed South Africa to an open-ended mission, where there have been disagreements between the UN and South Africa concerning the interpretation of the mandate in relation to the use of force. Furthermore, the mission has for a long time lacked the necessary resources undertaking the task at hand which means that UN forces have been spread thinly across the DRC, increasing the risks to the deployed forces. The SANDF has failed to live up to its part of the wet-lease agreement with the UN, and are therefore not entitled to reimbursement for the non-operational equipment. This again reflects negatively on the means part of the seven criteria. Domestically there has been mandate for the mission, but needed funding has not been in place. The regional cooperation element has on the civilian side been seen as part of the South African mediation involvement within the SADC and regional framework. On the military side it can be argued that the DRC incidence illustrate that where regional disagreement existed concerning the handling of the situation during the so-called SADC intervention in 1998, by 2006 this was replaced by plans of deploying a joint SADC force as part of MONUC.

## **Chapter Nine: The Three Cases and the South African Experience of International Peace Missions**

### ***9.1: Introduction***

As shown in the last three chapters South Africa is today a big contributor to international PSOs. The SANDF has since the initiation of Operation Boleas in 1998 become an increasingly important tool in the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy. This chapter will attempt to sum up the findings from the three case studies, and especially what can be inferred from these findings. This will be done in the following way. In the first part of the chapter the findings will be ordered schematically structured according to seven criteria listed in chapter 5, and one more general criteria dealing with the role of the government and the SANDF. The chapter then moves on to describe what the three cases say about the manner in which the government have used the SANDF, and finally the chapter concludes by investigating what the cases say about the lead nation capacity of the SANDF.

### ***9.2: Lessons Learned from the Three Cases***

The three cases provide some important insights into South Africa's use of the military tool in its conduct of foreign policy since 1994, and especially its capacity to undertake this role. As mentioned earlier, this is an area which is undergoing rapid change, and therefore the cases can only give an indication of how the situation has developed since 1994 to mid 2006, and point to some of the possible pitfalls that lie ahead. The chosen cases have also provided the political level with some important lessons concerning what can be expected of the SANDF as a foreign-policy tool, but especially what it cannot do. This has been important in the whole debate over the role of the defence force in post-apartheid South Africa. For the SANDF, the increased deployment to international PSOs has constituted both an opportunity and a challenge. It was an opportunity, as it created a 'raison d'être' for the force, exemplified by Nyanda's statement that there will be no renaissance without military muscle and consequently that the continued state funding of defence is fully justified. Since 1994 the SANDF and the DOD have had to fight for their existence and have been plagued by political circles which for a long time did not have a clear idea of why they wanted a defence force. When they created a policy, in co-operation with among others the DOD and the DFA, on the specific task of peace missions, they did

not follow the criteria stipulated in the paper that had been declared as representing an agreement. The increased demands placed on the SANDF were, however, a positive problem for the SANDF as an institution, because for the first time it was given a legitimate reason to apply for additional funding, as the government needed its services. The DOD has therefore also been very reluctant to reject new deployments because it constituted a real opportunity for the SANDF as well. From being some kind of problem, the SANDF has turned out to be an indispensable tool of the government, both in support of the people, as in support to the SAPS, and in support of the DFA in international peace missions. On the other hand, the deployment to international PSOs was a challenge to the SANDF because this was a new task for the force, for which it had never prepared, and which took place in the middle of an internal transformation process. Like many other military forces in the contemporary world, the SANDF was experienced in and capable of fighting the battle, but inexperienced in winning the peace.<sup>1</sup>

One of the SANDF's problems has been that, even though the government had produced a White Paper creating a framework for the SANDF's involvement in international operations, the government has often chosen not to follow its own criteria for deployment. The table below shows how the seven criteria outlined in Chapter 5 have been seen in each of the three cases.

<b>Criteria / Cases</b>	<b>Operation Boleas</b>	<b>Burundi</b>	<b>DR. Congo</b>
<b>A clear international mandate?</b>	No: there was no international mandate; only an invitation from the Lesotho PM to intervene.	Yes: the UN and later the AU mandate had the required capacity to executing the mandate	Yes/No: there has been a UN mandate for the operation. However, there has continuously been a mismatch between the mandate and the capacity of the mission. Mission-creep has also occurred.
<b>Sufficient means?</b>	Yes and no: access to means was not the issue in this case, but	Yes and no: AMIB and later ONUB had sufficient capacity to	No: lacking capacity to fulfil its mandate properly. Sufficient

<sup>1</sup> This is despite the fact that similar operations had been conducted domestically for a long period in, for instance, Natal, and also that the OLD SADF had great experience with "WHAM" missions during the liberation, though the success of these operations were questionable.

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	insufficient preparations. It turned out that Boleas did not have sufficient strength to eliminate resistance quickly. It could also be argued that the SANDF was in the midst of its transition and not ready for this type of operation.	fulfil their mandate. The economic resources required were not available. Domestically, there were insufficient means to cover the costs of deployment. The required forces were not available, which led to increased deployment frequency. Critical personnel problems.	bridging funding not available. Maintenance of equipment impossible. Due to health and structural issues, there was a lack of forces which led to increased deployment frequency. Critical personnel problems.
<b>A domestic mandate and budget?</b>	Yes and no: budget in place, but parliament complained about not being heard.	Yes and no: mandate in place but lacking a budget.	Yes and no: mandate in place but lacking a budget.
<b>Volunteerism?</b>	Yes	Law changed	Law changed
<b>Clear entry and exit criteria?</b>	No	No	No
<b>Regional co-operation?</b>	Yes: however, the SADC was partly a cover for the South African intervention.	No: despite being an African mission, it was not carried out within the framework of the SADC, but as a coalition of the willing.	No: South Africa did not participate in the 'SADC intervention' and has deployed its own capacity as part of MONUC. However, plans are in place to deploy a joint SADC force as part of MONUC.
<b>Foreign assistance?</b>	No international assistance received.	Yes: economic support.	Part of an international operation. Co-operation with international partners in the SSR.
<b>Mediator and military contributor?</b>	Yes and no: tried to mediate, but the execution of the military operation was coercive in nature.	Yes: functioned as mediator and helped implement the peace agreement through deployment of the military tool.	Yes and no: functioned as mediator and contributed to MONUC, helping implement the agreement. However, the South African

			government has pushed for a much more robust approach in eastern DRC and has an aggressive diplomatic approach in securing South Africa's economic interests and influence in the DRC. The parallel bilateral strategy is an example of this.
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This table shows that South Africa in the three cases has followed a negotiating strategy, in which it has functioned as a mediator, followed by a military commitment. In the two cases that followed the publication of the White Paper on Peace Missions, the SANDF was used as a foreign policy tool, implementing brokered peace agreements under extremely volatile circumstances. However, two of the three cases also show that, despite its peaceful strategy, South Africa also has shown that it is willing to use coercive means. In the case of Lesotho, the SANDF was used as a pre-emptive tool, and in the case of the DRC as part of a robust PSO operation. The DRC case is especially interesting as South Africa disagreed for a long time with MONUC over the interpretation of the mandate concerning the use of force. South Africa wanted MONUC to use forcible disarmament long before the MONUC leadership was prepared to do so. The three cases combined show that, despite South Africa's stated benign peaceful means strategy, it is still in some instances willing to use the SANDF in coercive operations to obtain the required political results.

In the case of the South African involvement in Burundi, we heard from the Minister of Defence that this should be seen as a model for peace in Africa. The involvement of South African troops in the DRC and Burundi was a matter of creating peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region and thus safeguarding and protecting current and future South African markets, by creating the needed foundations for peace and development. However, the operation also involved issues of moral responsibility in relation to fellow Africans, that is, as part of the Pan-African idea. This was visible during the debate in the portfolio committee on defence, in which the ANC member of the committee refused the DA's realist reasoning, stating that South Africa had a



moral obligation to assist fellow Africans in need, and as a result proximity to South Africa was not an issue. Both issues are closely tied to the country's role as a regional power, that is, the desire for control and the responsibility to provide security for the members of the regional structures. The country's involvement in the peace process in Burundi was an important step in creating this model for peace in Africa, where South Africa plays a central role. In particular, it was an important step in the attempt to create peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region, which, according to the Minister of Finance, was an aspect of securing current and future markets for South Africa, both in terms of the export of industrial products and access to and control of natural resources.

The table also shows that where criteria such as sufficient means, a clear entry/exit strategy and a clear mandate are concerned, the government has been willing to compromise on these three criteria because of the greater importance given to the strategic level and South Africa's predominantly benign regional role. Beyond its role as a mediator, South Africa needs actively to take part in creating peace and stability on the continent in order to sustain this role. As mentioned in the Introductory chapter, the credibility of a mediator is closely tied to his or her ability to deliver results. The SANDF has become an integral part of this strategy by supporting the government's diplomatic strategy, including by force if necessary. Nevertheless, seen from the Western point of view, if the government fails to provide the SANDF with the necessary resources to undertake its missions in a satisfying manner, this could have severe ramifications for South Africa's strategic role. However, the capacity of the SANDF must also be analysed with respect to the framework and the partners with whom it has to operate, and not necessarily by NATO standards. The Burundi case showed that, despite its shortcomings, the SANDF was able to undertake its role as lead nation in the mission. As we saw in Chapter 2, the South African government has expended a lot of energy in building and reforming both continental and regional structures. Within this context, it has been able to create and sustain its role as a benign regional power. The shortcomings of the SANDF in the DRC and Burundi cases do not constitute a major issue in this context, because the quality and capacity of the SANDF still remain relatively higher than that of most of its African partners. There is no doubt, however, that the shortcomings that did occur will have a negative influence on the capacity of the future regional ASF brigades and their potential for success when deployed. The significant structural problems faced by the SANDF, as shown in Chapter 4, was also found in two of the three cases, and it needs to remedy before its requests for additional resources can be taken seriously.

The SANDF has started this process though for instance its updating of the White Papers and the SSA's vision 2020 paper, but it still has a long way to go. The new SDP will provide the SANDF with some critical capabilities, which will also enhance its capacity for leading regional PSOs, but will not solve the main capacity problems within the army.

For the SANDF, the deployment in Burundi did provide some important lessons. It was the first time that it had been deployed to lead an international peace mission. It also showed how difficult it was to rely on international partners, given the failed African replacement for its troops after the first year. It also showed how difficult it can be to co-operate with forces from partner nations. For instance, South Africa had to provide the initial financing for the Mozambican forces in Burundi before even considering deploying forces. The experience of AMIB and ONUB is valuable in the sense that it helped the establishment of the SADC ASF brigade and pointed out areas needing special attention. It also provided important lessons on the capacity of a small nation, in military terms, like Mozambique. This could, for instance, prove beneficial in the area of communication, where many African nations have a limited capacity and to which South Africa is able to contribute.

### **9.3: The Importance of Proximity**

The cases discussed have demonstrated, that there is a degree of discrepancy between how the regional policy is conducted and what the officially stated policy is, that is, the prioritisation and quality claimed for South African forces when deployed have lacked follow-up on the ground. However, the cases discussed have also shown that it is necessary to divide South Africa's regional policy, and thus both its political and its economic commitment, into different sub-sections based on geographical proximity to South Africa. Operation Boleas showed that South Africa was willing to use force pre-emptively to achieve its foreign policy goals. This was not the case in Burundi, and especially not in the DRC. The difference was first of all that Lesotho has always, as claimed for instance by Alden & Soko, been within the sphere of South African national interests as a small, landlocked state with a large minority living in South Africa, and it is totally dependent on its relations with its big neighbour.<sup>2</sup> Another important element was that the South African-led intervention was a signal to the parties that the historical tradition in Lesotho of military interference was no longer acceptable in a southern African context. It can be argued

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<sup>2</sup> See Chapters 2 and 6 for further details of Lesotho's dependence on South Africa. See for instance also Alden & Soko, South Africa's economic relations with Africa

that for South Africa to be able to initiate its reform proposals in Africa in general, it needed to acquire its own sphere of interest. A military government in Lesotho would therefore be totally unacceptable to the ANC government and its ambitions in Africa. It can also be argued that South Africa was only able to play the role it did in Burundi and the DRC because of its previous intervention in Lesotho. It proved itself a credible mediator through its successful negotiations in Lesotho following the intervention and drafting of a new constitution, and if need be it is also willing to use force to obtain its ambitions. This has been seen recently in the DRC within MONUC's eastern command. Had the coup-plotters been successful in Lesotho, it would have undermined South Africa's status as a regional power and mediator. The SANDF therefore became the tool that saved a seemingly failed attempt at political mediation.

The two cases in the Great Lakes Region both showed the limitations and possibilities of the military as a foreign policy tool. The government was unwilling to use the SANDF in the Zimbabwean-led attempt to save the autocratic leadership of Laurent Kabila. But it can also be argued that the so-called SADC force served South Africa's interests because it forced the parties in the DRC war to find and accept a negotiated solution in the end. The DRC itself was outside South Africa's traditional direct sphere of interest, which is also part of the reason why the Pretoria government did not take part in the three SADC members' military expedition. Another reason was that the parties to the conflict at the time were not ready for a political solution and had to exhaust each other first. The SANDF's role in the DRC, as in Burundi, was to secure the implementation of a negotiated South African peace deal. Proximity, political reality and objectives, and capacity are the keys to understanding South Africa's behaviour and use of the SANDF. Very central to the ANC political project is the peaceful resolution of disputes, which means that force should only be used when diplomatic options have been exhausted and direct South African interests are at stake. The Lesotho case is an example of this, where clear South African interests were at stake. In the Great Lakes instances, the South African forces never used coercion in attempting to force the FLN, for example, to accept a peace deal, even though it can be argued that the diplomatic channels had apparently been exhausted several times. This, of course, also has something to do with the mandate, which did not allow for a forceful disarmament. However, in the DRC, South Africa has been one of the states calling for MONUC to disarm the so-called negative forces in eastern DRC by force. The SANDF has played a central role in the offensive operations against and disarmament of the militias and the foreign

rebels operating from eastern DRC. The South African government has in this instance allowed its forces to be used in offensive military operations as a part of a UN force to secure the success of a political process partly brokered by itself. The active South African involvement against the so-called negative forces in eastern DRC has had a positive effect on its standing among the political leaders of the Great Lakes region, who in 2006 asked the South African government to help find a solution to the problems in northern Uganda, in addition to its present involvement. This means that South Africa is now involved in negotiating peace in all states in the Great Lakes Region. It is the combined South African efforts that have created this role, but it is SANDF forces who have actually made the political achievements possible.

In 2006, the SANDF is an integrated part of South African foreign policy, something that was not true in the period from 1994 to 2001. However, even though it is more or less impossible to think of South African foreign policy without including the SANDF, structural and capacity problems remain to be solved in order to make the force a more effective tool, and not an embarrassment, as has partly been the case in the DRC.

#### ***9.4: The Three Cases and the SANDF Lead Nation capability?***

A question that remains to be answered is whether the SANDF has the capacity to take on the role of lead nation in future PSOs, especially African ones? Chapter 4 showed that on paper the SANDF have the inventory that would enable it to function as a lead nation. However, the Chapter also showed that serious structural and capability issues negatively affected the capacity of the SANDF to undertake that role. The three cases showed that South Africa in real operations has experienced problems in fulfilling several of the requirements of lead nations, mostly because of a lack of economic and human resources, but also because of domestic political constraints and bad management within the SANDF itself. On paper, the SANDF has the capability to function as a lead nation in international PSOs: it has the HQ capacity, enough communications equipment for a whole mission, and specialised functions such as medical facilities, airport handling crews, river patrol capacity, engineering units etc. In addition to this, it will soon have a long distance transport and close air support capacity. This means that in theory South Africa has no problems in taking on the responsibility of a lead nation for a brigade level

deployment. It can even be argued that it has already partly done this during Operation Boleas and currently in AMIB/ONUB.

Nevertheless, the three cases do show that the SANDF, and therefore South Africa itself, has a significant capacity problem within its armed forces. Some of these problems are structural or due to bottlenecks, such as problems with rotating troops. However, other problems stem from domestic policy constraints. With the introduction of the MSDS personnel group, the force started a much-needed rejuvenation process within the SANDF. This will help the SANDF to sustain the present level of deployment without having to deploy the same individual twice within eighteen months, as was the case in DRC. Another personnel issue, one which has a negative effect on the lead nation role, is the poor standards of health within the force. Again the MSDS recruits will have a positive effect on the deployment capacity of the regular army units, but when it comes to the specialised functions, the poor standards of health will still constitute a serious problem for the SANDF. The financial repercussions linked to this issue, previously described, are also serious.<sup>3</sup>

A third area that is causing concern regarding the SANDF's lead nation role is the financial problems the force is facing. The three cases discussed showed that the SANDF is having difficulties in keeping its equipment operational. As described in Chapter 3 and 4, for various reasons the force does not have the required resources to maintain its equipment on a daily basis. As a result, a lot of resources must be used to prepare and make equipment operational prior to deployment. This is due to the present force structure, which is not financially sustainable within the current defence budget. Another problem is the force structure itself, in which the force has a problematic tooth-to-tail ratio, which means too few troops are left at the sharp end available for deployment. This is expensive and it has a negative impact on the capacity of the force.

Another aspect highlighted by the cases described is the logistical problems facing the SANDF. This is partly caused by the open tender system favoured by the government, and partly by insufficient resources, which leaves the force without stock, and finally is caused by the pilots within the force. This has serious negative effects on the lead nation capacity of the force because it has proved incapable of keeping its equipment in working order. South Africa cannot take on the responsibility as a lead nation with relatively weak African partners without the capacity to keep its

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<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 4 for further details of the HIV/AIDS issue in the SANDF.

own equipment in good working order. A peace mission will not be able to function if, for instance, it has no engineering capacity. For others to call on or accept South Africa as a lead nation, the SANDF must be able to ensure that its specialised functions are both available and operational. This lack will have a serious negative effect on the capacity of, for instance, the future SADC ASF brigade if it is not remedied.

Finally, the SANDF has a cultural problem in the sense that its forces on deployment have an extremely poor disciplinary record so far. There has been increased focus on this particular area due to sexual abuse investigations, especially in MONUC. This is a command and control issue, one that the SANDF leadership must take much more seriously. In the end, the behaviour of forces on deployment is the responsibility of the Chief of Defence, since it is his directives that must be implemented on the ground. The behaviour of South African troops, especially off duty in both Burundi and the DRC, has been an embarrassment to South Africa and has given the force a bad reputation. This needs to be remedied to create the impression of a professional and capable force, one that can function properly and has the capacity to function as a representative of South Africa.

The cases discussed show that the SANDF has the capacity to function as a lead nation, but in the present situation, political, institutional and economic factors are making it difficult for it to fulfil this task properly. The force needs to complete the delayed review processes, thus enabling it to release funds for operational expenses. The political level must realise that, if it wants the SANDF to play the lead nation role, it must release more funds to it. The SANDF will have to co-operate with often weak African or SADC partners, meaning that the demands on the South African contribution are likely to increase. This is expensive, and the political level will have to decide whether it is willing to provide this.

## **Chapter Ten: Conclusion**

### ***10.1: SANDF's Role and Capacity as a Tool in South Africa's Foreign Policy?***

In the beginning of the dissertation it was established that South Africa and the Mbeki government sees its destiny being closely interlinked with that of the African continent, and that peace and stability is seen as fundamental requirements for development and for the renaissance to succeed. Foreign Minister Zuma argued that South Africa has to look beyond itself – it has a responsibility meeting the expectations of the continent and its citizens. But the introductory chapter also showed that to be able to undertake a leading role South Africa needs both hard and soft capabilities, including military capabilities, but it also needs to accept the leading role and have international acceptance of that role. As argued by Bull in the introduction concerning great powers;

They accept the duty, and are thought by others to have the duty, of modifying their policies in the light of the managerial responsibilities they bear.<sup>1</sup>

Consequently the South African government has come to realise that if it accepted this role for the country, it could not just focus on the policy side, it needed to accept the implementing role as well, for instance, military commitment. It had to create coherency between its role as a regional power and peacemaker and the managerial responsibilities tied to this, and then its own policies.

I began the preface to this dissertation by asking three research questions that were to direct the investigation. The first was whether the foreign policy transition from “pariah” to “peacemaker” been a key foreign policy objective. The second question was whether the SANDF was playing a crucial role in supporting this transition. Finally the third question was whether the SANDF had the capacity to continue playing this role? This concluding chapter is structured around answering these questions and what can be inferred from the findings in the dissertation. The chapter ends by first making some remarks on perspectives for the future, that is, beyond mid

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<sup>1</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p.196.

2006, and secondly by making some remarks about the weaknesses in the dissertation and the research strategy.

### **10.1.1: “Pariah” to “peacemaker”: a key foreign policy objective?**

South Africa and the SANDF are faced with daunting tasks on several levels. As admired as South Africa has been for its relatively peaceful transition to a multiracial democracy, many expectations have also been created for the new South Africa concerning its capacity to take a benign leading role in the transformation of Africa, as outlined in President Mbeki’s renaissance project. As was shown in Chapter 2, the international community has looked to South Africa in the search for potential leadership in Africa. However, in southern Africa its neighbouring states’ did not look for leadership, but rather for partnership and some kind of return for their role in the struggle against apartheid. At the same time, South Africa had to define a role for itself, both domestically, through a transformation of society that gave the state legitimacy, including internationally. The ANC government had to try to capitalise on some of the goodwill for it while also shaping a place and role for South Africa within the international system. The country had to obtain regional and international acceptance of its new role as a peacemaker and mediator, as well as its move away from its former status as a pariah state. This was done by introducing a co-operative foreign policy and confidence-building measures. The defence posture was changed, inspired by NOD principles. Defence spending was reduced dramatically and the rhetoric towards the region changed. The different post-apartheid governments have attempted to obtain international acceptance of this new role as a mediator and peacemaker by winning respect. The role of a peacemaker was both a role that the international system placed on South Africa, and also something that benefited South Africa itself and was therefore a strategy pursued by the government. The latter sees South Africa’s destiny as being closely interlinked with that of the African continent, the logic being that peace and stability is a precondition for development, and that what is good for South Africa is good for the continent. It is now a norm entrepreneur that uses its peacemaking strategy and peace diplomacy as part of the grand plan of reforming the continent, including for the sake of South Africa itself.

### **10.1.2: Has the SANDF played a crucial role in supporting this transition?**

The dissertation shows that, after the initial years of transformation and uncertainty, the Mbeki government has increasingly used and recognised the importance and



usefulness of the military tool. However, the dissertation has demonstrated that, as a consequence of South Africa's new benign foreign policy strategy, stricter frameworks have been established for how and when the government can use its coercive tool – that is, the armed forces have changed from playing a role as a source of regional destabilisation to one as a peacemaker as part of the government's wider peace diplomacy. The SANDF has become a pivotal instrument in propping up the reshaping of South Africa's new international image, as well as an integrated part of the ANC government's attempt to fulfil its overall target of creating the basis for economic growth and political stability on the continent and in South Africa in particular. This was done through the transformation process in the SANDF that changed it from being political influential during the apartheid era to being armed force in a democracy under civilian control. This was illustrated in chapter 3, and in all three cases, where diplomacy, successful or unsuccessful, was propped up by the military tool.

However, the dissertation has also demonstrated that the South African government has been overtaken by global events and that its strategy for participation in international peace missions has proved insufficient. It has experienced capacity problems in managing this role as a benign regional leader and peacemaker. With the publication in 1999 of the White Paper on Peace Missions, it underestimated the extent to which it was going to be using the SANDF in PSOs. This resulted in deployments that were the result of *ad hoc* processes, which in both the DRC and particularly Burundi even ran counter to the very principles outlined in the White Paper on Participation in Peace Missions. The core national interest that is pointed out as a criterion for launching larger deployments, that is, above battalion level, has not been followed, again Lesotho being the exception. This means that, although the government has proved to be willing to use the SANDF in international operations on a much larger scale than anticipated and planned for in support for the government's diplomatic drive, it has been unwilling to release the funds required or to provide the necessary policy framework for making the SANDF better "dressed" for the operations. It has been important for the government to be able to deploy the SANDF in order to show its commitment to the agreements it has helped negotiate, but it has not been a securitised issue. The unwillingness to release the needed funds and create the necessary policy frameworks for the SANDF operate efficiently put a question mark on whether the government in reality has fully accepted that managerial responsibility as a regional leader and peacemaker. The logic has been that the SANDF must be able to manage the tasks within the existing budgetary

framework. Again the Lesotho operation differed, because the SANDF did not have the same kind of problems with funding, and the operation was of high government priority because core South African interests were at stake. The findings of this dissertation therefore stress that the SANDF has played a crucial role in South Africa's attempt to transform itself from a pariah to a peacemaker. However, the dissertation also shows that the required policy frameworks enabling the SANDF are now outdated and do not reflect the government's actual use of the SANDF. Therefore, South Africa needs to engage in an ongoing process of rewriting and adjusting its strategy in this field, also because there is no sign that the need for South African troops in PSOs in the immediate future will fall.

### **10.1.3: Does SANDF have the capacity to continue playing this role?**

One issue seems to have been missing in this process of situating South Africa as the obvious leading state in southern Africa, and that is its willingness to use the resources required to create an efficient force when deploying military troops to PSOs in Africa. It is not in willingness in respect of the number of troops deployed, but in the quality of the training and the equipment that they bring with them that problems can be detected. As part of the ANC government's attempt to nurture South Africa's image, it is important to take part in such missions, for example, by being the ninth largest contributor to the UN's missions around the world. However, the commitment seems to stop there, and the government seems to be disregarding the need to create an effective environment in which the forces deployed can operate. At the end of the day, it is the lives of the soldiers that are at stake. The problems for the SANDF described in this dissertation are mostly day-to-day ones, both in the SANDF and in the DOD in general. More importantly, this dissertation shows that the ANC government has not and politically cannot raise the support to prioritise the required resources, despite its willingness to deploy troops to PSOs, thus making the SANDF a more effective force when deployed. This has had severe consequences for the capacity of the deployed forces, and in particular their ability to function effectively as a lead nation according to the criteria set out in Chapter 4.

The question that remains to be answered is what role is the SANDF playing in achieving South Africa's foreign-policy ambitions? Is the SANDF an integral part of South Africa's foreign policy, as claimed by the country's foreign minister? What is the relationship between foreign policy will and ambition and military capability? Taken together, the cases show that, while the SANDF continues to be a capable fighting force, it has problems in conducting and sustaining long-time PSO

commitments. The Lesotho case showed that logistically the SANDF had problems supporting the force, and the SANDF concluded that South Africa did not at the time have a rapid reaction capacity available. The problems illustrated in chapter 4 and in the two other cases indicate that this might well still be the case.

However, it can be argued that the capacity of the SANDF must be measured by the standards of South Africa's regional partners, that is, the context in which it predominantly has to operate, not by NATO standards. If this measure is used, the negative picture indicated by the cases considered here becomes more positive. In this context, the SANDF has more capacity than its partners, which might be enough to maintain a semblance of superior military capability. However, as mentioned in Chapter 2, the SANDF will be measured internationally by international standards, that is, by the lead nation criteria listed in Chapter 4, and not by so-called "African standards".

Furthermore, it must be stressed that the SANDF's new MSDS recruitment plan, the SDP, the acquisition of its Airbus long-distance transport capability and the revival of the reserve-force capability will add important strengths to the SANDF and thus increase its ability to act as a lead nation. As things are now, the AU needs international assistance to deploy troops in, for instance, Sudan's Darfur province. In the future South Africa will be able to undertake such tasks, which will be pivotal for the capacity and effectiveness of the ASF, as well as propping up South Africa's foreign policy drive in Africa and its status as a regional great power in Africa. The SANDF will in future be able to create the framework for a mission from entry to exit.

However, the SANDF has a number of challenges and deficiencies which need to be overcome before its increased capacity will fully take effect. Indeed, one can argue that South Africa will not be able to sustain its status as peacemaker and mediator if it does not solve these issues. The problems can be categorised as "domestic political structural constraints", "SANDF structure and internal dynamics", and "SANDF external".

This dissertation has showed that, because the South African government has prioritised domestic political issues above the requirements involved in the SANDF's forces being deployed in international missions, this has created some real capacity-reducing factors. The first issue is that of race and black empowerment. The fast-tracking of inexperienced officers for domestic political reasons has had a significant

negative impact on the operational capacity of the SANDF.<sup>2</sup> This also underlines the fact that the ANC government has not seen it as imperative that the SANDF should be at maximum capacity when deployed in African PSOs. This also stresses that the ANC government has not realised, or has been unwilling to realise, the seriousness of the PSOs into which it has deployed the SANDF. This leads back to the black empowerment issue, and the logistical problems faced by the SANDF during deployments. The legislation could be altered, thus helping to increase the capacity of the SANDF. Even the defence committee in Parliament has pointed out that the logistical problems must be solved, because PSOs are not a peacetime activity. However, this is not just an issue of legislation, but also one of finance and management. The SANDF does not, as now, have the necessary resources for the stock of spare parts it needs to enable it to service its forces and equipment when deployed on mission. Furthermore, it has shown itself to be incapable of administering the resources allocated to it in such ways that it can call convincingly for additional funding. This is not the fault of the SANDF alone because the domestic economic and social situation is making it difficult for it to reduce its surplus personnel. In addition, the SANDF will increasingly have to allocate resources to cover its increasing health burden. These issues are examples of the government prioritising domestic political concerns over those of the SANDF, despite its stated prioritisation of the SANDF's international involvement. The risk, of course, as Lamb has pointed out, is that the SANDF might be transformed from a defence force to a welfare institution. It must be stressed, though, that the government has chosen to deploy more troops than foreseen in the White Paper, thus showing its willingness to commit forces. Furthermore, on the HIV/AIDS issue it has chosen a politically and judicially controversial approach, disallowing HIV/AIDS-positive individuals access to the forces, despite a comparable Supreme Court ruling from Namibia permitting the opposite and domestic criticism from human rights NGOs. This shows that the South African government deems some issues to be of such a character that the government cannot compromise the SANDF as an effective force when it is deployed.

For the SANDF, this poses some central challenges, and it will have to create a strategy to address them. Domestically, it will have to continue its process of reform and transformation, shaping it to the task which lies ahead, which is to make the

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<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that all fast-tracked officers are incapable of doing their jobs, because some very capable officers have been promoted in the SANDF. This is just to say that it takes years of training and experience to create a capable officer, and it is difficult to see how it can be possible to fast-track experience. The reason why this is important in relation to the SANDF is that defence matters basically deals with life and death – inexperience can in the extreme case result in death and destruction.

greatest use of the limited resources available to it to enable it to serve the interests of the republic. One immediate problem will be how to handle this reform process at a time when the force's capacity is being over-stretched by the politicians, namely how to find time and room for training, leave, etc. for force personnel. The next problem must be how to reform the force so that it can assign and prepare personnel from other sections of the SANDF to participate in international missions, that is, altering the tooth to tail ratio by putting more capacity in the "sharp end" of the force. The challenge for the SAA will also be how to reform the force structure to release more troops for PSOs without creating a force of peacekeepers, as the minister of defence has argued.

The problem, of course, is that the present force structure has been declared unsustainable, and defence planners need to come up with a new affordable design. Again the MSDS program will be able to reduce the personnel costs, but the overall costs still need to be reduced. The defence planners are therefore faced with a conundrum, that is, how to reduce costs by making an affordable force design, while at the same time being able to undertake the tasks ordered by government, both primary and secondary, which are largely unaltered, with ever-increasing pressure for increased international deployment and cooperation. This has to be done without any forced retrenchment tools being made available to the force and within the same budgetary framework. The SANDF itself needs to deal with its top-heaviness, which will reduce costs, while at the same time changing its tooth to tail ratio, making more personnel available for international deployment. However, MSDS recruits are not solving problems concerning the critical personnel groups, where the SANDF has problems in both recruiting and especially holding on to this group. The problem is that the private sector offers better salaries and working conditions. This represents a serious capacity problem for the SANDF, which has difficulties in sustaining the deployment of its specialised units in particular, such as its medical personnel, at the present rate of deployment. Perhaps improved capacity within the reserve force could take some of the pressure off, but it would not solve the problem as long as the SANDF is unable to fill its current vacancies. However, the main problem for the SANDF is that it is based on a force design that cannot sustain the present level of international deployment for a longer period of time, and a design that has, furthermore, been declared unsustainable.

The weapons acquisition programme will help to increase the capacity of the SANDF to participate in international missions and to function as the lead nation in PSOs.

However, society, especially one like South Africa's, will always debate whether these resources might not have been used better in other sectors of society, a reference to the oxymoronic relationship between developmental priorities and defence spending. For the SANDF, it is therefore crucial that it be able to deliver results when a government with huge development challenges chooses to invest in the region of R50 billion on military equipment. In this case it does matter whether the equipment is useful in PSO operations because the political level has invested money and expects results. The problem, of course, is that the whole foundation for the composition of the SDP has been changed by politically re-prioritising the defence tasks since the defence review and the white paper on defence were drawn up. To put it bluntly, the SANDF, guided by the politicians, has created a defence force that the politicians no longer want. Even though a large part of the SDP equipment has a "dual-use" capability, the investment of R50 billion would have looked somewhat different in 2006. The former apartheid Chief of Staff, General Constan Viljoen, argued this in Parliament in 1998, when no one would listen. Seen in retrospect, he seems to have been right. The question that will also have to be answered at the political level in the coming years is whether the second phase of the SDP, which to a large extent deals with the blanket obsolescence of equipment in the SAA, will be initiated. The political controversy and fierce debate that has followed the first phase makes that a big question. The issue, then, is where that leaves the SANDF, and in particular the SAA, and its capacity to prop up the government's foreign policy.

One issue that the SANDF will have to deal with in the years to come is that it has to a large extent prepared itself for peacekeeping operations, while the offensive capability of the force has largely been removed since 1994. The question is, then, how the force is prepared for the tasks it will be confronted with in future, that is, primarily robust peace-keeping or peace-making? The PSOs of the 1990s are generally acknowledged to have suffered from mission creep and open-ended engagements, the DRC operation being a case of point. The Pretoria government seems to have realised this and to have tried to protect itself from this risk with the introduction of the White Paper on Peace Missions. But for political reasons it did not follow its own recommendations, to a large extent committing troops instead to open-ended missions without clear exit strategies, despite the criteria mentioned in the White Paper. This has increased the capacity demands on and risks for the SANDF when deployed. Former Vice-President Zuma's commitment of South African troops to the Burundi mission, despite the absence of a peace agreement with Agathon

Rwasa's FNL, is instructive in this respect, because deployment into such a situation increases the risks for the force significantly, as well as meaning that it must be able to defend itself and therefore needs heavier weapons. Defence Minister Lekota recognised this in the portfolio committee on defence when he argued that something more was at stake in Burundi. This means that the White Paper on Peace Missions is just a policy paper putting forward recommendations, that can be pushed aside for higher political considerations. Consequently, it will be interesting to see the priorities listed in the forthcoming review of the defence review and the review of the white paper on peace missions.

By its recent actions in Burundi, the South African government has created a framework model for future military co-operation on PSOs in Africa and in SADC in particular. For several years military co-operation was put on hold due to the internal institutional problems of the organisation. However, the recent signing of the SADC MDP has served as a symbolic gesture of commitment by SADC member states, and despite its focus on common defence, it has also provided a judicial framework for co-operation on military and especially intelligence issues.<sup>3</sup> The reopening of the RPTC in late 2005 and the advanced preparations of the SADC ASF brigade are other positive signs. An effective ASF structure should help relieve the SANDF of some of its rotation problems. However, the SADC ASF structure does require an effective SANDF to be successful.

The definition of the SANDF's role seems to be the final piece to complete the puzzle. South Africa will not be able to sustain its role as a regional benign power and peacemaker if it lacks an efficient military capacity to prop up its foreign policy ambitions. The ideas, norms and reform ambitions underlying institutions such as SADC and the AU will be impossible to sustain if South Africa and the other regional powers in Africa do not have the military capabilities to put into these structures 'undertaking its managerial responsibilities' in order to lead the process forward.

However, increased deployment into international operations and increased regional co-operation can be slippery slopes for politicians because the defence requirements put forward in the strategy paper could easily turn out to be insufficient in meeting the political demands. The government's involvement, both in Africa and internationally, as a mediator, regional power and peacemaker mean that the demands on South

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<sup>3</sup> One of the problems faced by the AMIS force in Darfur has been that the contributing states have been reluctant to share intelligence with the other members of the mission.

Africa to commit troops are increasing. There is a proverb that illustrates this situation nicely: if you give an inch, they are likely to take a mile. South Africa has reached out to Africa, but Africa has responded with demands and expectations that exceed South Africa's capacity. The politicians and the SANDF leadership have to work together to find and define a way for South Africa to meet and handle this challenge. South Africa's role in Africa may well depend on it.

### ***10.2: Some perspectives and reflections on the findings***

The SANDF will continue increasingly to play a pivotal role in South Africa's foreign policy in the years to come. With significant South African influence and participation, the SADC ASF brigade will become an important tool in the attempt to stabilise and create peace on the continent. A functioning SADC brigade will most likely relieve some of the current pressure on the SANDF. The MSDS program will slowly rejuvenate the force, improving fitness levels and thus force readiness levels overall. This will increase the SANDF's capacity to support the government's diplomatic efforts in Africa. To quote former Chief of Defence Nyanda, once more there will be no African renaissance without the support of military muscle. However, as mentioned above the ASF structure does foresee an important role for the regional great powers in Africa in providing the framework for the brigades. It is questionable if South Africa at the moment has that capacity.

The government and the SANDF are confronted with a number of challenges. They must right-size the force because the present force structure is unsustainable. Even though this process is now under way, it is unlikely that the SANDF will be allowed to reduce the force in the short to medium term. Also, taking the current political climate into consideration, it seems unlikely for political reasons that the SANDF will be given the extra funding to cover this unsustainable structure. Another dimension in the area of human resources is the increasing costs for the SANDF in coping with the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This seems to be an uphill battle, both in terms of increasing medical costs for the SANDF, and in the declining human resource base of the force. This could undermine its capacity, though the MSDS recruits will take some of the pressure off.

Another problem facing the SANDF is that it is finding it difficult to attract and especially retain critical function personnel in the force. This problem could undermine its capacity to function as the lead nation in African PSOs. This is a



difficult problem to solve as long as the private job market offers better salaries and working conditions. However, it is a problem that the SANDF will have to solve because it risks putting too much pressure on the remaining personnel in respect of the frequency of international deployments, which itself can cause people to leave the force. This would exacerbate the already critical situation, making it difficult for the SANDF to function as a lead nation.

Finally, will South Africa be able to maintain and function as a lead nation if it does not solve the problem of the lack of maintenance for its equipment or manage to replace aged equipment. This requires a commitment from the government, and the new defence review has created a clear picture of the needs of the army especially. Getting parliament to accept a phase two of the SDP will take difficult negotiations, given the debate and criticism that followed the first SDP. However, the SANDF cannot continue to sustain its current deployment levels if this problem is not solved. Indeed, it cannot continue to prop up South Africa's diplomatic efforts to the same extent if these problems are not solved – in other words, it cannot continue to support South Africa's role as a benign regional power and peacemaker.

### **10.2.1: A bit of self-reflection**

In writing a dissertation of this nature, a number of choices and assumptions are made that reflect negatively on the findings, and especially the solidity of the findings. To what extent can they be said to have general value, or do they only say something about the specific area being investigated? Assumptions are always debatable and normatively influenced: what would it have meant if other assumptions had been used, other variables tested?

One of the fundamental questions that this dissertation leaves open is to what extent the typology model in Chapter 4 can be said to have general applicability. It could be argued that it was created by the author using his past experience and some theoretical inputs, in other words, it fits too neatly the attempt to demonstrate that the SANDF has capacity problem and that this negatively effects South Africa's great power status. The answer is that the only way to determine this is to use the model in the analysis of another state to see if it can be used to explain its actions too.

One case that comes to mind is Argentina, which, after the ending of the military rule, used its armed forces in a benign manner in multilateral PSOs and institutions in a

process of changing and nurturing its international image. Thus it became member of SHIRBRIG, though later chose to leave SHIRBRIG again once its international image had changed.<sup>4</sup> Other examples might include India, Nigeria and Pakistan, which all have used the deployment of forces in international PSOs as a means to nurture and improve their international standings. But proper analysis needs to be conducted to establish whether this is the case or not, and especially whether the model can be used.

Another problem with this research project is the comparability of the three cases, that is, to what extent can a meaningful comparative study be made, and what can be inferred from the results? This is particularly the case with CTF Boleas, which both in time and nature differs from the two other cases. It can be argued that the very dissimilar design strategy used creates the problem that the dependent variable has no causal coherency, and the cases therefore cannot produce generally viable conclusions, but only partial, case-based, inferred results. This undermines the explanatory power of the study. However, as mentioned in the methodological section, an attempt has been made to solve this by introducing Chapters 3 and especially 4, which attempts to create a framework describing the general priorities related to defence and the structural problems facing the SANDF. This, I believe, counters the methodological problems caused by the nature of the three cases.

One criticism in relation to this could be the limited number of cases used in the dissertation, and especially what can be inferred from this relatively small sample. There are several replies to this. First, within the chosen time span the number of cases was limited, and no other cases fitted the criteria set out in Chapter 2. Secondly, Chapters 3 and especially 4 function as a way of measuring the findings in the three cases and thus of evaluating the validity of the findings in them. Thirdly, the validity of the findings needs to be tested in a later study using other cases. The findings in this study are not static and unchangeable, but will always change over time. However, this study points to a series of structural problems that might have longer lifespan.

Another point of potential criticism is the author's personal attitude towards the present research object, in this case South Africa, more broadly. This is, as mentioned in Chapter 1, always a limitation in the findings. The author has spend

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<sup>4</sup> For further details of Argentina's membership of SHIRBRIG, see, for instance, Jakobsen, *The Transformation of United Nations Peace Operations in the 1990s*, p. 274.

much time in South Africa in the last ten years and has come to consider it his second home. The danger is, of course, that his personal amazement at the country and its transition may have clouded his judgement. It could be that he has not been critical enough, or alternatively too critical in an attempt to avoid being too lenient. This is something that one can attempt to allow for, but it must be up to the judgement of others as to whether or not the author has succeeded.

## Appendix 1: SANDF Military Strategy

Source: the SANDF Military Strategy

### DEFENCE AGAINST AGGRESSION

The provision of self-defence in accordance with International Law against any external aggression which endangers the stability of South Africa.

**Show-of-force.** A demonstration of the readiness of the force to engage in one or more missions. This could, for instance, be done by means of a training exercise.

**Pre-emptive Operations.** This is an attack initiated on the basis of a belief that an enemy attack is imminent or under way. (Within the limits of International Law regulating the use of force.)

**Repelling of a Conventional Onslaught.** Military operations launched in order to protect and defend South Africa, its citizens and national interests against aggression committed by forces of another state or group of states, excluding the use of nuclear weapons.

**Repelling of an Unconventional Onslaught.** Operations conducted against guerrilla or para-military groupings conducting operations that are in conflict with the Constitutional order of South Africa.

**Repelling of a Non-conventional Onslaught.** Operations to curb attacks by a-national (not belonging to a specific nation), sub-national (groupings within a country) or meta-national (groupings that span more than one nation, for example multi-national companies or cartels) forces. Examples are religious fundamentalists, warlords or groups trafficking in illicit drugs, piracy, weapons or undocumented migrants. These can be groupings from within or outside South Africa.

**Defence Against an Information Onslaught.** Defensive measures against an onslaught on South Africa's military information, information-based processes and information systems.

**Defence Against a Biological and/or Chemical Onslaught.** Defensive measures against the employment of biological agents or chemical products by an adversary to produce casualties in man or animal and damage to plants or matériel, to obtain military advantage.

**Special Operations.** Special operations are operations of a specialised nature that are conducted by specially trained and equipped military forces. Special Operations will normally be conducted jointly with different Services, while the authority for these deployments will mainly be granted at the highest or even political level.

**Protection of Foreign Assets.** Examples of foreign assets that need protection include embassies, high commissions, consulates and related facilities.

## PROMOTING SECURITY

Promoting Security means the provision of external deployment or support to enhance security in support of decisions by the executive.

**Supporting Military Foreign Relations.** Military foreign relations could include attachés, own personnel attending courses, foreign students attending own courses or any other activity that will enhance the peace and security-building measures between countries.

**Defence Against an Information Onslaught.** Defensive measures against an onslaught on alliance's military information, information-based processes and information systems in which South Africa participates.

### Sub-regional, Regional or International Peace Support Operations

**Observers.** A military observer is a person mandated by an international organisation to observe a treaty, military cease-fire, an international organisation or the execution of a United Nations Security Council resolution.

**Peace-keeping.** Peace-keeping operations describe the activities of the United Nations in the field. Modern peace-keeping operations normally involve both military and civilian personnel who are tasked with monitoring and assisting with the implementation of agreements reached between belligerent parties. Such activities are also mandated under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. They take place with the consent of the conflicting parties and do not involve the use of force (other than in self-defence) by the peace-keepers.

**Peace-making.** Peace-making is primarily a diplomatic process/activity, which is conducted with the aim of bringing hostile parties to a negotiated agreement through peaceful means.

**Peace-enforcement.** Peace-enforcement describes activities where, in terms of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the Security Council deems it necessary to use armed force to maintain or restore international peace and security in situations where the peace is threatened, where a breach of the peace occurs, or where there is an act of aggression.

**Peace-building.** Peace-building may occur at any stage in the conflict cycle, but it is critical in the aftermath of a conflict. In essence, peace-building is mainly a diplomatic/developmental process.

**Humanitarian Intervention.** The provision of safe areas or corridors to ensure the safety of populations caught up in areas of conflict.

**Search-and-rescue.** The use of aircraft, vessels, specialised rescue teams and equipment to search for and rescue personnel in distress on land or at sea.

### Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Assistance

**Disaster Relief.** The provision of support for the preservation of life, health and property in emergency situations which exceed the capacity of the civilian authorities.

**Humanitarian Assistance.** The provision of support to alleviate human suffering.

## SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA

The population of South Africa is supported by means of operations and activities other than war during periods when the responsible government departments do not have the capacity to do so.

**Maritime Support.** Support to other state departments which do not have the capacity to execute their maritime responsibilities. It currently consists of the following:

- The provision of surveillance and enforcement support to the relevant authorities for the protection of marine resources.
- The provision of assistance in the protection of the marine environment against pollution.
- The provision of transport assistance to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to the Prince Edward Island group, Gough Island and the Antarctic.
- The provision of hydrographic services for the purposes of the Navy, South Africa's mariners and to other mariners in terms of regional and inter-national obligations.
- The promulgation of radio navigation warnings, notices to mariners, and tidal and related meteorological data to mariners in terms of international obligations.

**Border-line Control.** Border-line control is the application of border control between identified ports of entry, such as a border control post. Border-line control includes control between designated ports of entry, as well as airspace and maritime control. Border-line control is a South African Police Service function in which the South African National Defence Force currently assists.

**Co-operation with the South African Police Service.** The South African National Defence Force may in certain circumstances assist the South African Police Service. This assistance excludes police functions such as criminal investigation, arresting suspects, preparing dockets and involvement in the criminal justice system.

**Search-and-rescue.** The use of aircraft, vessels, specialised rescue teams and equipment to search for and rescue personnel in distress on land or at sea.

### Disaster-relief and Humanitarian Assistance

**Disaster Relief.** The provision of support for the preservation of life, health and property in emergency situations which exceed the capacity of the civilian authorities.

**Humanitarian Assistance.** The provision of support to alleviate human suffering.

**Support to Other Government Departments.** Providing assistance when other government departments do not have the capacity or during emergencies.

**Presidential Tasks.** These are tasks that are performed by the Department of Defence for national interest or at the request of the President. The tasks include support provided on an *ad hoc* basis when emergencies occur. Examples are: when soldiers are used to curb the spread of foot-and-mouth disease or cholera, the provision of the National Ceremonial Guard, as well as protection and health care of very important persons.

**Air Transport for Diplomatic Commitments.** The provision of air transport for the President, the Deputy President, the Minister and Deputy Minister of Defence and, where capacity allows, other cabinet ministers and provincial premiers.

**Presidential Health Support.** A comprehensive military health support to the President, Deputy President and other personnel as directed by the President on a 24-hour basis, both internally and externally to South Africa.

**Maintenance of Health Status of Members of the South African National Defence Force.** Maintaining the health status of individuals and groups at an acceptable level for the South African National Defence Force to fulfil its obligations.

## Appendix 2: South African Defence Acquisitions since 1994

Designation	Equipment	Quantity	Origin	Delivery	Manufacturer
JAS-39 <a href="#">Gripen</a>	Multi-role fighter aircraft	28	Sweden/UK	2007-	Saab/BAE Systems
Super <a href="#">Lynx</a> series 300	Ship-borne helicopter	4	<a href="#">UK</a>	2007	AgustaWestland
Hawk 100	Lead-in fighter trainer aircraft	24	UK/South Africa	2005-	BAE Systems/Denel
<a href="#">Agosta</a> Type 209	Patrol submarine	3	<a href="#">Germany</a>	2005-07	HDW/TNSW
Meko <a href="#">A-200</a>	Patrol corvette	4	Germany/South Africa	2005-06	ESACC consortium
<a href="#">Vulture</a>	Unmanned aerial vehicle	n/a	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	2005	ATE
Oliphant Mk 1B	Main battle tank upgrade	n/a	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	2004-05	<a href="#">Alvis</a> OMC
<a href="#">Wasp</a>	Rapid-Deployment Vehicle	25	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	2004-05	<a href="#">Alvis</a> OMC
<a href="#">A 109</a>	Light utility helicopter	30	Italy/South Africa	2003-	AgustaWestland/Denel
Lima Class	Landing Craft	6	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	2003	<a href="#">Stingray</a> Marine
<a href="#">Gecko</a>	Light Vehicle	106	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	2002-03	Crayford <a href="#">ATV</a>
n/a	Mobile EW system	9	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	2001	Grintek
Lindau Class	Coastal minesweeper	6	<a href="#">Germany</a>	2001 <sup>(1)</sup>	East <a href="#">Germany</a>
ESR-220 MkII Kameelperd	Mobile radar	4	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	2000	Reutech Radar Systems
<a href="#">AH-2A Rooivalk</a>	Attack helicopter	12	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	1999-03	Denel
<a href="#">PC-12</a>	Utility aircraft	1	<a href="#">Switzerland</a>	1997	Pilatus
<a href="#">C-130 Hercules</a>	Tactical transport aircraft	5	<a href="#">USA</a>	1996-97	Lockheed Martin
B707-344C	Transport/Elint aircraft	2	<a href="#">USA</a>	1995	Boeing
<a href="#">Mamba</a> Mk 2	Armoured personnel carrier	577	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	1994-98	Vickers OMC
<a href="#">PC-7 Mk II Astra</a>	Basic trainer	60	<a href="#">Switzerland</a>	1994-96	Pilatus
<a href="#">C-212 Aviocar</a>	Transport aircraft	4	<a href="#">Spain</a> <sup>(2)</sup>	1994	<a href="#">EADS CASA</a>
CN-235M-100	Transport aircraft	1	<a href="#">Spain</a> <sup>(2)</sup>	1994	Airtech

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Designation	Equipment	Quantity	Origin	Delivery	Manufacturer
BN2A/B Islander	Utility aircraft	2	<a href="#">UK</a> <sup>(2)</sup>	1994	Britten-Norman
BK 117A	Utility helicopter	10	<a href="#">Germany</a> <sup>(2)</sup>	1994	Eurocopter/Kawasaki
<a href="#">Cheetah C</a>	Multi-role fighter upgrade	38	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	1993-96	Atlas
SAS <i>Outeniqua</i>	Combat support ship	1	<a href="#">Ukraine</a>	1993	Kherson Shipyard
T Craft class	Patrol craft	3	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	1992/1996	T Craft International
Rooikat	Reconnaissance vehicle	240	<a href="#">South Africa</a>	1990-99?	Vickers OMC
<b>Notes</b>					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Six acquired; two for use as spares.</li> <li>2. <a href="#">From 'homeland' air forces.</a></li> </ol>					

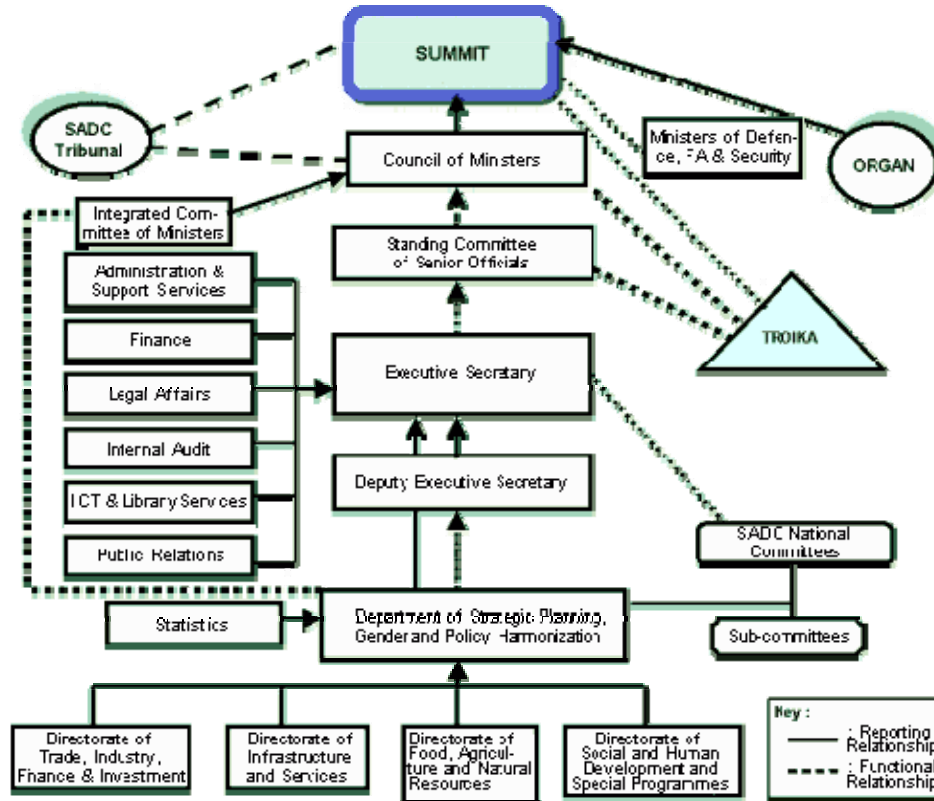


### Appendix 3: South African Trade Balance

CONTINENTS	R a n k	Proportion 2005	Annual Growth					
Name	2005	2004	2003	2005	2004	%Total	Cum.	2005-2004
TOTAL EUROPE	25,956,645	102,970,148	92,020,491	1	1	40.8%	40.8%	0.8%
TOTAL ASIA	17,600,376	73,200,280	65,178,196	2	2	27.6%	68.4%	-3.8%
TOTAL AFRICA	9,925,246	39,037,276	39,000,803	3	3	15.6%	84.0%	1.7%
TOTAL AMERICAS	8,167,792	36,571,593	34,162,785	4	4	12.8%	96.8%	-10.7%
Total CONTINENTS	2,039,473	7,922,196	6,332,008	5	5	3.2%	100.0%	3.0%
SHIP STORES	365,427	1,799,027	3,995,434					-18.8%
UNALLOCATED	7,181,147	34,615,748	34,984,939					-17.0%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>71,236,105</b>	<b>296,116,268</b>	<b>275,674,656</b>					<b>-3.8%</b>
CONTINENTS	R a n k	Proportion 2005	Annual Growth					
Name	2005	2004	2003	2005	2004	%Total	Cum.	2005-2004
TOTAL EUROPE	32,932,305	129,398,336	116,597,468	1	1	44.0%	44.0%	1.8%
TOTAL ASIA	27,754,268	114,806,845	89,131,487	2	2	37.1%	81.0%	-3.3%
TOTAL AMERICAS	9,302,719	40,158,370	36,436,472	3	3	12.4%	93.5%	-7.3%
TOTAL AFRICA	3,140,157	13,000,078	8,217,671	4	4	4.2%	97.7%	-3.4%
Total CONTINENTS	1,746,441	8,118,987	6,765,024	5	5	2.3%	100.0%	-14.0%
UNALLOCATED	299,447	269,999	201,203					343.6%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>75,175,337</b>	<b>305,752,616</b>	<b>257,349,325</b>					<b>-1.7%</b>
CONTINENTS	R a n k							
Name	2005	2004	2003	2005	2004			
TOTAL AFRICA	6,785,088	26,037,199	30,783,133	1	1			
TOTAL PACIFIC	293,032	-196,791	-433,016	2	2			
TOTAL AMERICAS	-1,134,927	-3,586,777	-2,273,687	3	3			
TOTAL EUROPE	-6,975,660	-26,428,189	-24,576,977	4	4			
TOTAL ASIA	-10,153,892	-41,606,566	-23,953,291	5	5			
Total CONTINENTS	-11,186,359	-45,781,123	-20,453,838	6	6			
SHIP STORES	365,427	1,799,027	3,995,434					
UNALLOCATED	6,881,699	34,345,749	34,783,736					
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>-3,939,233</b>	<b>-9,636,347</b>	<b>18,325,332</b>					

Source: South African Ministry for Trade and Industry, WWW accessed 10 June 2005

Appendix 4: The Structure of SADC



## Appendix 5: The Operationalisation of the ASF

### **ANNEX A TO ROADMAP FOR THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF ASF**

#### **KEY CONCLUSIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS THAT UNDERPIN THE ASF FROM THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MEETING OF THE ACDS (MAY 2003)**

##### **I. MISSIONS AND SCENARIOS**

1. The ASF structures are informed by missions and scenarios defined within the Policy Framework for the Establishment of the ASF. These are:

- a. **Scenario 1.** AU/Regional military advice to a political mission. Deployment required within 30 days from an AU mandate resolutions.
- b. **Scenario 2.** AU/Regional observer mission co-deployed with a UN Mission. Deployment required within 30 days from an AU mandate resolution.
- c. **Scenario 3.** Stand-alone AU/Regional observer mission. Deployment required within 30 days from an AU mandate resolution.
- d. **Scenario 4.** AU/Regional peacekeeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions (and peace-building). Deployment required within 30 days from an AU mandate resolution.
- e. **Scenario 5.** AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping missions, including those involving low-level spoilers. ASF completed deployment required within 90 days from an AU mandate resolution, with the military component being able to deploy in 30 days.
- f. **Scenario 6.** AU intervention, e.g., in genocide situations where the international community does not act promptly. Here it is envisaged that the AU would have the capability to deploy a robust military force in 14 days.

##### **II. DEPLOYMENT TIMELINES**

1. The ACDS had noted that the speed with which forces will be required to deploy has particular implications for standby force structures and arrangements. Significant implications of varying readiness levels are:

- a. At 14 days readiness collective training involving field exercises with all units is essential prior to activation. At this level of readiness there is also a clear requirement for a standing fully staffed brigade HQ and HQ support. There is also a requirement for an established and fully stocked logistics system capable of sustaining the entire brigade. In the absence of large military alliances such as NATO in Africa, individual AU Member States may be best placed to provide this capability.
  - b. At 30 days readiness collective training at least involving HQ CPX must occur prior to activation. At this level of readiness there is also a clear requirement for at least a standing nucleus of a brigade HQ with its attendant HQ support as well as an established and fully stocked logistics system capable of sustaining the entire brigade. SHIRBRIG provides a good example of the HQ structure. In its system, contingents deploy fully self-sustained for 60 days. This might not be the case with African contingents. In this regard, ASF owned logistics bases will be required.
  - c. At 90 days readiness there may be time available to conduct collective training to develop a level of coherence prior to deployment. There is also time to establish a HQ and logistics stocks. A requirement does exist, however, for a small full time staff to manage the standby system, and to standardise procedures and doctrine.
2. To be able to deploy within the relevant timelines for the respective conflict scenarios, the ASF should have mission ready units and HQs, with available equipment, including vehicles and communications, ideally held in centralised regional logistical bases or provided by donors under clear terms of commitment. These requirements pertain to pre-deployment. To launch the ASF elements into mission areas, these pre-deployment arrangements should be backed up by standing arrangements for strategic sea and airlift.

### **III. REGIONAL BRIGADE FORCE STRUCTURE**

3. Once fully established the ASF will consist of standby multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components located in their countries of origin and ready for rapid deployment anywhere in Africa at appropriate notice.
4. Non-political-military-police aspects of the ASF is not a Phase 1 priority as UN humanitarian, development and human rights elements, which do not

require a UN Security Council mandate, could deploy in tandem with an AS mission.

5. As stipulated in the Policy Framework, the standby brigades would be composed of:

- a. Brigade (Mission Level) HQ and Support Unit of up to 65 personnel and 16 vehicles.
- b. HQ Company and Support Unit of up to 120 personnel.
- c. Four Light Infantry Battalions, each composed of up to 75 personnel and 70 vehicles.
- d. Engineer Unit of up to 505 personnel.
- e. Light Signals Unit of up to 135 personnel.
- f. Reconnaissance Company (Wheeled) of up to 150 personnel.
- g. Helicopter Unit of up to 80 personnel, 10 vehicles and helicopters.
- h. Military Police Unit of up to 48 personnel and 17 vehicles.
- i. Light Multi-Role Logistical Unit of up to 190 personnel and 4 vehicles.
- j. Level 2 Medical Unit of up to 35 personnel and 10 vehicles.
- k. Military Observer Group of up to 120 Officers.
- l. Civilian Support Group consisting of logistical, administrative and budget components.

6. This structure provides a guide and could be elaborated upon during the forthcoming Workshop on doctrine development.

#### **IV. CIVPOL, MILOBS AND CIVILIANS STANDBY LIST AT AU AND RECs LEVELS**

4. The Policy Framework set the following targets:

- a. 300-500 Milobs
- b. 240 CivPol
- c. Civilians (not a Phase 1 priority)

## **Appendix 6: The Composition of Task Force Boles**

Army elements (BDF and SA Army)

- \* 1X CTF Headquarters (HQ) from 43 Mechanised Brigade ( MECH BDE) - Ratel Command (24) (Personnel)
- \* 1X Regiment (REGT) HQ from 1 Special Service Battalion (1SSB) - Ratel Comd - (18)
- \* 1X Battalion (BN) HQ from BDF - (15)
- \* 1X Mech Infantry (INF) Company (COY) from 1 SAI BN - Ratel 20 - (135)
- \* 1X Mech INF COY from BDF - Armoured Personnel Carrier (APV) (130)
- \* 1X Motorised (MOT) INF COY from 151 SAI BN - Samil 20 -(135)
- \* 1X Parachute Company (PARA COY) from 44 PARA BDE - On standby for duration of operation
- \* 1X Armed car squadron (SQN) from 1 SSB Ratel 90 (60)
- \* 1X Mortar fire group (GP) from 1 SAI BN -Ratel 81 (48)
- \* 1X Anti- Tank GP from 1 SAI BN - Ratel 90 - (42)
- \* 1X Pathfinder Platoon (PL) from 44 PARA BDE - On standby if needed
- \* 1X PROVOST Platoon (Military Police) from OFS COMD PRO UNIT - Mamba -(35)

South African Air Force Elements

- \* 2X Mobile Air Operations Teams (MAOTS)
- \* 6X Oryx Helicopters
- \* 2X Alouette III Helicopters - In gunship configuration
- \* 1X Cessna 208

Military Health Service Elements

- \* Medical Task Group

## Appendix 7: The basic elements of the Lusaka Agreement

- *Within 24 hours all air, land and sea attacks would end and military forces would disengage.*
- *The situation on the borders would be normalised. This would allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance, control the entry of outside forces and arms and seek to control the non-statutory foreign groups that will present a real security concern as they return to their native countries.*
- *Within one week a Joint Military Commission (JMC) would be established to create the situation where national dialogue leading to future political stability could occur. The JMC would be composed of two representatives from each belligerent party under a neutral chairperson appointed by the OAU. The JMC was mandated to (i) determine the limits of the warring groups at the time of the cease-fire, (ii) bring the warring parties to the negotiations table, (iii) disengage forces, (iv) investigate violations of the cease-fire, (v) work out a mechanism to disarm militia groups, (vi) monitor the withdrawal of foreign troops and the repatriation of foreign citizens, most obviously Rwandans and (vii) track down those who have committed crimes against humanity.*
- *An 'appropriate' force should then be deployed by the UN (working with OAU) to ensure the implementation of the agreement and decisions taken by the JMC.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Foreign Affairs Portfolio Committee, 13 September 1999, Democratic Republic of Congo: Briefing by Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad.

## Appendix 8: Historical chronology<sup>2</sup>

1652	The Dutch settlers arrive in the Cape
1899 – 1902	The Boer War
1910	Union of South Africa formed
1912	South African Native National Congress is founded (later ANC)
1914/15	A Boer rebellion is started caused by the outbreak of the First World War. South Africa supports the alliance against Germany and occupies German South-West Africa (later Namibia)
1920	German South-West Africa becomes a South African protectorate
1923	The Native Urban Areas Act tightens the urban segregation
1936	The Native Trust and Land Act passed; remnant Africa common roll vote in Cape terminated
1939	South Africa joins the allied forces in World War Two
1940	The Ossawabrandwag, an Afrikaner paramilitary movement is founded. The support for Nazi-Germany was strong in segments of the Nationalist Boer Community
1940-48	Industrial expansion means that great numbers of African workers moves to the cities primarily on the Rand. An increased radicalisation can be detected among the African workers culminating in the 1946 black mineworkers' strike
1948	Dr. D.F. Malan's National Party wins the general election with the support from primarily Afrikaner nationalists and white workers that fear for their jobs in competition with the African workers
1950-53	The Major Apartheid legislation passed: Population Registration; Suppression of Communism; Group Areas and Prevention of Illegal Squatting; Separate Representation of Voters; Bantu Authorities; Bantu Education. The banning of the Communist Party in 1950 meant a closer relationship between the ANC and the SACP.
1952	The ANC leads Defiance Campaign
1955	The ANC produces the 'Freedom Charter', which for instance calls for multiracial democracy and nationalisation
1956	The Tomlinson Commission report on homelands. This report eventually led to the creation of the homelands
1958	H. F. Verwoerd becomes Prime Minister
1959	The PAC leaves the ANC, and the black resistance peaks. The Black PAC left the ANC as a protest against the White and Indian Communist members of the ANC
1960	The Sharpeville massacre
1960	The ANC and the PAC are banned
1961	South Africa leaves Commonwealth. The ANC begins its armed struggle
1962-63	The ANC leadership captured and imprisoned during the Rivonia trials
1966	H. F. Verwoerd assassinated; J. B. Vorster becomes Prime Minister
1960s	Rapid economic and industrial growth; white incomes increase as Apartheid entrenched; homelands and forced removals policies implemented; black population growth increasingly outstripping white
1975	Inkatha leaves the ANC alliance and becomes an independent political party
1975	The Portuguese colonies becomes independent and South Africa launches Operation Savanha in support of the FNLA and UNITA movements in Angola
1976	Soweto student rebellion and Transkei becomes the first "independent" homeland
1977	The leader of the Black consciousness movement Steve Biko dies in police custody in Port Elizabeth
1978	P. W. Botha becomes Prime Minister
1979-80	Ian Smith's UDI regime collapses in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and Robert Mugabe becomes President
1980	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1980 SADCC is formed
1983	The new South African constitution leads to tri-cameral parliament. The UDF is launched in protest of the exclusion of the black majority from influence

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<sup>2</sup> Based primarily on chronology in Beinart, Twentieth/century South Africa.



- Africa: Salvation or Despair?-

1985	In July Botha declared the country in a State of Emergency
1985	COSATU is founded
1988	A negotiated settlement between the actors in Angola. Namibia becomes independent in 1989 and Cuba leaves Angola
1989	F.W. de Klerk becomes President
1990	Nelson Mandela is released from prison; the ANC and other movements are unbanned; the rescinding of Apartheid laws gather pace
1991	Convention for a Democratic South Africa meets to negotiate constitution for a new South Africa
1990-94	The politically motivated violence spreads in the townships, especially in the Natal province
1994	The first democratic election gives the ANC more than 50% of the votes. A government of national unity is formed. Mandela becomes President
1994	South Africa joins SADC and the OAU
1996	The NNP leaves the government to form a political opposition.
1998	South Africa intervene in Lesotho together with Botswana
1999	Thabo Mbeki becomes President after another ANC election victory. The organisation nearly wins 2/3 of the seat in parliament
2000	The ANC government has successfully stabilised the economy, but has lost more than 400000 jobs since 1994 in an attempt to reform the post Apartheid society. The high crime rate makes South Africa one of the most violent societies in the world.
2001	4,7 million South Africans are estimated to be HIV/AIDS positive

## **Appendix 9: The Five AU Regions**

The boundaries of the AU regions do not necessarily comply with already established regional economic communities (RECs), such as ECOWAS, IGAD, ECCAS, EAC and SADC. The regions are comprised as follows:

Western Africa - 16 Members

Benin; Burkina Faso; Cape Verde; Côte d'Ivoire; Gambia; Ghana; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Liberia; Mali; Mauritania; Niger; Nigeria; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Togo

Central Africa - 9 Members

Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, DR Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tomé et Príncipe

Eastern Africa - 13 Members

Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda

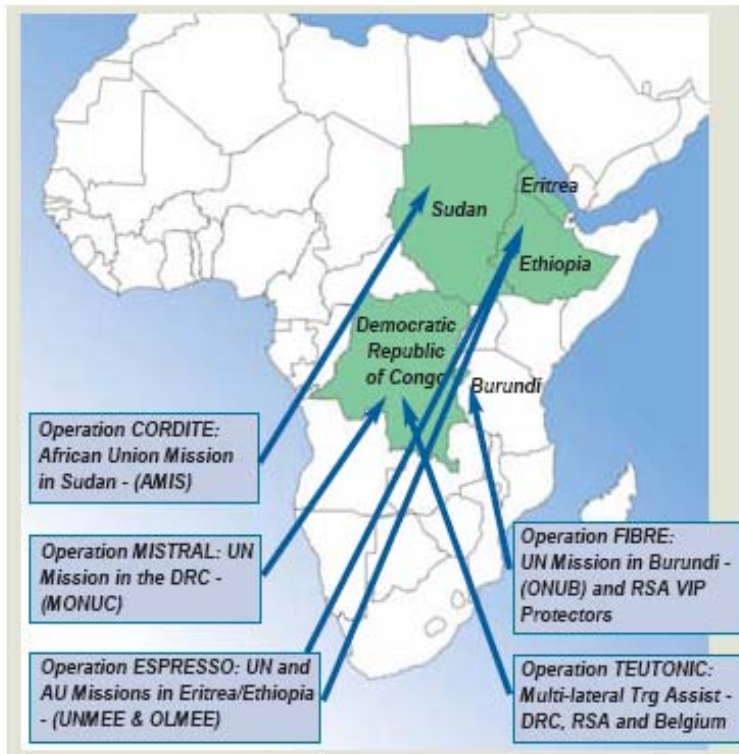
Northern Africa - 5 Members

Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Tunisia

Southern Africa - 10 Members

Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe

**Appendix 10: The SANDF deployments in Africa as of March 2005:  
Source The DOD Annual Report 2004/05**



## **Appendix 11: The SHIRBRIG Mandate and Concept**

### SHIRBRIG MANDATE

The SHIRBRIG mandate is to provide the UN with a non-standing multinational brigade at high readiness based on the UN Stand-by Arrangement System (UNSAS). This initiative provides the UN with a well-prepared, rapidly deployable capability for peacekeeping operations mandated by the UN Security Council.

The Concept of SHIRBRIG can be summarized as follows:

Member countries decide on a case-by-case basis whether or not they will participate in any given mission. National decision making procedures (and thereby national sovereignty) is in no way affected by membership in SHIRBRIG. This is the overarching principle governing members participation in SHIRBRIG.

Any deployment must be mandated by the UN Security Council. Although deployments were initially envisioned under Chapter VI of the Charter, the Steering Committee recently agreed to examine more robust operations on a case-by-case basis.

After a maximum of six months, the mission will either be terminated or SHIRBRIG will be replaced by non-SHIRBRIG forces.

The Brigade's reaction time will be 15 to 30 days following the decision of the participating nations to make forces available for deployment upon request by the UN.

The availability of forces will be based on a brigade pool of resources that will include capabilities to carry out a peace support operation as well as provide for redundancies in such capabilities.

Units committed to the brigade should be self-sufficient for 60 days.

**Appendix 12: List of sanctions imposed against South Africa , 1960  
- 1989**

<u>Multilateral</u>	Military	Trade	Finance
UN General Assembly	1962-63, 1983	1962,1965	1966, 1969
UN Security Council	1977, 1984	1985 voluntary	1985 voluntary
Commonwealth	1971	1985-86	1985-86
EC	1985	1986	1986
Nordic Countries	1977, 1985	1985-87	1979, 1985-86
OAU	1963	1963	1963
<u>Bilateral</u>			
USA	1963, 1977, 1985, 1986	1978, 1985-86	1985-86
UK	1985	1986	1985-87
West Germany	1986	1977	1977 informal
France	1985-86	1986	1985
Japan	1986	1986 informal	1969, 1985-86

Source: Kloze, Norms in International Relations

On 6 November 1962, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 1761, condemning South African apartheid policies.

On 7 August 1963 the United Nations Security Council established a voluntary arms embargo against South Africa.

Following the Soweto uprising in 1976 and its brutal suppression by the apartheid regime, the arms embargo was made mandatory by the UN Security Council on 4 November 1977 and South Africa became increasingly isolated internationally.

Numerous conferences were held and the United Nations passed resolutions condemning South Africa, including the World Conference Against Racism in 1978 and 1983. A significant divestment movement started, pressuring investors to refuse to invest in South African companies or companies that did business with South Africa. South African sports teams were barred from participation in international events, and South African culture and tourism were boycotted.

After much debate, by the late 1980s the United States, the United Kingdom, and 23 other nations had passed laws placing various trade sanctions on South Africa.

## **Appendix 13: List of Main Formal Interviews Conducted**

### **2000**

Professor Martin Rupiya, Centre for Defence Studies, University of Zimbabwe, 25 January 2000.

Interview with Colonel Simpson Nyathi, MoD Zimbabwe, 24-25 Jan 2000.

Prof. M. Baregu (SARIPS), 27 January 2000

Head of the SADC section Horst Bremmer, South African Department of Foreign Affairs, 16 February 2000

Prof. Theo Neethlingh, 18 February 2000

Colonel Chris Serfontein, 19 of February 2000

### **2003**

H. Short and E. Castleman in the South African DFA, September 2003.

Nick Sendall, DOD, 24 September 2003

Rear Admiral Hauter, SANDF Chief Director Strategy and Planning, and Mr. Motumi, Chief of Policy and Planning, Deputy Director General Defence Secretariat, 26 November 2003

Col. (Rtd) Henri Boshoff at ISS, December 2003

### **2004**

Briefing at ARSMCOR, 15 September 2004, including by Dr. Johan Viljoen

Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS in Pretoria, 21 October 2004

Lt. Col. Brian Plaatjes and Lt. Col. Molobo (Both SANDF), 28 October 2004 in MONUC HQ Kinshasa (Agreement on no quotation)

Director for DDRRR Peter Swarbrig, 29 October 2004

RSA Mil. Attaché in the DRC Lt. Col. Jack Khanye, 1 November 2004 at the RSA Embassy in Kinshasa

Dep. Pol. Adviser François Grignon at MONUC HQ, 2 November 2004

Nieves Molina at MONUC HQ Dep. For DDRRR, Legal adviser, 2 November 2004

Lt. Col. David Iffland (UK-Army), MA to the MONUC Force Commander at MONUC HQ, 3 November 2004

South African Ambassador in the DRC, 3 November 2004 at the SA embassy in Kinshasa

Eight interviews done at SANDF Base in Kindu Sunday 7 November 2004 (Not included)

WO I André Meier at MONUC Camp Iveco, 11 November 2004

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