

The South African National Defence Force: Midwife of Peace in Africa?

By Dr. Thomas Mandrup, Institute for Strategy,
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Research Paper



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This research paper is an evaluation of SANDF involvement in Peace Support Operations.
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Introduction¹

“...any form of participation in peace operations is an extension of South African foreign policy...” (DFA 1999 p. 30)

The many years of military counter-insurgency operations in southern Africa meant that South Africa was perceived, both regionally and internationally, as possessing, in relative terms, a significant military capability. In the immediate aftermath of the transition in 1994, therefore, it was supposed that it would be able to play a central part in the resolution of future conflicts in southern Africa.² 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 South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in international missions in Africa, just a few years after its predecessor, the South African Defence Forces, had itself been a main source of conflict.³ In practical terms too, the SANDF had undergone a far-reaching transformation and reduction process following the transition to democracy in 1994, which at least temporarily reduced its capacity as a defence force. The defence budget had been reduced from 4.4 per cent (in 1989) to a projected 1.2 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2009, one of the lowest percentages in southern Africa (Parliament 2007).⁴

However, as this article will argue, the ANC government has slowly come to acknowledge that the military tool is instrumental in its attempts to fulfil the country's post-1994 foreign policy ambitions of reform, stability and development in Africa. This resembles what Adrian Hyde-Price argues of the EU, namely that it can only function as a source of democratic reform if it is also a “Centaur”⁵ – half man and half beast – willing and able to use force as part of a comprehensive security strategy (Hyde-Price 2004: 4). The reasoning seems to be that South Africa cannot achieve its diplomatic goals in Africa of creating peace, stability and development without being willing to use its coercive tool: that is, there can be no effective South African engagement with the African Renaissance⁶ without the support of the SANDF, comprehensiveness being the key word. That said, the international role played by the armed forces in the current government is somewhat different from the one they played during the white minority rule of the apartheid era. The perception of threat differs significantly from especially the era of then president Pieter W. Botha, when South Africa was seen as the target of a total communist onslaught. At that time, the SADF had to deter this threat and to redirect the confrontation away from South African soil. Today Foreign Minister Nkosazana Zuma has claimed that the SANDF is an integral part of South Africa's new foreign policy ambition of creating an African renaissance (Zuma 1999).

The SANDF has therefore become an increasingly important instrument in the government's peace diplomacy⁷ strategy. In his June 2004 defence budget speech, Defence Minister Lekota argued that the SANDF will increasingly support

the government's diplomatic drive in Africa (Lekota 2004), a role that President Thabo Mbeki has called "being the 'midwives' of peace" (Mbeki 2005). It is unclear, however, to what extent the SANDF has the capacity to carry out this role of supporting and propping up South Africa's regional diplomatic efforts. Using examples and experiences from some of the recent operations of the SANDF, this article will attempt to address this question.

The role, employment and capacity of the SANDF in African PSO's

Since 1994, South Africa has mainly been faced 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. In the DOD's Strategic Business Plan, the SANDF's primary mission is described as ensuring an 'Effective defence for a democratic South Africa' (DOD 2004a; DOD 2007). 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.

The new priorities and focus for the SANDF, which followed the 1996 White Paper on Defence and the 1998 Defence Review, has been subjected to criticism, especially from critical scholars like Peter Vale, who argues that the new force, and thus the government, has continued to keep the focus on 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 common security system 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 (Vale 2004 pp. 77-83). The White Paper process was a typical example of the attempt to create a framework for South African military contributions to international PSOs by looking backwards and not forwards to the future. However, despite the fact that Vale is right to criticize the White Paper process for its narrow definition of security, he misses an important point. A modern defence needs to be able to undertake a wide range of tasks, including offensive operations. Even defensive strategies, such as the so-called "non-offensive defence" (NOD), have significant offensive capabilities incorporated within them.⁸ That being said it is true that in hindsight it seems as if the R50+ billion 1999 Strategic Defence Package (SDP) was shaped by this narrow security thinking, leaving the defence force with expensive and technologically advanced equipment, which is expensive and difficult to maintain and keep operational, while not being useful for the day-to-day tasks of the force. The most striking example is the acquisition of the three new German-made sub-marines.⁹

The tasks, the force structure and its sustainability

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.¹⁰ The DOD has told policy-makers that the current level of operations cannot be sustained without additional funding or a political prioritisation of the tasks of the SANDF. However, the attitude in the other government departments seems to be that the DOD receives more than enough resources as it is.¹¹ In his June 2004 defence budget speech and again in his 2005 speech, Defence Minister Lekota gave extra focus and attention to participation in international operations. This has to be understood as part of the prioritisation of the tasks of the SANDF with increased focus on its support role for the country's diplomatic drive in Africa. Nevertheless, according to the SANDF 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.:

Defence Against Aggression	Promoting Security	Supporting the people of South Africa
<p>Show-of-force.</p> <p>Pre-emptive operations (within the limits of international law regulating the use of force).</p> <p>Repelling of conventional onslaught.</p> <p>Repelling of unconventional onslaught.</p> <p>Repelling of non-conventional onslaught.</p> <p>Defence against an information onslaught.</p> <p>Defence against a biological and/or chemical onslaught.</p> <p>Special operations.</p> <p>Protection of foreign assets.</p>	<p>Support military foreign relations.</p> <p>Defence against an information onslaught.</p> <p>International, regional or sub-regional peace support operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observers. ● Peace-keeping. ● Peace-making. ● Peace-building. ● Peace-enforcement. ● Humanitarian intervention. ● Search-and-rescue. ● Disaster-relief and humanitarian assistance. 	<p>Maritime support.</p> <p>Border-line control.</p> <p>Co-operation with the South African Police Service.</p> <p>Search-and-rescue.</p> <p>Disaster-relief and humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>Support to government departments.</p> <p>Presidential tasks.</p> <p>Air transport for diplomatic commitments.</p> <p>Presidential health support.</p> <p>Maintenance of health status of members of the SANDF.</p>

The major missions for the SANDF. Source: SANDF Military Strategy

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 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 the table, which constitutes a major financial drain on the total budget. However, the Cabinet has decided that routine support to the South African Poli-

ce Service (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 the table.¹² Conversely, in the draft Defence Update¹³ it is stated that “support to the People of South Africa” is a permanent task, which again shows that the SANDF must be able to undertake a broad range of tasks (DOD 2005b p. 16, Ch. 4, Article 9). The ability to prioritise between the three missions in the three pillars is limited. The three pillars also fall in line with the suggestion in the draft Defence Updates that the distinction between primary and secondary functions be removed. Consequently all tasks are seen to be equally important (DOD 2005b p. 17, Ch. 4, Article 15-16).

At the political level, it has previously been stressed that the most important task of the SANDF is to provide support for the people and to protect the state against external attacks. However, as mentioned already, South Africa faces no conventional military threat in the short to medium term; moreover, tasks that were formerly considered of secondary importance have in reality become primary, for instance, participation in PSOs and disaster relief (DOD 2004b p. 5). The major challenges envisaged during the consultative processes in the 1990’s 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 to actually make use of their primary functions, and instead the secondary tasks become their day-to-day role (Williams 2000 p. 119). The 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 table – while at the same time being able to cope with the increased level of secondary tasks which the politicians expect the SANDF to undertake (DOD 2004b p. 5). Dr. Koornhoff, 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” (Koornhoff 2004 p. 13). 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.

Similarly, 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 generally. The South African Defence Attaché in Kinshasa confirmed this position when he tried to explain the reasons behind South Africa’s involvement as a mediator in the DRC conflict (Khaniye 2004). In November 2004, South Africa had more than 3,000 soldiers deployed as part of international PSOs, primarily in the DRC and in Burundi. In addition, in 2006, the SANDF had eleven rifle companies or a total of 1,765 troops deployed domestically on a daily basis to support the police in an attempt to tackle the crime pandemic.¹⁴ This makes a total of more than 4,700 soldiers deployed at all times.

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 (Le Roux 2003b). In the Defence Review it was recognised that 'additional capabilities may be required' (DOD 1998 p. 30) if the SANDF were 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' (DOD 2004a and DOD 2007). But the political statements coming from the ruling party still cling to the constitutional requirement of providing deterrence against external aggression, as well as providing support to the people. This places severe limitations on the capacity of the SANDF which, at the same time, is increasingly expected to prepare for PSOs elsewhere on the continent (Koornhoff 2004 p. 10).

The autumn 2004 mid-term financial statement showed that the SANDF only had resources to keep its full force in the DRC and a small contingent in Burundi. The statement concluded that the government policy seemed to be that the forces in Burundi should be withdrawn when no more resources were allocated to the DOD (DOD 2004c). This, of course, is part of the game of political bargaining between the DOD and other government departments for additional funding of their tasks. It also stresses a point made by Alden and Le Pere that the public debate in South Africa concerning participation in PSOs did not focus so much on the risk of landing in militarily difficult circumstances as on the financial implications (Alden and Le Pere 2003 p. 73). This was also partly illustrated in the Defence Portfolio Committee during the debate following the presentation of the DOD's strategy for the FY 2007/08, when the chair of the committee meeting, Tandi Tobias, concluded that the DOD would not get additional funding and

“...that it would be very difficult for the Minister of Finance to prioritise defence, when it had already been agreed that South Africa's biggest enemies were poverty, underdevelopment and unemployment”. (Parliament 2007)

Interestingly enough, there was no debate on the consequences of this fact for the operations and the risks to the individual soldiers.

In addition to this, the DOD has been hit by problems of a financial nature because reimbursement for participation in UN missions does not go back to the DOD, but directly to the Ministry of Finance. This is despite the fact that the White Paper on Participation in Peace Mission stipulates that the decision to participate in international peace missions is a shared responsibility of several government departments, as well as 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 (DFA 1999 p. 28). This has

often not been the case. Therefore, participation in international missions has to be covered partly from within the DOD's ordinary budget. One of the problems is a lack of departmental coordination, where for periods of time the presidency has had a tendency to act on its own, without proper coordination with the other government departments. The bottom line is that the guidelines laid down in the 1999 White Paper on Peace Missions are often not followed, thus creating a number of problems for the DOD and SANDF in terms of a lack of funding and the availability of soldiers and equipment.

Problems and possibilities: the SANDF's involvement in PSOs

The SANDF (and before that the SADF) had a reputation within military circles of having, in relative terms, high military standards equivalent to those of most first-world countries. However, the record of the SANDF PSO participation since 1994, is, so I would claim, changing this perception. I shall return to this later. However, for the SANDF, the increased deployment to international PSOs has constituted both an opportunity and a challenge, the former because 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 they have been hampered in their efforts by political circles which for a long time did not have a clear idea of why they wanted a defence force.

"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". (Kent and Malan 2003 pp. 13f.)

Whether the SANDF has been reduced to "almost peripheral status" is, of course, debatable. It is true that compared to the period before 1994 it has a peripheral status, which in reality is a positive sign. It shows that the armed forces have been "relegated" to exercising their role within the military sphere of society under strict civilian and democratic control. In the draft Defence Update document, the DOD itself stresses that:

"South Africa's domestic security environment has improved significantly since the inception of democratic governance. The security sector, in particular, has been transformed to display values of democratic governance that reflect the principles of transparency, accountability and representivity". (DOD 2005b p. 5, Article 16)

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. According to Len Le Roux, Senior Researcher at ISS in Pretoria, this meant that the armed forces could focus their attention on their primary function, namely their provision, preparation and employment (Le Roux 2003a p. 8). The armed forces ceased to be a political player, and a clear separation between the civilian and 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.¹⁵

However, the above statement by Kent et al. includes another important element which deals with the public debate on the role and employment of the armed forces. The recent experiences of international deployments show that the stated priority given to the SANDF international deployments is not followed by similar resource commitment, and the SANDF has to struggle for additional resources from the National Revenue Fund in competition with other government departments (Mandrup 2007a p. 250; Mandrup Jørgensen 2007b; Mandrup 2008 forthcoming).

The fact was that the political level did not follow the White Paper guidelines and increased demands were placed on the SANDF, stretching its capacity. However, this was also a positive problem for the SANDF as an institution because it was for the first time given a legitimate reason to apply for additional funding, as the government needed its services. The DOD has therefore also been very reluctant to object to new deployments because it constituted a real opportunity for the SANDF as well. From being some kind of problem and a perceived negative strain on a limited economy, the SANDF has turned out to be an indispensable tool for the government, both in support of the people, the SAPS and 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, one for which it had never prepared, and one which was also taking 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.¹⁶

Cooperation with the region

“The security and development of South Africa is inextricably linked to Southern Africa and the continent Africa therefore remains the focus in the conduct of our defence policy and relations. South Africa is accordingly committed to and deeply involved in strengthening continental and regional structures, in particular the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and in the implementation of socio-economic development programmes like the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)”. (DOD 2005B: p. 5-6, Chap. 2, Article 1)

The DOD strategic plans stress that military co-operation with the region is being prioritised. In the draft Defence Update, the emphasis is being placed on collective security¹⁷, i.e. a focus on human security and a rejection of the separation of the security of the state from that of the people, which should nonetheless be seen as mutual dependent (DOD 2005b p. 6). However, South Africa is geographically situated in what Holsti defines as a “zone of conflict” (Holsti 1996 p. 141ff.), thus placing it in a delicate dilemma, namely how to function as a democratic state in a “rough neighbourhood”,¹⁸ but also how to cooperate militarily with states that do not necessarily comply with the same democratic principles, and for whom the main focus is on creating security for the ruling regime and not the people.¹⁹ By nature, these states are often not interested in collective security arrangements, but on collective defence arrangements. The problems with security cooperation and integration in the SADC could be seen as partly resulting from this distinction.

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 to deal with the future co-operation of the SANDF with some of the ill-disciplined and low-capability forces of a majority of its African partners, as well as 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.²⁰

Military co-operation in SADC is, after some years of internal struggle, beginning to take shape and today seems more than just a long-term ambition. South Africa has been very active in the formation of the so-called SADC Brigade as part of the overall African Standby Force (ASF), which, according to the plan, by 2010 should be able to provide the AU with a rapid reaction capability consisting of five regionally based brigades.²¹ The SADCBRIG was declared operational at a ceremony in Lusaka in 2007. However, it is according currently only a ‘paper tiger’, because the contributing countries still have to produce the designated units and allow for a SADC inspection. In addition to this, the SADCBRIG has difficulties in securing the needed funding. (Ratala 2008) However, the SADCBRIG has high South African priority and in the DOD’s draft Defence Update document it is stated that:

“As the largest UN troop contributing country in the region, South Africa will be expected to make a meaningful contribution to the establishment and maintenance of the SADC regional brigade”. (DOD 2005b p. 9, Ch. 2, Article 22)

This very vague formulation does not specify what the South African contribution is going to consist of, apart from it being “meaningful”, which in this context could be seen as substantial. However, the ASF SADC brigade poses some direct challenges to the SANDF because as the regional power South Africa plays a pivotal role in setting up and sustaining the SADC brigade, i.e. providing the specialised functions that its partners are unable to provide.²² This is essential if the SADC brigade is to be operational. Another issue with serious ramifications for South Africa, and especially the future force design, is that the ASF brigades are supposed to be able to undertake robust enforcement type operations. This means that the SANDF needs to have significant offensive capabilities in its inventory.

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, with its large developmental needs and where a third of the population live in poverty, whether these resources might have been used better elsewhere. This is especially the case with a technologically advanced force, which, as Gilpin points out, tends to become increasingly expensive (Gilpin 1981 p. 66). This means that it seems rather unlikely that the DOD share of the GDP is going to be increased in the near future, which the above statement from the Chair of the Portfolio Committee also stresses.²³ The DOD must settle with the resources at its disposal, which is also why major acquisitions for the army, that was supposed to be the focus in the second phase of the Strategic Defence Package (SDP), might be difficult to get through government.

Evaluation of SANDF's previous experience in African PSOs²⁴

As shown above, South Africa today is a big contributor to international PSOs. Since the initiation of Operation Boleas in 1998, the SANDF has become an increasingly important tool in the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy.²⁵ This section will sum up some of the issues which South Africa's recent PSO experiences have provided, particularly from its involvement in Operation Boleas, AMIB/ONUB²⁶ and MONUC. These three operations provide some important insights into South Africa's use of the military tool in its conduct of foreign policy since 1994, and especially the capacity of the SANDF to undertake this role. As mentioned earlier, this is an area which is undergoing rapid change, and the cases discussed therefore can only give an indication of how the situation has developed since 1994 to the time of writing (early 2008), and point to some of the possible pitfalls that lie ahead. The operations chosen 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.

The operations show that South Africa has generally followed a negotiating strategy in which it has functioned as a mediator, followed by a military commitment during the implementation phase. In the case of Burundi and the DRC, the SANDF was used as a foreign policy tool, implementing brokered peace agreements under extremely volatile circumstances. The cases also show that, despite its stated peaceful strategy, the ANC government is willing to use coercive means if need be. 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 for a long time South Africa disagreed with MONUC over the interpretation of the mandate concerning the use of force (Mandrup 2007a; Mandrup 2007b), wanting MONUC to use forcible disarmament long before the MONUC leadership was prepared to do so.

The four cases combined show that, despite South Africa's stated strategy of benign peaceful means, it is still in some instances willing to use the SANDF in coercive operations to obtain the required political results, which of course is in accordance with the possible mission areas described in the DOD's strategic business plan. This, combined with the general development in international PSO towards more robust mandates, indicates that in the future the SANDF will increasingly be engaged in complex PSOs with a Chapter VII mandate. In addition to this, the future deployment of the SADC ASF brigade might have a robust or even offensive nature. However, the government will continue to follow its multi-lateral track, and the SANDF will also in the future be used in UN and AU mandated missions. This is also why operation Boleas in Lesotho in 1998 created such problems for the ANC government, because the mandate was not in place before the initiation of the mission. (Mandrup 2007b)

In the case of the South African involvement in Burundi, Defence Minister Lekota

argued that this operation was to be seen as a model for peace in Africa (JSCD 2001). 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 especially future South African markets for export of industrial products, and access to and control of natural resources (Parliament 2002). This is done by creating the necessary 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 an ANC member of the committee argued that South Africa had a moral obligation to assist fellow Africans in need. 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.

Past South African experiences also show 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 concerns at the strategic level and because of South Africa's predominantly benign regional great power role. Beyond its role as a mediator, South Africa needs to take an active part in the creation of peace and stability on the continent in order to sustain this role. As mentioned above, 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.

The Burundi case showed that, despite its shortcomings, the SANDF was able to undertake its role as lead nation in the mission.²⁷ The government has put a lot of effort into building and reforming both continental and regional structures. Within this context, it has been able to create and sustain its role as a credible mediator and 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 in general were also found in both operations in the DRC and in Burundi. The SANDF has started this process, for instance, by rewriting the White Papers and the creation of the South African Armies (SAA) Vision 2020 paper, but it still has a long way to go. The first phase of the 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 (Mandrup 2007a). In its 2007/08 Strategic Business Plan, the DOD itself points to the risks and claims that the SANDF was facing the blanket obsolescence of several major weapon systems, which could, amongst other things, result in a lowering of morale and motivation among its personnel (DOD 2007). Seen from a Western point of view, if the government fails to provide the SANDF with the necessary resources to undertake its missions in a satisfactory manner, this could have severe ramifications for South Africa's strategic role. Nevertheless, 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.

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 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 states. For instance, South Africa had to provide the initial financing for the Mozambican forces in Burundi before it would even considering deploying forces. The experience of AMIB and ONUB is valuable in the sense that it helped the establishment of the SADC BRIG and pointed out areas needing special attention. It also provided important lessons on the capacity of a small state, in military terms, like Mozambique. This could, for instance, prove beneficial in the area of communications equipment, where many African nations have a limited capacity, but to which South Africa is able to contribute.

The Importance of proximity

The experience from the three deployments 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 have lacked follow-up on the ground when they have been deployed. 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. This is despite the fact that the draft Defence Update document stipulates that PSOs are going to be defined as being equally important to national defence (DOD 2005b).

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 been within the sphere of South African national interests as a small, landlocked state with a large minority living in South Africa, making it totally dependent on its big neighbour (e.g. Alden and Soko 2006). 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 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 achieve its ambitions. This has been seen in recent years 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 1998 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 military expedition of the other three SADC members. 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 role in the DRC, as in Burundi, was to secure the imple-

mentation of a negotiated South African peace deal.

Proximity, political reality and objectives as well as capacity are the keys to understanding South Africa's behaviour and use of the SANDF. 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, as clear South African interests were at stake. In the Great Lakes instances, South African forces never used coercion in attempting to force the remaining rebel 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 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 that have actually made the political achievements possible.

At the time of writing, early in 2008, 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 a partly negative effort, as has to some extent been the case in the DRC.²⁸

The PSO experience and the SANDF Lead Nation capability?

The AU expects the regional powers to play a central role in the formation of the ASF, and the South African DOD argues that it will have to play a meaningful role in the SADC brigade, i.e. it will have difficulties in being operational without significant South African contributions. However, a question that remains to be answered is whether the SANDF has the capacity to take on this role, or even the role as lead nation, in future PSOs, primarily in the African theatre.

On paper the SANDF have the inventory that would enable it to function as a lead nation. However, the reality on the ground also shows that serious structural and capability issues negatively affect the capacity of the SANDF to undertake that role. The cases shows that in actual operations South Africa 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 in AMIB/ONUB.

Nevertheless, the cases also show that the SANDF, and therefore South Africa itself, has a significant capacity problem within its armed forces (Mandrup 2007a). Some of these problems are structural – general to private ratio, tooth-to-tail ratio, the relationship between force design and available resources – or due to bottlenecks, such as problems with rotating, serious health problems among personnel and vacancies among critical function personnel groups. However, other problems stem from domestic policy constraints, a lack of forced retrenchment possibilities for surplus personnel²⁹ as well as the balance between the need to fast-track officers and the need for experience in creating skilled staff officers.³⁰

With the introduction of the Military Skills Development System (MSDS)³¹ personnel group, the force started a much-needed rejuvenation process within the SANDF. This will help it sustain the present level of deployment without having to deploy the same individual twice within eighteen months, as, for instance, was the case in DRC and Burundi during the deployments from 2002 to 2006. Another personnel issue, one which has a negative effect on the lead nation role, is the poor standards of health among the personnel 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 fi-

financial repercussions linked to this issue are also serious (Mandrup 2007a pp.159-207).

Another area that is causing concern regarding the lead nation role of the SANDF is the financial problems faced by the force. The cases discussed showed that the SANDF is having difficulties in keeping its equipment operational. The force does not have, for various reasons, the required resources to maintain its equipment on a daily basis, thus creating a maintenance backlog (Mandrup 2007a). 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, as mentioned above, the DOD has declared to be not financially sustainable within the current defence budgetary frame (DOD, 2004 Defence Hearing). Another problem is the force structure itself, in which the force has a problematic tooth-to-tail ratio, which means that too few troops are being left at the sharp end, available for deployment. This is expensive and it has a negative impact on the capacity of the force (Le Roux, 2004). Part of the problem is, for instance, that 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 1,500-2,000 (ISS 2004 p. 10). One of the problems here is that the DOD in terms of salary-brackets and areas of responsibility has attempted to duplicate the system in the rest of the public sector.

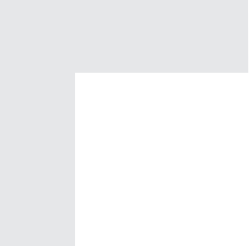
An additional aspect highlighted by the cases described above is the logistical problems facing the SANDF, creating serious problems for the SANDF's operational readiness level. This is partly caused by the open tender system favoured by the government, prolonging the defence acquisition process. In addition to this the DOD has insufficient resources for the daily maintenance of its basic equipment, which leaves the force without the necessary stock of spare parts. This problem is solved by the military units by cannibalising equipment, to keep the rest of the equipment operational, which is an expensive and time consuming way to run an armed force. This is of course not a uniquely South African problem; however, it raises a number of risks. Cannibalising happens to a certain extent in all defence forces, but must be firmly controlled by the logistical chiefs. If all levels of the defence force, which seems to be partly the case in the SANDF, starts cannibalising at their own initiative, it will reduce the combined number of operational equipment. In addition to this, cannibalising in reality means that the piece of equipment that is being cannibalised is never going to be operational again. An issue that worsens the operational readiness level and increases the incentive to cannibalise is the shortage of critical function personnel and in particular the lack of pilots within the force, make it difficult to sustain deployments.³² 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. The experience of MONUC shows that several UN inspection teams declared the

SANDF contingent to be at insufficient force readiness (Mandrup 2007a pp. 255-284).³³ The standard of training, discipline and equipment has turned out to be not much better than troops from the other African contributors (Iffland 2004). This correlates badly with the government's stated political ambitions of wanting to make a significant and meaningful contribution and thus make a difference, i.e. being an example for others to follow. The forces in the DRC have been deployed with equipment that several UN inspections have declared 'non-operational' and vital strategic components have not been made available (Iffland 2004; Meier 2004). For instance, of the total of 18 South African Armed Personnel Carriers (APC)³⁴ deployed in the DRC in August 2004, 13 were declared non-operational due to maintenance problems.³⁵

This pattern was confirmed at a re-inspection conducted in November 2004 (Meier 2004). It indicates that the stated political commitment is not being followed by actual commitment on the ground. South Africa cannot take on its responsibility as a lead nation with relatively weak African partners without the capacity to keep its 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 critical function personnel will have a seriously negative effect on the capacity of, for instance, the future SADC ASF brigade if it is not remedied, because certain capabilities be (partly) unavailable. On a more practical note, the low levels of operational readiness also mean that South Africa does not receive any reimbursement for the malfunctioning equipment, putting even more pressure on the already stretched resources of the SANDF.

Finally, the SANDF has a force cultural problem in the sense that its forces on deployment have so far exhibited an extremely poor disciplinary record. There has been an 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 a problem 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.

On a slightly more positive note, the SANDF has made an important difference during its deployments. The force has been highly praised, for instance, during the high-risk combat operations of previous years in DR. Congo, both in the Kivu provinces and in Ituri. This illustrates that the force does indeed have a high fighting capacity, which of course is something that needs to be maintained. The complex asymmetry that characterises many present-day conflicts and the robust



nature of the ASF brigades underlines the fact that there is still a need for this offensive capability. However, the disciplinary problems need to be tackled, and most of the other problems relate back to the DOD, the force planners and the politicians, who make the job difficult for the forces in operations.

The cases discussed above 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 open, consultative review processes into defence policy, 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.

Conclusion

“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”. (DOD 2004b p. 36)

The prospect of 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 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?³⁶ 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 facing. Moreover, the SANDF is a relatively potent and disciplined fighting force, though there is a general perception within the force of a lowered capacity and quality. As good as the force has conducted itself during operations, as many disciplinary problems have emerged while being in camp.

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, the capacity to function as a lead nation is not necessarily tied to the capacity to deploy large force numbers.³⁷ More important for South Africa is the ability to provide critical functions and thus to tie the operation together. South Africa is slowly expanding its capacity in this 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.³⁸ 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. The most likely result in this process will be that the SANDF will be 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 (Motumi and Hauter 2003). 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, if the Defence Update goes through Cabinet and Parliament, the army will be able to benefit from an increased focus on its equipment needs. However, the problems it has in attracting and retaining critical personnel will reduce its capacity to deliver such capabilities to the SADC ASF brigade and PSOs in general.

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 has helped rejuvenate and right-size the force's composition and have had a positive impact on the army's ability to deploy and even more so in the future. 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, some of the pressure will have been taken 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.³⁹

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 per cent or more than 16,000 personnel being HIV-positive. 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 distribution by the SANDF of antiretroviral drugs to its infected members might be an important step enabling them to continue to serve. However, this category of staff could still not be deployed to international PSOs because of the stage their illnesses have reached 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 severely negative effect on their esprit du corps.

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 to purchase the 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, resources that could have been more usefully 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 fault of the SANDF, 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 Defence Update drafters is therefore to increase the number of available soldiers for international missions by solving the structural problems arising from, for instance, the tooth-to-tail ratio while creating a sustainable force structure, revitalising the Reserve 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 being that "defence gets more than its share as it is" (Ngombane 2004).

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Interview with South African Ambassador to the DRC Mr. Sisa Ngombane, 3 November 2004, in Kinshasa.

Hauter, Rolf & Motumi, Tsepe, 2003

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.

Iffland, 2004

Interview in MONUC HQ with Lt. Col. Iffland, MA to the Force Commander 9 November 2004

Khaniye, 2004

Interview with SA Military Attaché Col. J. Khaniye in Kinshasa, 1 November 2004.

Le Roux, 2004

Interview with Maj. Gen. (Retd) Len Le Roux at ISS in Pretoria, 21 October 2004

Meier, 2004

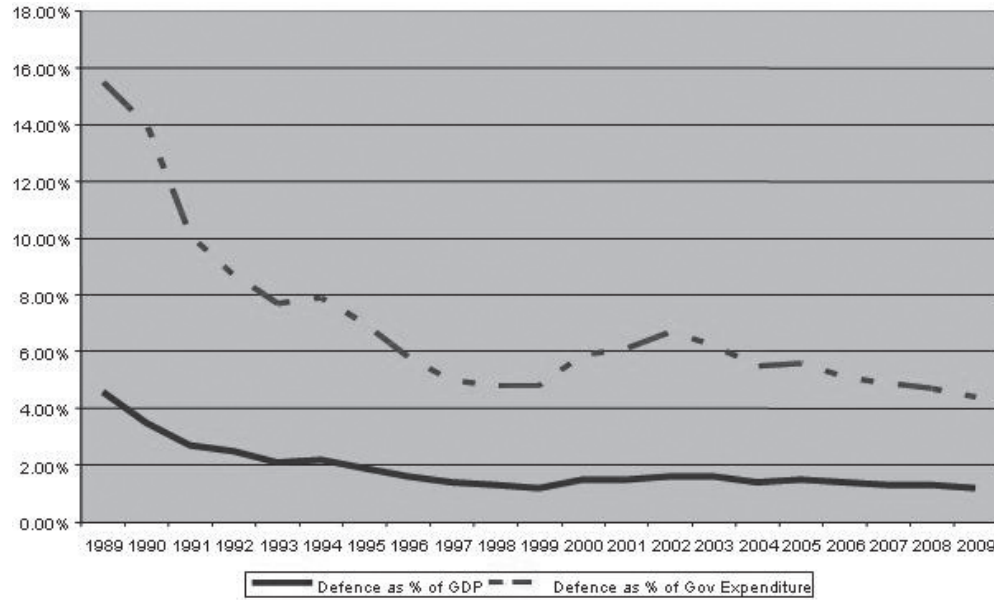
SANDF WO I A. Meier, member of the UN inspection team, in Camp Iveco 11 November 2004

Ratala, 2008

Rear Admiral Ed Ratala, Chief Joint Operations Division, SANDF, at Thaba Tswane, 21 February 2008 Appendix 1

Appendix 1

The Development in South Africa Defence Spending



Endnotes

¹ This report is part two of a report on the role of the military tool in South African foreign policy. This first part is titled Defence and Foreign Policy: the case of the South Africa; it is also available at www.fak.dk.

² For instance, expressed in then US Ambassador Thomas N. McNamara's speech in Johannesburg, 20 February 1996, on The US approach to Regional Security; and in Speech by Julius Nyerere cited by Vale and Maseko, *South Africa and the Renaissance*, p. 283.

³ The name of the South African armed forces was changed in 1994 from SADF to SANDF to mark the transition.

⁴ For an overview of the development in defence spending see appendix.

⁵ 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.

⁶ Current South African President Thabo Mbeki in 1997 put forward 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. Vale and Maseko, *South Africa and the Renaissance*, p. 274. Furthermore, 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 article to go any further into these divisions and the fundamentally different perceptions and critiques of the ANC government's foreign policy relating to this.

⁷ 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.

⁸ For further reading on Non-offensive Defence see for instance Moeller, *Defensive Restructuring of the Military in Sub-Saharan Africa*, in Geoff Harris (ed.): *Demilitarising sub-Saharan Africa*.

⁹ The SDP has been highly controversial in relation to the chosen equipment, to the cost of the deal in a country with so large developmental problems, and finally because of corruption allegation surrounding the deal. For further reading see for instance Feinstein 2007, p. 154-207

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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. See also statement by ANC MP Thandi Tobias below.

¹² Operation Intexo is a SANDF effort to control the borders, while Operation

Stipper deals with rural security. 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.

¹³ The DOD in 2004 started a much needed process of updating the White Paper and the Review. However, the 2005 draft update paper is so far the only publicly available document from this process, and the review seem to have been delayed in government.

¹⁴ In this deployment, the ongoing Operation Intexo, the SANDF operates with three months rotation. In addition to this, the SANDF also runs Operation Stipper in 9 provinces, using 23 platoons from the Army Territorial Reserve units which have, in support of the police, the responsibility for rural security. DOD, 2006 Annual Report, p. 101. These reserve units are in the process of being closed down, a process that according to plan should be finalised by 31 March 2009.

¹⁵ 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*.

¹⁶ This is despite the fact that similar operations had been conducted domestically for a long period in, for instance, Natal, and also that the SADF had great experience with "WHAM" missions during the liberation, though the success of these operations was questionable.

¹⁷ The principles of Collective/Common Security argues that the state's security dilemma is not best solved at the individual state level, but by instituting communal commitments whereby each state undertake to join in common action against those which threaten the territorial integrity or political independence. For a collective security mechanism to be successful it requires common values and norms, for instance commitment to democratic principles, and high level of trust. The basic objective of Collective Security systems is to make Collective Defence redundant.

¹⁸ Term used by Chester Crocker in his 1993 book entitled *High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood*.

¹⁹ This is not to say that all the states in southern Africa are undemocratic, but simply to underline the fact that the diplomatic rules that the South African government has to handle are significantly dissimilar internationally and regionally.

²⁰ 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 to be taken care off before deployment.

²¹ See SA DOD Annual Report 2004/05 for further details of the South African involvement in the process of ASF formation.

²² South Africa has for instance designated sanitation units, engineers, the parachute battalion, small boats for water patrols, communication equipment, divers, blue water capability and helicopters.

²³ It has been argued that if the DODs share of the GDP was increased to 2 pct, from the present level of 1, 5 pct., it would solve the DODs financial constrains. Conversation with former Deputy Chief of Defence Admiral Trainer at the Parliament Defence Hearing November 2004.

²⁴ The empirical data used in the article is based on the data from three case studies presented in a Ph.D. dissertation by the author, Thomas Mandrup, 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. The dissertation is available at <http://forsvaret.dk/NR/rdonlyres/9AE29043-4E20-4BBD-B1FB-F7960E927A8D/0/Africasalvationordespair.pdf>

²⁵ The South African led intervention in Lesotho called Combined Task Force Bolesas.

²⁶ African Mission in Burundi and United Nations Operation in Burundi.

²⁷ The operation was plagued by, for instance, problems in keeping the equipment operational, disciplinary problems amongst the personnel and securing the necessary economic resources. For further reading, see Mandrup, Peace diplomacy: The South African National Defence Force in Burundi, in Cawthra, eds., forthcoming.

²⁸ See below for an elaboration of this point; see also Report of the Portfolio Committee on Defence on an Oversight visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, dated 14 March 2006; or Mandrup 2007.

²⁹ This is, of course, controversial, especially in a country with up 36 per cent unemployment. However, this is just to illustrate that from an institutional point of view it is problematic to have a large number of personnel that, for instance, have lost their operational capability.

³⁰ Again this is a delicate issue, because of the potential conflict between different ambitions, i.e. creating a force that is representative of the population of South Africa and the need of a force that consists of skilled and experienced officers. In Denmark it is argued that it generally takes 15-20 years to educate a good staff officer.

³¹ The Military Skills Development System (MSDS) was started in 2003 to ensure the enhancement of the SANDF's mission readiness through the systematic rejuvenation of its human resource composition through yearly intakes of the country's youth. The MSDS also ensures a continuous provision of personnel to the SANDF reserves.

³² In its March 2006 report from the DRC, the Portfolio Committee on Defence also identified the DOD's procurement practise as creating serious problems for the deployed forces (Parliament 2006).

³³ It has form people in the DOD been argued that part of the SANDFs problems detected in UN missions is due to the fact that some of the equipment was declared to be non-operational on account of smaller malfunctions, such as a broken windshield. See for instance South African Army Journal 2007. However, on the inspection that the author participated in the DRC in November 2004, no

equipment was declared for nonoperational on that account.

³⁴ The Caspir armoured personnel carrier is the primary vehicle used by the SANDF. This APC has been used by the force since 1980 and was battle-proofed in Angola during the liberation/border wars. The quality of this APC has been seen recently when Russia bought 100 Caspirs because of its unique protection against mines.

³⁵ The inspections are part of standard UN routines in which the forces deployed are inspected at least once every six months to check their force readiness (FR) level. The UN also inspects the state of the equipment on 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, no batteries for their binoculars, and 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.

³⁶ Force-to-force ratios measure how big an international force must be to balance the indigenous force and enable it to fulfil its mandate.

³⁷ Comment by Major Mads Rahbek, Danish Armed Forces.

³⁸ 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.

³⁹ Project established to revitalise the reserve force.

