

Conclusion

Martin Rupiya

After two years of sustained research—beginning in November 2003 with a general call for papers, followed soon thereafter by a methodology conference attended by selected authors—the project on the history of militaries in Southern African has finally delivered a product.

This is the complete study. It focuses on a specific region of Southern Africa, is informed by a common development—the political decolonisation of African states—and is assessed over the specific period of December 1961 when Tanganyika achieved its independence until April 1994, when the last of the 13 states, South Africa, finally attained a similar status.

African military practitioners, academics and policy makers with considerable expertise and experience in the field (as explained in the introduction) wrote each of the national chapters. By providing a historical analysis that is empirically grounded, this contribution should be able to win over sceptics and those who have so far been reluctant to tell their own stories.

The chapters cover the history of militaries since independence in Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Namibia, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The primary focus of *Evolutions & Revolutions: A Contemporary History of Militaries in Southern Africa* has been to document how independent states responded to the challenges presented by defence

and security threats that emanated from both internal and external sources in the post-colonial era. These reactions included formulation, adoption and implementation of policy options, the creation of institutions, the allocation of funding and the management of the impact of the processes throughout the life of each new state.

The common point of departure of all 13 case studies was from the era when leading agitating nationalists, either through civil disobedience or armed struggle, once in office, reacted to threat perceptions and created related instruments of force and coercion. It is against this background that the work attempts to provide insight into how an important part of the bureaucracy—the military—was/has been established, financed, controlled, equipped, commanded, reinforced and maintained in independent Southern Africa. Research results have provided a critical mirror that reveals, in retrospect, the rationale as to why policy makers and practitioners behave(d) in a particular manner in their quest to provide for national defence and security.

In facilitating the production of *Evolutions & Revolutions: A Contemporary History of Militaries in Southern Africa*, the project has achieved several firsts. Not only have we bridged the gap in our knowledge of Southern Africa's turbulent experience over the past 30 to 40 years, we have also demolished the myth associated with a reluctance on the part of African luminaries since the 1960s to put pen to paper. The customary preference for the majority of our African leaders is only to provide cursory reference to events in oral form, with the written culture still to be inculcated.

Yet another achievement is what we envisage as the impact of the book, first among our target audience (the security policy-maker and practitioner) as well as, of course, the chapter writers and other interested persons in the region and beyond. From the participants in the project, we also expect confirmation of the secondary aim of the project—that is, the creation of an impetus and nucleus of a cadre force that now takes forward the debate, through research and publication on military issues in the future. We are convinced that once this expectation becomes a reality, then this is likely to be emulated in other regions elsewhere, and specifically on the African continent.

There are a number of areas that spring to mind in this consideration. For example, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit has authorised the documentation of the liberation movements' history and that of the Front Lines States (FLS)—an organisation that included Nigeria among the participating Southern African countries.

The liberation history project by SADC has been placed under the former Tanzanian colonel, later brigadier, who was the point person for the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Liberation Committee in the delivery and sharing out of war materiel to the region's liberation movements. We hope that this project will find common cause with skills flowing from this endeavour. This is because we are convinced that the experience gained from this project has already prepared and equipped some of the researchers with the ability to make a meaningful contribution to new, related research and publication oriented initiatives.

A second spin-off from the production of this book is that it now provides researched and analysed information on structures and capacities, in historical terms, of the foundations holding up the militaries in SADC. As a result, this knowledge can form the basis of undertaking the next crucial step—namely, that of encouraging wide-ranging security sector reform, initially at the national level but later at the regional level too.

To this end, the current discussion, protocols and intentions by the United Nations (UN) encouraging regions throughout the world to build adequate military capacity around common defence and security policy has found resonance in Africa. On the continent, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) has provided the political leadership and centre around which the Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP) has emerged, giving rise to the African Stand-By Force (ASF). As the region moves towards fulfilling the minimum requirements by 2010, as set out by the PSC through the CASDP, the envisaged structures of the ASF specifically within the SADC region are likely to benefit from the information on policy, strategy, composition and structure contained in this volume.

LESSONS LEARNT

Important lessons can be drawn from the various chapters, and it is the purpose of this concluding chapter to draw attention to a number of these aspects. There are some general lessons as well as a few unique and specific experiences that we wish to review, while strongly urging readers to refer to the individual chapters for elaboration.

The first general lesson that emerges from a comprehensive assessment of the chapters is that there was a difference in approaching the military question between countries that attained independence

through negotiation and those that had to take up the armed struggle. Those nationalists who did not engage in the armed struggle appear to have assumed power without a blue-print in their manifestos on the military question. However, in Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, where the armed struggle became very much part of the political settlement tool, in that environment, a military integration programme was a priority and became part of the immediate constitutional reform pillars.

By contrast, in Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia, security sector or defence and security policy reform was low on the list of nation-building priorities at the outset. It was only when the 'still weak and evolving state' was threatened that attention turned towards addressing the military question. For instance, in then Tanganyika of 1961 until the mutiny of January 1964, the new leaders appeared unconcerned with the military question. The prime minister and his new cabinet had their attention focused on other dimensions of poverty alleviation, and in the process offered the defence and security responsibility of the new state to the UN Trusteeship Office. This was politely refused. However, after the mutiny/military coup of January 1964, this hands-off non-interference policy changed radically, to result in the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi party taking direct and effective control of the military. After these events, the revolutionary methods became almost the normal reaction following a root-and-branch reform of the security sector. This internal security policy and civil–military relationship was only partly abandoned nearly 30 years later following global multiparty democracy and the recommendations made by the late Justice Francis Nyalali Commission of 1991. The latter called for a break with the past and distance between the civil service, the ruling party, government and the armed forces.

A similar trend was noted in the case of Mauritius following its independence in 1963 against the background of growing internal insecurity. The result was to push the leading nationalist political party into entering into formal security arrangements with the former colonial powers—France and Britain—even before formal political independence was bestowed.

The same can be said in identifying a particular regional trend with events in Malawi. In that country, the events around the August 1964 cabinet crisis that later culminated in invasions and insurrections in 1965 and 1967 created an environment in which Prime Minister Hastings Kamuzu Banda provided a new security policy to be implemented by a

faction of the ruling party—the Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP). While some attention had been paid to the Ghana-like national youth movements in 1963, the MYP was perceived to play a mundane role, concerned with motivating the nation on issues of food production and poverty alleviation. However, the internal security challenges that followed provided the rationale for Dr Banda to abandon the standing army and thrust the implementation of his security policy in the hands of the MYP. This reliance on the MYP was to continue until Operation Bwezani in December 1993, launched to effectively disband the MYP. The examples noted in Tanzania, Mauritius and Malawi provide an interesting perspective of how regimes in the new states reacted differently to almost similar internal challenges.

Meanwhile, the examples of countries emerging from the context of an armed struggle clearly indicate the level of priority accorded to the military question in the policies, institutions and expenditure patterns. Furthermore, in these states there is a clearly identified symbolism that includes defence and security structures. A distinct example is Namibia, where one of the roles of the armed forces is to foster integration in the wider, previously divided society.

Then there is a final category, the monarchies and former protectorates that were caught up in the whirlwind of wars and conflicts in Southern Africa. This includes Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which, on closer examination, each took a different route in the evolution of its forces. Botswana adopted the most radical security policy, throwing its weight behind the OAU Liberation Committee and the FLS. A similar trend was followed by Lesotho and Swaziland—countries that had to balance their geographic location within South Africa with their support for the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), without upsetting their precarious relationship with apartheid South Africa. Meanwhile, Malawi was the odd man out in the region, prepared to work with colonial Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) and apartheid South Africa.

In concluding, we need to take a brief look at two aspects: foreign military assistance in the region from 1961-94; and a commentary on military expenditure.

FOREIGN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO SOUTHERN AFRICA

The point to note on military assistance in the region is that under different ideologies and philosophies, countries have offered each other

political and military assistance. During the 1960s, the FLS marshalled military assistance on behalf of the OAU to liberation movements and their military formations from South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia. In return, colonial regimes in Southern Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa, Israel, Portugal, Taiwan and South Africa also provided support to proxy forces aimed at undermining the nationalist armed struggle project.

Over and above this, however, the region also witnessed the involvement of a number of countries offering military assistance of different sorts to countries in the region. Included here were the super powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—as well as France, Britain, West Germany and the former East Germany before the latter collapsed in 1989.

Most military assistance was to support the colonial and settler project against the nationalist armed struggle project, until full decolonisation in 1994. Thereafter, support switched to the independent states in different forms. The most interesting example of this was Britain's support of the Mozambican Armed Forces after the Rome Treaty of 1992, hosted in eastern Zimbabwe.

There were also other players outside of the Cold War context that offered military assistance through either sending contingents or equipment to the region, or providing opportunities in their own countries. Included here is Kenya, whose presence in Southern Africa in one country or another from the 1970s until the 1990s is unique. Kenya was involved in Swaziland, Namibia and Zimbabwe (in the Commonwealth Monitoring Force), and also had unsavoury involvement with Renamo in Mozambique and with the MYP in Malawi. Kenya therefore appears to be one of the countries that played a prominent role in Southern Africa, wading on both sides of philosophical and ideological divide during the armed struggle and beyond, such as serving later with the United Nations Transitional Administration Group (UNTAG) in Namibia that replaced the departing South African Defence Force.

The Ghanaian military also played a role, supporting the emerging Zambian Defence Force. India and Pakistan, despite their differences on that sub-continent, both played a role in Southern Africa, consolidating the Pan Africanist agenda. Their militaries were engaged in Zambia, Namibia, Lesotho and Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe also received support from China, Egypt and Vietnam). The Angolan government forces and the various peacekeeping missions launched in that country also received

support from Brazil, as did the Namibian navy; again to complement and consolidate the post-colonial independent project. Finally, assistance has also swung round to the West during the era of UN peacekeeping missions and regional integration.

A COMMENTARY ON REGIONAL MILITARY EXPENDITURE

Significant amounts of money have been spent on the region's security demands and continue to be so allocated. For a number of factors, however, a summary of this expenditure using available Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) data, or any such similar tool, fails to provide an adequate regional picture.

This is because military expenditure has been furtive, in-kind and difficult to quantify. Take, for instance, Tanzania's military commitment to the FLS and its expenditure on its own national service, militia, the Islands of Zanzibar and even the financing of the Kagera War with Uganda from 1978 to (in theory) 1981, when the more overt actions were terminated although a presence continued to be entertained until the mid-1980s. It is impossible to correctly quantify these wide-ranging allocations.

Complicating the picture further are cases such as Malawi and Swaziland, where external factors not only directed these countries' security policies but also financed the process.

In this context, each chapter has attempted to provide some sort of indication of military expenditure in order to guide our interpretation of events in the region. The cautionary commentary by SIPRI, the renowned research institute, is important, however, indicating that graphs, expenditure columns and statistics must be treated with the proverbial pinch of salt. It is also instructive to note that SIPRI data is sometimes 'originated' from statistics produced by other organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, whose calculations may seek to emphasise different points. Put simply, attempting to compare military expenditure figures between states—or even year-on-year within a state—may be as different as comparing oranges to apples.

To this end, SIPRI has this to say (<http://first.sipri.org/non_first/result_milex.php?>):

Military expenditure data from different volumes of the Yearbooks should not be combined because of data revision between volumes.

Revisions can be significant; e.g. when a better time series becomes available; the entire SIPRI series is revised accordingly. When data are available in local currency but not in constant US\$ or as a share of GDP, this is due to lack of economic data. Revisions in constant dollar series can also originate in significant revisions in the economic statistics of [the] IMF that are used for these calculations.

Interestingly, and indicated in the table, force levels in the region have been declining steadily since South Africa's 'independence' in 1994. The available figures demonstrate that most countries (Tanzania, Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia) have cut their earlier force levels by half, while others appear to be remaining static.

Another important trend is that all the countries' militaries are for the first time working together, informed by a coherent security policy under SADC and the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. The two trends are important in that they can be relied upon to precipitate long-neglected national security sector reform programmes that are guided by the regional reform agenda.

Force levels for SADC countries, 1990–2003

Year	Angola	Botswana	DRC	Lesotho	Malawi	Namibia
1990	115 000	6000	55 000	2000	7000	8000
1991	150 000	7000	60 000	2000	8000	8000
1992	128 000	6000	55 000	2000	10 000	8000
1993	128 000	6000	55 000	2000	10 000	8000
1994	100 000	6000	55 000	2000	10 000	8000
1995	100 000	7000	55 000	2000	8000	8000
1996	97 000	7000	60 000	2000	10 000	8000
1997	100 000	8000	60 000	2000	5000	9000
1998	114 000	9000	60 000	2000	5000	9000
1999	120 000	9000	40 000	2000	5000	9000
2000	120 000	9000	40 000	2000	5000	9000
2001	146 000	9000	40 000	2000	5000	9000
2002	100 000	9000	40 000	2000	5000	9000
2003	130 000	9000	40 000	2000	5000	9000
Total	1 648 000	10 7000	715 000	28 000	98 000	119 000

Source: Bonn International Centre for Conversion, conversion surveys, March 2005, <http://www.bicc.de/>

In the final analysis, *Evolutions & Revolutions: A Contemporary History of Militaries in Southern Africa* has been an effort to capture the rich and vibrant experience of the region during its conflict-ridden era.

The work has also been about trying to understand how the key bureaucratic components that are responsible for executing the states' monopoly of force and coercion—the military—were organised, financed, equipped, deployed, controlled and managed then and since. The next challenge must be focused on moving the agenda forward, motivating for a second phase that addresses the conceptual suggestions of a regional security sector project based on national security interests, inherent capacities, and geophysical and strategic advantages.

South Africa	Swaziland	Tanzania	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Total
85 000	3000	40 000	16 000	45 000	448 000
80 000	3000	40 000	16 000	45 000	485 000
72 000	3000	46 000	16 000	48 000	445 000
72 000	3000	46 000	16 000	48 000	405 000
84 000	3000	46 000	18 000	47 000	392 000
120 000	3000	35 000	18 000	45 000	413 000
107 000	3000	35 000	18 000	43 000	397 000
100 000	3000	35 000	22 000	39 000	390 000
95 000	3000	34 000	22 000	39 000	285 000
81 000	3000	34 000	22 000	39 000	371 000
73 000	3000	30 000	22 000	40 000	360 000
65 000	3000	27 000	22 000	39 000	374 000
60 000	3000	27 000	22 000	36 000	320 000
56 000	3000	27 000	17 000	29 000	334 000
1 150 000	42 000	502 000	267 000	582 000	441 5000