RAISING ARMIES IN A ROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD

SOLDIERS, GUERILLAS AND MERCENARIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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1 PREFACE

While the instruments of war, including the weaponry, are surely important, one of the timeless verities of war is that it is fought by people against other people. It therefore matters how armies are raised, as this has, among other things, an impact on the loyalty, "morale" and fighting spirit of the troops, hence also on the military power available to the State.[1] The choice between a militia structure, universal conscription or professionalization (or even privatization) also has implications for civil-military relations and may thus have a (beneficial or detrimental) impact on state-building.

The following article an overview of the personnel structures of the armed forces in Southern Africa, with a special focus on South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Angola. As an introduction a brief survey of recent developments in Europe in this field is provided, followed by a brief and inevitably superficial account of the historical background of the present (Southern) African armies. The focus is almost exclusively placed on armies with some consideration given to other security forces such as militias ands paramilitary forces. Both navies and air forces, however, are almost totally disregarded.
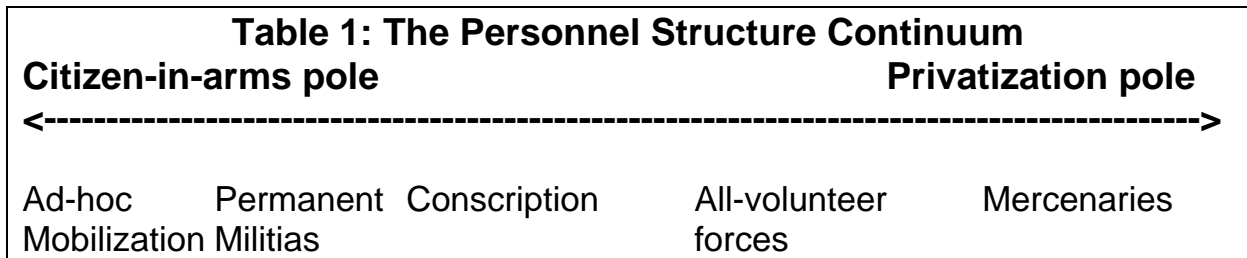
2 INTRODUCTION: HOW TO RAISE ARMIES

In principle there are four ways of raising armed forces, and we find elements of each in Southern and the rest of sub-Saharan Africa., both historically and today, just as we do in Europe.

2.1 Modes of Recruitment

Different countries have made different choices with regard to how to raise their armed forces, and it is difficult to discern any clear trend. It is counter-intuitive that one personnel structure should be superior, by its very nature, as this cannot explain the actual diversity. That countries have actually opted for different personnel structures constitutes strong *prima facie* evidence that this is very context-dependent, i.e. that particular structures may be appropriate for some countries in certain periods, but that there is none that is suitable for all countries at all times.

In real life we find few pure (or archetypal) cases, but personnel structures are almost always blends of different forms. In Table 1 pure cases could be ordered along a continuum ranging from the "citizen in arms" model to complete professionalization. This continuum describes

different degrees of division of labour, which also corresponds (albeit not completely) to degrees of statehood. This is not particularly surprising, in view of the several recent studies about the intimate relationship between war and the State.[2]

Table 1: The Personnel Structure Continuum				
Citizen-in-arms pole				**Privatization pole**
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Ad-hoc Mobilization	Permanent Militias	Conscription	All-volunteer forces	Mercenaries

At the citizen-in-arms pole we have the almost state-less society (or one where state and nation are almost synonymous) in which the army *is* the population; at the privatization pole we have a situation where the state has subdelegated the use of armed force to private firms, i.e. private military companies (PMCs) employing mercenaries.

Neither of these are compatible with "strong states" enjoying a Weberian "monopoly on the legitimate use of force".[3] Statehood is more compatible with either of the three intermediate personnel structures, i.e. "swiss-type" militias, "European-style" conscription, and US-style professionals.

- "Ad hoc mobilization" implies that the State has no standing armed forces, but relies exclusively on raising such forces if and when the need should arise—as recommended, e.g. by Alexander Hamilton for the United States of the 18th Century.[4]
- A permanent militia such as that of Switzerland entails the obligation of the entire (male) citizenry to defend the country in an emergency, manifested in regular training and refresher courses. On the other hand, the milita system removes the need for standing armed forces, except for a very small cadre.
- Conscription entails a universal obligation of all citizens to defend the State (albeit everywhere, except for Israel, confined to the male population) and to undergo training for this purpose. The standing army thus comprises the officers' corps (almost always professionals), a group of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and the conscripts, some of which are, at any given time "trainees". Upon termination of their active service, conscripts are often enrolled in the reserve forces as are former officers and NCOs.
- All-volunteer forces are State-employed professionals, for whom

soldiering is a job like any other. Reserve force options are often also available for former professional soldiers.
- Mercenaries are, likewise, professional soldiers. However, in contrast to the above, they are "free agents", selling their services to the highest bidder, be that another state or non-state actors, and usually on a short-term contract basis.

2.2 Europe

By the turn of the millennium the picture of military personnel structures was a mixed one, even in Europe.[5] As Table 2 shows, countries in fairly comparable positions had opted for different modes of recruitment, ranging from militia systems to professional (all-volunteer) forces.

Table 2: Military Manpower in European Countries			
Conscription		**Abandoning conscription**	**All-Volunteer Forces**
Regular		Political decision taken, but no implementation	**Recent abandonment of conscription**
Albania	Poland		
Belarus	Romania		
Bosnia	FRY	Russia	Belgium
Croatia	Slovakia	Bulgaria	Netherlands
Cyprus	Slovenia	Hungary	
Czech		Ukraine	
Republic	**With**	Turkey	
Denmark	**militia**		
Estonia	**elements**		
Germany	Austria		
Greece	Finland	**Political decision**	
Latvia	Sweden	**under**	Tradition of
Lithuania		**implementation**	professionalizat
FYROM		France	ion
Moldova	**Pure**	Italy	Ireland
Norway	**militia**	Spain	Luxembourg
	Switzerla nd	Portugal	United Kingdom

Moreover, in the course of the nineties, several countries have reconsidered their tradition of conscription, albeit for different reasons:

- The Netherlands and Belgium have already effectively abolished

conscription—albeit in the sense of "deactivating" it whilst maintaining the principled obligation of all citizens to do military service. Both France, Spain, Portugal and Italy are, likewise, in the process of phasing out conscription in favour of all-volunteer, professional forces. The main rationale for this seems to have been a recognition that a war of national defence had become a highly unlikely eventuality, and that the armed forces were much more likely to be used for peace support operations or (at least since NATO's war against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, FRY, in 1999) for ("humanitarian" or other) military interventions. For such missions professionals are deemed more appropriate, if only because they can be more rapidly deployed.

- Russia is clearly interested in substituting smaller, professional armed forces for the present large conscript army, and is merely waiting for the economic situation to allow it to implement this. The rationale seems to be a desire to rationalize and to capitalize on the improved security political situation facing the country after the end of the East-West confrontation.

- The situation is the same in other parts of the former USSR (e.g. Kazakhstan and Ukraine) as well as in former Warsaw Pact countries such as Bulgaria and even Hungary or the Czech Republic, the latter two since 1999 members of NATO.

- Even Turkey, which in 1990 decided to phase out conscription but subsequently abandoned this plan, is seemingly now in the process of moving towards all-volunteer forces.

Even those countries which have taken no decisions on reform (yet) have seen serious debates on possible alternatives to whatever happens to be the prevailing form of recruitment, as was the case of the German debate on alternatives to conscription or the Swiss debate on a complete abolition of the militia army. Other countries have seen a "creeping professionalization" without any major debate, producing a growing share of professionals in the mixed personnel structure, tantamount to a piecemeal phasing out of conscription—as in the Nordic countries. The share of conscripts in the total armed forces is thus steadily declining so that most West European countries are now fielding either mixed or predominantly professional armies.

We have thus seen that there remains a significant diversity with regard to the personnel structures of the armed forces, even in a fairly homogenous "region" such as "the North".

3 AFRICAN ARMIES: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the following, I shall have a look at comparable developments in Southern Africa—with some additional comments on developments in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. The focus is placed on the SADC countries with a special focus on Angola, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

As a background to this, however, a very preliminary and superficial account of the historical background is provided. It is divided, somewhat arbitrarily, into pre-colonial times, the colonial era, the liberation struggle and the post-colonial period.

3.1 Pre-Colonial Times

Our knowledge of the general situation in Africa before the advent of the Europeans is relatively scarce, mainly because of the almost complete absence of written sources.[6] Hence, it would be frivolous to aim at any exhaustive account of the military manpower systems. We do, however, have some scattered glimpses of into social and army organization.

Even though cavalry played a role, e.g. in the Sudan, most armies consisted almost entirely of infantry,[7] organized according to four different models: citizen armies (i.e. militias), locally enrolled troops figting under local chieftains, centrally enrolled soldiers divided into (more or less standing) units, and professional soldiers. Many of these troops were (at least *de facto*) slaves. The differences between the various African countries (only some of which deserve the label "states") were, however, substantial.[8]
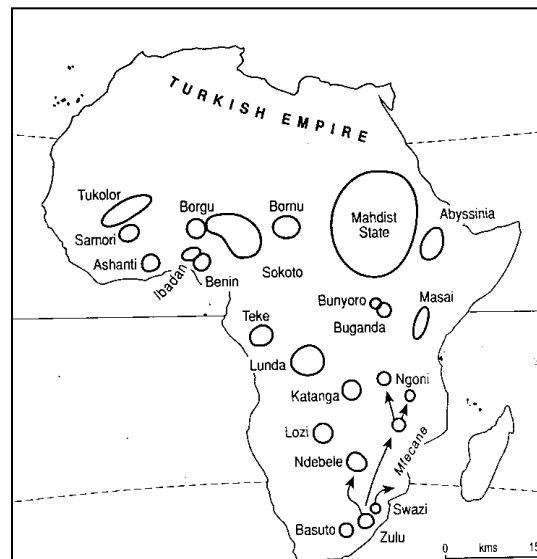
Fig 1: Pre-Colonial Africa[9]

- Ethiopia undertook an attempted transformation of the "feudal levy" system of enrollment into a genuine national army when the country suffered a defeat to a British expeditionary force in 1867. Quite rapidly, however, the reform was continued with the result that, by the 1890s, Ethiopia was able to field an army numbering around 100,000 troops, capable of repulsing the Italian attempted conquest in 1896 in

the Battle of Andowa.[10]

- The *Jihad* admy of the Tukolors of Senegal (stemming from the Sudan) in the mid-19th century was composed of volunteers (*sofas*) as well as conscripted troops (*tuburru*). The former were generally loyal (partly because of their "licence to loot") while the latter were less so, perhaps because they did not have the same licence.[11]
- The Asante (or Ashanti) empire in West Africa (roughly the present Ghana) was moderately centralized with vanquished tribes being obliged to provide warriers to the empire. There was thus near-universal compulsary male military service, but the organization was based on matrilineal clans. The army at full mobilization numbered around 200,000 troops, including slaves from neighbouring states enrolled in the army. The army, however, was mainly based on a feudal organization, entailing a levy of freemen. The high fighting spirit related to strong unit cohesion—with freemen coming from the same localities and with the slaves also belonging to families, hence also with something to lose from defeat. With the exception of a small cadre force, the organization was similar to militia system, consisting mainly of part-time warriors receiving no peacetime drill or training. [12]
- The Mali Confederation was able to muster up to 100,000 men under arms, according to Arab sources—most or which constituted a standing army garissoned in towns across the territory. Troops were initially freemen, commanded by the minor nobility and raised by "feudal" levy, even though slave batallions were later added.[13]
- The Songhay empire of the 15th and 16th centuries raised its standing army on a territorial basis, including the best warriors of defeated tribes alongside freemen of the empire itself, serving in the 30,000 troops large infantry, to which should be added a sizable cavalry of 10,000 horsemen of the nobility.[14]
- In Rwanda centralized armed forces were created, when King Mutabazi forbade the recruitment of warriors by chiefs without his permission and obliged leading Tutsis to send their sons to court for military (and other) training, albeit rather serving as a bodyguard for the King than as a national army. In the 18th century the centralization of the armed forces was taken a bit further when the King's monopoly on appointing commanders of army bands was extended to the frontier regions, where commanders were allocated land—also as a means to control subdued peoples (mainly Hutus).[15]
- The Zande "empire" north of the Congo River had a fairly elaborate army organization, recruiting, on a voluntary basis, the warriors as youths into companies on a district basis. The warriors were all

unmarried, and habitually left the service upon marriage. They were under the command of representatives of the King and were used both for military and other service. In times of war, however, the military ranks were swelled by others, including the married men who were enrolled on a local basis.[16]

- The Kongo of the 16th Century was a fairly well organized kingdom. However, the state had no standing army, even though the King had a bodyguard, mainly composed of foreigners (i.e.slaves). In addition to this, villagers were raised by levy in case of war. After 1575, however, a small standing army was created, albeit mainly serving as a bodyguard for the king.[17]
- The Luba and Lunda empires, centered west of Lake Tanganyika, had no standing army, but relied on a militarized retinue travelling with the chiefs to collect tribute.[18]
- The Kingdom of Nkore in Western Uganda was based on succession wars, where the ruling *Mugabe* was succeded by the strongest of the contestants in the small civil wars that followed his death (often by suicide). However, the troops for these wars were raised on an ad hoc basis, mainly on the basis of (matrileneal) clans.[19]
- The Zulu kingdom in present South Africa was based on the norm that all male youths had to serve as warriors immediately upon their formal initiation into manhood. The armies were raised locally, by means of a kind of militia system, where the warriors lived at home but took up arms when summoned by local chieftains. Under Shaka (early 19th century) these armed forces were brought under centralized control of the King, thus creating an almost modern standing army, where warriers were trained and garrisoned until marriage.[20]
- The Matabele Kingdom on the border between the present South Africa and Zimbabwe was established by a defected Zulu general. The state initially rested on the military foundations of a general conscription of all young males from the age of fifteen, forming a standing army, and the enrolment of all the older men in an army reserves. The raiding of neighbours (e.g. the Mashone) constituted a major source of the kingdom's income.[21]

There was thus a plethora of organizational forms for the armed forces in pre-colonial Africa—just as was the case in Europe at its comparative stage of development.[22] With the notable exception of the Ashanti and the Zulus, however, all of these forces were both small and ill-equipped, hence not much of a match for the European invaders.

3.2 The Colonial Era

The European forces used to conquer Africa in the infamous "scramble" were "almost absurdly small", but capitalizing on their advantages in terms of military technology, including the (in)famous Maxim (and Gatling) machine guns referred to in the quote above as well as on their superior organisation.Upon conquest, only small European troop contigents were kept in the colonies, as the colonial powers preferred to rely upon the option of reinforcement, should the need arise. [23]

Fig. 2: The "Scramble for Africa"[24]

Even though the Europeans generally met with surprisingly little organized military resistance, Africa did see a few major uprisings against the imposition of colonial rule.[25]

- The state of Samora in the present Senegal and Liberia resisted the imposition of French rule until 1900 by means of an almost total militarization of the state and an army built on the European model, numbering by 1887 an infantry of 30-35,000 men plus a 3,000 men strong cavalry. After the defeat and destruction of the old empire they created a new empire in the present Côte d'Ivoire.[26]
- The present Sierra Leone saw a rising against British rule in 1898 as a reaction to the imposition of a "hut tax". The uprising took the form of an armed resistance., under the leadership of Bai Bureh, who enrolled mercenary-like troops supplied by other chiefs as well as "war boys".[27]
- The Ashanti Wars (1873-84) between the UK and the Ashanti kingdom (in the present Ghana) and the subsequent uprising of 1900 pitted a fairly well organized African army against that of the UK, which had to resort to the unusual means of a predominantly white army (1500 whites to 700 blacks).[28] After their defeat, however, the Ashanti abandoned soldiering, and the British thus needed no regular force in the colony, but could rely on a small armed police numbering

975.[29]

- The protracted war between the French colonialists and the Baulé people in the present Cote d'Ivoire (1891-1911) took the form of an almost classical guerilla war, i.e. as "a war of and by the people", where the absence of a state structure proved to be almost an asset, as "there was no army to destroy, no state to smash, no king to deport". The resistance fighters resembled a militia in having their weapons ready at hand, if only because the guns were also their "means of production".[30]

- In the present Kenya the Nandi tribe resisted British rule from the 1890s to 1905 by means of a small standing army raised on a terrtorial basis in an almost conscription-like manner.[31]

- The Maji-Maji rebellion in German Tanganyika (present Tanzania) in 1905-06 was, in a certain sense, a sequel to the resistance in 1888-91[32]. It was a reaction to the German oppression, in particular a deliberate strategy of using famine as a weapon (killing maybe 250,000-300,000 Africans). The uprising was eventually defeated, inter alia because of the poor (clan-based) organization of the Maji-Maji and their (weapons) technologial inferiority.[33]

- The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 was of a greater scale than most other colonial wars, the UK employing around 18,000 troops, of which nearly half were Brits. Under King Cetschwayo the Zulus inflicted a crushing defeat on the British forces at Isandlwana in 1879, but succumbed to the subsequent British invasion.[34]

- The Boer War (1899-1902) pitted the two white "tribes" of South Africa against each other, but the black Africans also played a role. The Zulu nation thus opted for the role as "balancer", and both the Boers and the British employed African troops on an extensive scale. Both sides were, however, in agreement that this was supposed to be "a white man's war", hence only reluctantly resorted to the use of black troops—just as they employed "foreign volunteers" who would seem to deserve the label "mercenaries",[35] Through most of the war, the Boers fought as guerillas and were partly organized as a militia, enrolling all able-bodied men between sixteen and sixty, without uniforms, and making extensive use also of civilian support, including women and children. The Brits responded, inter alia, with the establishment of concentration camps and the employment of "child soldiers", personified by the boy scouts organized by Baden-Powell.[36]

- The Herero uprising in German South-West Africa (the present Namibia) in 1904-07 represented a more or less spontaneous reaction to the particularly harsh German exploitation and repression. The

combined struggle of the Gama and the Hereros eventually forced the Germans to muster an army of no less than 70,000 troops to quell the rebellion.[37]

- The Matabele War (1893) in the present Zimbabwe was partly fought against the British settlers, partly by the Ndbele people under King Lobengula against the neighbouring Mashona people. In this context the Mashona put up very little resistance, whereas the Europeans raised an almost militia-style army. In the later stages of the war, when this militia had been reinforced by regular troops, the Ndbele and Shona resorted to guerilla-style warfare in the great *ChiMurenga* of 1896-97, forcing the Brits to resort to the burning of *kraals* and similar measures directed against civilians. The resistance was hampered by lack of unity (i.e. Shona fear of Ndbele domination) and lack of a unified strategy, the Ndbele being more offensive than the, almost totally defensively minded, Shona.[38]

The bulk of the troops used by the Europeans to conquer and subsequently rule the colonies were black Africans, as least as far as the rank-and-file were concerned.

The Portuguese were the first the institute this practice,[39] but all the others quickly followed suit. In all of North, East and Central Africa the British forces (the King's African Rifles and the Royal West African Frontier Force) thus included as few as 300 whites (mainly officers and NCOs) in command of around 11,500 Africans, while the corresponding figures for Germany were 226 whites to 2,600 blacks, and those of Belgium (or rather the infamous King Leopold II) in the Congo (the *Force Publique*) numbered 200 whites to 6,000 blacks—mostly mercenaries from other parts of Africa.[40] Leopold even seems to have had a perverse preference for such African forces as had a reputation for ferociousness and even cannibalism (*sic!*). Moreover, In several cases the African troops were drawn predominantly from particular ethnic groups, thereby promoting "martial tribes" and laying the foundations for later ethnic strife, e.g. between Hutus and Tutsis in the Great Lakes Region.[41]
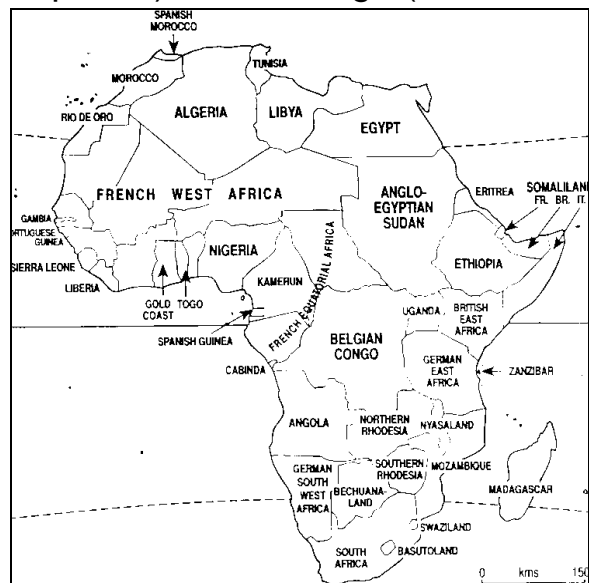

Fig. 3: Africa after the Scramble (1914)[42]

The French made extensive use of black troops from West Africa, particularly from Senegal even during the Ancien Regime and through the Revolution and the Empire—mainly in the form of volunteers (i.e. professionals), but also through the purchase ("*rachat*") of slaves. Most (in)famous were the *Tirrailleurs Sénegalaises*, estalished in 1857 and used for operations in e.g. Congo, the Sudan and the rest of West Africa—but also in, e.g., Indochina and Morocco. In 1803, moreover, an unsussessful attempt at introducing a semblance of conscription was made. The use of black volunteers continued throughout the 19th century, and in 1912 conscription was even extended to the black population of the French colonies.

As many as 215,000 black troops were thus used during the First World War, 157,000 thereof outside their respective colonies, and 30,000 were killed in combat. After the war, however, conscription was replaced by a system relying mainly on voluntary enlistment.[43] Quite extensive use was also made of Africans ("natives") by both the UK and France during the Second World War.[44]

The use of African troops by the Europeans did, however, on occasion give rise to rebellion, as when the Luluaborg garrison in thye Congo Free State revolted in 1895, or when French West Africa saw a series of revolts as a response to compulsory recruitment. More passive methods of resistance such as "protest emigration" and self-mutilation were also employed on a large scale.[45]

By the end of the great "scramble", the European colonial powers were in fairly firm control of their possessions in Africa, but only for a rather short while. First of all, their rule inevitably produced opposition which would, in due course, manifest itself in an armed struggle for independence. Secondly, the use of indigenous forces to uphold colonial rule "on the cheap" created the nuclei of the officers' corps that would in most cases, upon the achievement of independence, be instrumental in the creation of national armies.[46]

3.3 The Liberation Struggle

The struggle for liberation from colonialism primarily assumed the form of a political struggle, but in most colonies it also manifested itself in a guerilla struggle.[47] This was able to draw on some of the historical experiences of the struggles referred to above, but also to enlist support from both the Soviet Union and China, the latter of which had extensive experience in this mode of warfare.[48] The experience with guerilla warfare in, e.g., Vietnam and Cuba also played an inspirational role.[49]

In Kenya, the Mau-Mau rebellion in 1952 until the achievement of independence in 1963 was extremely severe. It was eventually quelled, inter alia by the King's African Rifles, but scattered guerilla fighters remained, known as the "forest fighters", who even proved difficult for the new government of President Jomo Kenyatta to come to grips with in its effort to "kikuyonize" the armed forces.[50]

While both the UK and France soon deciphred "the writing on the wall" and started preparing for a peaceful departure from Africa, Portugal fought a bitter war to cling to its three colonies in Africa, which ultimately played a decisive role in bringing about a revolt against the dictatorship—not least because the conscripted army was unsuitable to withstand the strains of colonial warfare, and because of the huge manpower demands. At one stage, Portugal deployed no fewer than 160,000 Portuguese troops in the colonies—in addition to some 60,000 African troops.[51] to which should be added support from the white regime of socalled "Rhodesia" and the South African apartheid regime.[52]

- In Guinea-Bissau the guerrilla movement of PAIGC (*Partido Africano da Independência de Guiné e Cabo Verde*) under Amilcar Cabral fought a protracted guerilla struggle against Portugal, with a total reported manpower strength reported of round 7,000 troops (perhaps as many as 10,000), organized into forty-man militias.[53]
- In Mozambique the liberation war against Portugal as the colonial power was fought by FRELIMO (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*) under Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel, with a diversionary "sideshow" being conducted by the so-called COREMO (*Comité Revolucionário de Moçambique*), a predecessor of the subsequent RENAMO (*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*). By the end of the war, the Portuguese were forced to deploy around 95,000 troops in Mozambique to fight the around 25,000 FRELIMO forces, of which about 10,000 were "regular guerillas".[54]
- In Angola no fewer than three guerilla movements were, at one stage, engaged in a struggle against Portuguese rule as well as each other: MPLA (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*) under Agostinho Neto, FNLA (*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*) under Holden Roberto and UNITA (*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*) under Jonas Savimbi—the latter two with some support from as unlikely bedfellows as the People's Republic of China, Mobuto's Zaïre and South Africa. The strength of the three guerilla forces is hotly contested, with estimates of MPLA strength ranging from 4,700 to 75,000 (*sic!*), and estimates of FNLA strength ranging from 4,000 to

10,000, while those of UNITA were hardly above 1,000 troops by 1974.[55]

The three white minority regimes in Southern Africa, likewise, experienced guerilla warfare, albeit under somewhat different circumstances.

- In Zimbabwe, two main guerilla armies fought against the white regime of Ian Smith after the latter's unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) of "Rhodesia" from Britain in 1965: The ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) under Joshua Nkomo and the splinter group ZANU (Zimbabwe African Union) under Ndabaningi Sithole and his successors Herbert Chitepo and Robert Mugabe. Each had its own armed wing, i.e. the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and the Zimbabwe Liberation Army (ZLA), respectively. The numerical size of both was rather small, but not known with any certainty, contemporary estimates ranging from 200 and 8,000 by the mid-1970s.[56]
- In Namibia (formerly German Southwest Africa) SWAPO (South West African People's Organization) and its armed wing, the PLAN (People's Liberation Army of Namibia) fought a protracted, but most of the time very low-key, guerilla war against the illegal South African occupation and the accompanying white minority rule from around 1963 until the achievement of independence in 1989.[57] Even though the number of South African troops in Namibia is not known exactly, it was surely a substantial contingent, including quite a number of blacks.[58]

Even though the struggle against white rule (i.e. apartheid) resembles the cases above, South Africa is in many other respects a case apart. First of all, the struggle was not a matter of gaining independence (achieved as early as 1910 with the creation of the Union of South Africa, which declared its independence from the UK in 1961 without this being contested), Secondly, by virtue of its occupation of Namibia, South Africa belonged, to at least the same extent, in the category of "imperialists" or "colonialists" as in that of colonies.

On the other hand, the very fact that the struggle of the black majority population was against white (albeit indigenous rather than foreign) rule warrants grouping it along with the other liberation struggles. The main parties to the struggle were the ANC (African National Congress) and its armed wing, the *Umkhonto we Sizwe* ("Spear of the

Nation" with the initials MK), while the Pan-African Congress (PAC) also waged a minor struggle by means of its armed wing, APLA (Azani People's Liberation Army).[59] Even though the ANC emphasized its right to take up arms, the struggle was all along mainly a political one, with MK activities playing merely a subordinate role.[60]

The fact that all the aforementioned liberation and guerilla movements received support from the Frontline States as well as from the OAU and both political and some military support from the USSR, its ally Cuba, and its rival China, created the impression among (especially the Afrikaner segment of) the white minority in South Africa that it was facing a "total onslaught" calling for a multi-pronged response.[61] Especially since the fall of the other white minority regimes in its neighbourhood, the introduction of Cuban auxillaries in the Angolan civil war, and the imposing of UN sanctions against the regime[62], the apartheid regime not only proceeded with a far-reaching militarization of the South African society.[63] Conscription was reserved for the white male population, but as the struggle intensified draft dodging and desertion became more common among white South Africans,[64] and the repressive measures taken against the culprits as well as other opponents of the regime served to erode the image of "democracy" for the white population.

The apartheid regime also made strenuous efforts at forging military and arms industrial links with other "pariah states"[65] and at strengthening its domestic arms industry[66], and even went so far as to produce a small number of nuclear weapons.[67] Moreover, it attempted a largely unsuccesful "divide and rule" policy-*cum*-decentralization through the creation of semi-autonomous "homelands" for the blacks, each with its own small army, configured and sized to make it suitable for internal security functions, but obviously incapable of resistance against the main forces, the SADF (South African Defence Force).[68]

3.4 After Independence

The armed forces have continued to play important roles in sub-Saharan Africa since the achievement of independence, both for good and bad.

Above all, independence did not bring peace, but many African nations found themselves embroiled in armed conflicts. While the number of international wars has, indeed, been impressively low that of intra-state conflicts has been quite high, [69] and several of these civil wars have been just as intense and destructive as wars between states—just think of those in Angola, Mozambique, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, and

Nigeria as well as the genocides in Uganda under Idi Amin or in Rwanda and Burundi. They have further resembled international wars because of their frequent internatio-nalization. Several categories of external actors have thus become involved in various capacities.

- During the Cold War, the rival superpowers tended to become involved on opposing sides in internal conflicts, as was the case with the Soviet and Cuban support for the MPLA government of Angola, mirrored in the US (and, for a while, Chinese) support for UNITA and FNLA—and with the US and Soviet involvement in the Ogaden War between Ethiopia and Somalia.[70]
- Regional great powers such as South Africa and Nigeria have tended to involve themselves in conflicts in other countries belonging to their respective regions.[71]
- Several states, large and small, have become embroiled in intra-state conflicts in their respective neighbouring countries, either because of the ethnic nature of those conflicts which often involved ethnic groups "straddling borders"—or because of geography, allowing insurgents to operate from bases across the border, either with or without the consent of the host country.[72]

While the impact of this internationalization has differed from case to case, both with regard to the intensity and duration and the eventual outcome of these struggles, one consequence has surely been that African armies have surely had enough "ordinary" military dutites to explain their continued existence and to justify the upkeep of sizable armed forces.

In addition to these national security functions, however, several African militaries have been deeply involved in domestic politics, e.g. in the form military coups, as have especially taken place in West Africa, but also elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa.[73] Even when the armed forces have not thus taken direct control of the State, they have frequently exerted domestic political power by indirect means, reflecting rather primitive civil-military relations.[74] Military norms and values have thus often been allowed to permeate society—also through the economic activities of several African militaries. This arguably amounts to a considerable militarization of societies—the rather low military expenditures in Africa notwithstanding.[75]

To these problems one might add the considerable complications involved with transforming, in many cases, armed liberation movenements with a distinct guerilla legacy into regular national armed

forces—or integrating former insurgents into the national armed forces.

4 AFRICA: PRESENT TRENDS

While the end of the Cold War was the critical juncture for Europe, its impacts on Southern Africa was much less significant.[76] It did, however, coincide with other developments of a major significance for the region such as the winding down of apartheid and the signing of important peace agreements (in Namibia and Mozambique), which justifies using largely the same periodization.

4.1 Political and Social Framework

The armed forces are inevitably a product of the society fielding them, just as they must reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the State commanding them. Hence, a very brief and superficial overview of these factors seems called for.

Like in the rest of the Third World, the State as an instituton is weak in most countres of Southern Africa, in the sense of lacking either legitimacy or governing capacites, or both.[77] The lack of generally acknowledged legitimacy is a consequence of many factors, among which the articificial borders, producing both multinational and multi-ethnic states and divided nations, i.e. nations or ethnic groups divided by state borders. The lack of a well-trained and loyal civil service, combined with a deficient infrastructure produces inadequate administrative and governing capacity, in its turn depriving the State of "performance legitimacy". There are different degrees of weakness, however, ranging from fairly strong States such as Botswana and Tanzania to nearly failed ones such as Angola and the DRC[78]—and obvious complete failures in West Africa (Liberia and Sierra Leone) and the Horn of Africa (Somalia).

Underlying most of these problems is economic weakness which seems to become exacerbated by the progressive globalization. Besides widespread poverty, its consequences include foreign debt, extreme vulnerability to world market fluctuations and small tax revenues, in its turn further weakening the State.

Neither is the social structure of most African countries conducive to state-building, featuring low level of education, high levels of unemployment and run-away urbanization—in their turn fuelling ethnic strife which is often instrumentalized by leaders having their own agendas, be they a quest for power or wealth, or indeed both.

While social norms obviously differ widely, among the prevalent

features is a general "gun culture", putting a premium on the possession of the implements of violence—sometimes as a legacy of the preceding (or a reflection of a still ongoing) armed struggle. A consequence thereof is the proliferation of small arms over most of Africa. [79]

4.2 Missions of the Armed Forces

As a result of the above weaknesses, internal security missions have always loomed much larger for the armed forces in Southern Africa (and the rest of the continent) than for their European counterparts. These range from counter-insurgency warfare to policing or constabulary functions. These are arguably the primary functions of the military forces, while national defence is of lesser importance.

In the past, of course, the apartheid regime construed the struggle of the ANC and the support by the Frontline States (FLS) as a "total onslaught", hence saw itself requiring a "total strategy" for "national defence", which combined counter-insurgency warfare against the MK with attacks against Angola and support for insurgents in both Angola (UNITA) and Mozambique (Renamo)—thereby posing an external-*cum*-domestic threat to the national security of its neighbours.

With the end of apartheid, however, it is difficult to identify any genuine national defence needs among the states of SADC—with the partial exception of the DRC, which is in the unenviable position of serving as a battleground for just about everybody in the region, including regular military forces from Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, Uganda, Rwanda and, to a lesser extent, Burundi.[80] While the DRC might thus arguably have a national defence need, it does not appear to take this all that seriously, overwhelmed by the domestic struggle.

In addition to these functions, SADC countries have committed themselves to mutual assistance (i.e. collective security functions) as well as to peace support operations,[81] which may well prove very demanding, both in manpower and logistical terms. Finally, as illustrated by the South African participation in disaster relief in connection with the February 2000 floods in Mozambique, there are plenty of non-military functions for the armed forces.

Indeed, the armed forces (at least in South Africa) exhibit a distinct interest in the debate about revised and expanded conceptions of "security" including, inter alia, human security or environmental security. While there are certainly sound analytical and theoretical reasons for such a "securitization" of pertinent issues, it also entails the political risk (or opportunity) that new issue areas will come to be viewed as the

prerogative of the armed forces (who habitually view security as their responsibility), thereby protecting the military against possible budget cuts.[82]

The trend is thus in the direction of a blurring of the distinctions between internal and external missions for the armed forces. On balance, however, the changes have been less radical than in Europe, which explains the greater degree of continuity, both with regard to military expenitures and the size of the armed forces. What further complicates the issue is that the distinction between state and non-state actors is simultaneously being eroded.

4.3 Privatization and the "Security Sector"

War and the preparations for it have been the exclusive domain of the state in Europe and the rest of the West (or North) at least since the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, just as the State has enjoyed a weberian "monopoly on the legitimate use of force" within its sovereign domain (i.e. within state borders), while the international arena has remained anarchic. By impliction, the external and internal aspects of security (i.e. national defence and domestic order, respectively) have been clearly separated, but both have been prerogatives of the State, personified in the army, the police and the judiciary.[83]

Not so in the Third World, including Southern Africa, where non-state agents play significant roles as set out in Table 3. Here the term "security sector" (or "security structures") may be a relevant generic term, encompassing all institutions involved in "security" (however widely defined), but usually covering such institutions as the army and policy and their respective intelligence agencies as well as their respective functional equivalents in the private sector.[84]

Table 3: The Security Sector	External security	Internal security
Europe		
Mission	National Defence	Domestic Order
State agencies	Army, Navy, Air Force	Police
		Internal intelligence service(s)
	Military and foreign inteligence service(s)	
Non-state	None	Relatively few and insignificant

agencies			
Southern Africa			
Mission	National defence	Counter-insurgency	Domestic order
State agencies	Army, Navy, Air Force	Army	Police, Army
	Military and foreign inteligence service(s)	Internal intelligence service(s)	
Non-state agencies	Private Military Companies	Private Military Companies	Private security firms Neighbourhood watch and vigilante groups

- Armies often have domestic security as their primary goal, e.g. in the form of counter-insurgency warfare or constabulary duties.
- A major part of the "policing" tasks are performed by either neighbourhood watch groups, vigilante groups or private security companies.[85]
- Mercenary companies such as the (now dismantled) Executive Outcomes and Sandline have been involved in both domestic and external forms of security, e.g. in Angola, Sierra Leone and the DRC.[86]
- Armies of many Third World countries do not merely engage in military activities, but sometimes also are domestic economic actors in their own right.
- The armed forces occasionally behave as predators, as seems to be the case of the forces operating on opposing sides in the war in the DRC (*vide supra*).

The boundries between security and non-security functions are thus blurred, as is the division of labour between state and non-state actors.

4.4 Demobilization

The past decade has seen some demobilization in Subsaharan Africa, yet relatively little in comparison with other parts of the wold (see Table 4). The main reasons for demobilization have be the signing of peace accords (e.g. in Mozambique[87]) and the end of apartheid in South Africa.[88] The latter not only entailed an end to the state of vitual war between the apartheid regime and the FLS, but also brought to power a new government in Pretoria which was committed to demilitarization.[89]

Table 4: Demobilization by Region 1987-98 (percent)[90]	1987	1998
North Africa	100	89.8
Subsaharan Africa	100	96.2
North America	100	66.8
Central and South America	100	70.5
East Asia	100	81.5
Central, West and South Asia	100	101.1
Eastern Europe	100	49.2
Western, Northern, Southern Europe	100	74.3
Oceania	100	84.3

Changes such as these have gone hand-in-hand with a growth in some African armed forces. This stands in contrast to the global trend which is in the direction of a general shrinkage of the armed forces and a concurrent reduction of military expenditures (MILEX), as in Table 5.

Table 5: Military Expenditures and Manpower by Region[91]	MILEX US$mil. (1997 prices)		Change	Armed forces (Thousands)		Change
	1985	1998	1985-98	1985	1998	1985-98
Subsaharan Africa	9.810	9.732	-0.8%	959	1.269	32.4%
World	1.213.197	785.269	-35.3%	27.162	22.083	-18.7%

As shown in Table 6, the picture of demobilization is a very mixed one, even in Southern Africa, both with regard to military expenditures and the growth or reduction of the ranks. Even though some of the changes seem quite dramatic, it should be kept in mind that the general level of miliarization is "almost absurdly low", certainly compared to that of the United States, the corresponding for which have been added for comparison.

Table 6: MILEX and Armed Forces In SADC[92]		MILEX			Armed Forces	
		1997 US$	Pct. /GDP	Per capita	(1000)	Per 1000 Pop
Angola	1987	1,310.0	18.3	166.0	74.0	9.4
	1997	1,550.0	20.5	147.0	95.0	9.0
Change	*Percent*	*18.3*	*12.0*	*-11.4*	*28.4*	*-4.3*
Botswana	1987	118.0	5.0	101.0	4.0	3.4
	1997	241.0	5.1	168.0	8.0	5.2

Change	*Percent*	*104.2*	*2.0*	*66.3*	*100.0*	*52.9*
Congo/Zaire	1987/88	257.0	2.9	7.0	53.0	1.5
	1996/97	252.0	5.0	5.0	50.0	1.1
Change	*Percent*	*-1.9*	*72.4*	*-28.6*	*-5.7*	*-26.7*
Lesotho	1987/89	35.0	3.7	20.0	2.0	1.2
	1997	32.0	2.5	16.0	2.0	1.0
Change	*Percent*	*-8.6*	*-32.4*	*-20.0*	*0.0*	*-16.7*
Malawi	1987	32	1.9	4	7	0.9
	1997	26	1.0	3	8	0.8
Change	*Percent*	*12.5*	*-47.4*	*25.0*	*14.3*	*-11.1*
Mauritius	1987	5.0	0.2	5.0	1.0	1.0
	1997	12.0	0.3	11.0	1.0	0.9
Change	*Percent*	*140.0*	*50.0*	*120.0*	*0.0*	*-10.0*
Mozambique	1987	126.0	8.3	9.0	65.0	4.6
	1997	73.0	2.8	4.0	14.0	0.8
Change	*Percent*	*-42.1*	*-66.3*	*-55.6*	*-78.5*	*-82.6*
Namibia	1990/91	48.0	1.9	34.0	8.0	5.6
	1997	90.0	2.7	57.0	8.0	5.0
Change	*Percent*	*87.5*	*42.1*	*67.6*	*0.0*	*-10.7*
South Africa	1987	4,630.0	4.3	133.0	102.0	2.9
	1997	2,320.0	1.8	55.0	75.0	1.8
Change	*Percent*	*-49.9*	*-58.1*	*-58.6*	*-26.5*	*-37.9*
Swaziland	1987	11.0	1.3	15.0	3.0	3.9
	1997	32.0	2.2	34.0	3.0	3.2
Change	*Percent*	*190.9*	*69.2*	*126.7*	*0.0*	*-17.9*
Tanzania	1987	133.0	3.6	6.0	40.0	1.7
	1997	87.0	1.3	3.0	35.0	1.2
Change	*Percent*	*-34.6*	*-63.9*	*-50.0*	*-12.5*	*-29.4*
Zambia	1987	96.0	3.5	13.0	17.0	2.3
	1997	41.0	1.1	4.0	21.0	2.3
Change	*Percent*	*-57.3*	*-68.6*	*-69.2*	*23.5*	*0.0*
Zimbabwe	1987	367.0	6.0	40.0	45.0	4.9
	1997	320.0	3.8	29.0	40.0	3.7
Change	*Percent*	*-12.8*	*-36.7*	*-27.5*	*-11.1*	*-24.5*
USA	1987	376,000.0	6.1	1,550.0	2,280.0	9.4
(for comparison)	1997	276,000.0	3.3	1,030.0	1,530.0	5.7
Change	*Percent*	*-26.6*	*-45.9*	*-33.5*	*-32.9*	*-39.4*

4.5 Personnel Structures

Conscription was never an exclusively European phenomenon. While some of its spread to other parts of the world may be explained with reference to emulation or to colonial rule, it also developed indigenously in non-European countries such as Japan and the Ottoman Empire.[93] In

the former case, at least, it could be seen as a natural component of modernization.

In Africa we see a mixed picture as well, e.g. in Africa. The following countries were listed in 2000 by the International Institute of Strategic Studies as having conscription: Benin, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania and Togo—in most cases selective, rather than universal.[94] Just as in Europe, changes had likewise occurred in the mode of recruitment, as countries had introduced or abandoned conscription—in some case combined with a reintegration of former insurgents.

Eritrea upon independence in 1993 introduced conscription, with an annual intake of around 30,000, providing it by 1998 with a reserve of 120,000 troops[95]—and Sudan in 1989 introduced a sort of home guard system, which in 1997 was transformed into a regular compulsary conscription system.[96]

Table 7: Personnel structures in SADC[97]	Personnel structure	Recent change	Missions	Service (years)	Active forces	Reserves (1000)	Para-military
Angola	C	1998[98]	I + F	2	112.5	n.a.	15.0
Botswana	P		D		9.0	n.a.	1.0
DRC	P		I + E		10.0	n.a.	5.0
Lesotho	P		D		2.0	n.a.	n.a.
Malawi	P		D		5.0	n.a.	1.0
Maritius	P		D		n.a.	n.a.	1.8
Mozambique	C	1992 1997	D	2-3	6.1	n.a.	n.a.
Namibia	P		D + F		9.0	n.a.	0.1
South Africa	P	1994	D + F		70.0	88.0	8.2
Seychelles	P		?		0.2	n.a.	0.3
Tanzania	C		D	2	34.0	80.0	1.4
Zambia	P		D		21.6	n.a.	1.4
Zimbabwe	P		I + F		39.0	n.a.	21.8
Legend	P: Professionals; C: Conscription, D: National Defence, I: Internal Threats, F: Foreign Military Assistance, (): on a minor scale, n.a.: not available						

Table 7 is a summary of the personnel strength and structures of the various SADC member states, indicating their mode of recruitment as well as recent changes in this respect. In addition a very superficial assessment of the primary missions is provided.

After this general overview, I provide some details on developments in four SADC member states: Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola and South Africa—all of which have gone though significant changes in terms of army personnel during the 1990s.

4.6 Zimbabwe

Ever since the departure of the Ian Smith regime in 1980[99] and the final struggles between the rival liberation movements, ZANU and ZAPU, in 1981/82, Zimbabwe was one of the most stable countries in Africa—and it remained so until quite recently.[100]

The present armed forces were created through a merger of the Rhodesian army with the armed wings of ZANU (ZANLA) and ZAPU (ZIPRA).[101] Their guerilla ancestry notwithstanding,[102] the armed forces were generally unpolitical and "professional" in the Huntingtonian sense.[103] Moreover, because of the relative peace within the country they were almost totally devoted to national defence missions. As a corollary of the growing economic crisis, however, problems have emerged—albeit not so much with the army as with the so-called "war veterans".[104]

The members of the Zimbabwe Liberation War Veterans Association (ZLWVA) claim to have participated in the war of liberation ("*Chimurenga*"), even though the age of some of these "veterans" obviously testifies against this. In 1997 these hitherto largely ignored veterans managed to force the government to promise substantial pensions—which exacerbated the economic crisis.[105] Because of the inbility of the government to pay the pensions to which they claimed to be entitled, unrest spread—which was subsequently re-directed by President Mugabe against the commercial (and predominantly white) farmers, from whom the "veterans" sought their due compensation in the form of land, confiscated in violation of a Supreme Court ruling, without compensation and often by violent means.[106]

Until quite recently, however, the armed forces have remained neutral in the struggle.[107] During the parliamentary elections in 2001, however, army troops and reserves (including war veterans) have on several occasions been deloyed against opposition rallies,[108] troops have already been deployed (on a minor scale) against striking workers, e.g. at the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe,[109]and the ZNA has commander toured barracks to entice troops to arlly behind the ZANU-PF.[110]

A further step towards politisation and "de-professionalisation" may be the integration of war vets as reserves in the army.[111] The introduction of an army reserve was decided in 1996, intended for tasks performed by home guards in many other countries. In the "Rhodesian times" the country, likewise, had a reserve army, largely made up of former white conscripts and intended to fight the ZANU and ZAPU guerillas.[112] The inclusion of the (highly politicised) war vets is, however, a totally different matter.

The most recent step towards deprofessionalisation may be the recently announced introduction of a "national youth service", which is so far voluntary but envisaged to become compulsory for all youths between the ages of ten and thirty. While this will include military training, the plans do not really seem to point in the direction of conscription, but may rather be intended to weaken the opposition, i.e. the MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) and to provide the ZANU-PF with a para-military arms that may come in handy in future confrontations[113]

Moreover, there have been speculations about a possible military coup if the crisis deteriorates,[114] as well as of power struggles within the army, which may be a prelude to such a move.[115] In response to international (and especially US) sanctions, the governement is, according to some reports, contemplating declaring a state of emergency,[116] in which the armed forces would surely play a central role. It is thus essential for the present government to ensure the future loyalty and reliability of the armed forces. One means to ensure this has been financial compensation in the form of bonuses (after an initial failure to provide subsistance allowances on time) as well as a certain restructuring.[117]

The quest to ensure army loyalty may be a conyributory motive for the military involvement of Zimbabwe in the internalized civil war in the DRC on the side of the Kabila government and fighting against the incursions of Rwandan and Ugandan forces.[118] This involvement (for which Zimbabwe did received a SADC mandate) has been very controversial—also because it has postponed the gradual reduction of the strength of the armed forces from 40,000 to 25,000 which was planned in 1998 and the material degrading of the army. Moreover, in 1999 the goverment went back on a previous decision to reduce military spending in favour of an increase by US$78 million.[119] On the other hand, the involvement also seems to have provided opportunities for the (parts of) the higher echelons of the armed forces to enrich themselves, e.g. through clandestine diamond ventures.[120]

4.7 Mozambique

As part of the 1992 peace agreement between the FRELIMO government and the Renamo rebel movement,[121] and under UN supervision of its implementation,[122] Mozambique in 1992 abolished conscription (first introduced in 1978) in favour of an all-volunteer army. This would including a sizable contingent of Renamo fighters: 15.000 of an envisaged total of 30,000 in the new FADM (Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique), the rest coming from the FAM (Forças Armadas de Moçambique).[123] The change was accompanied by a significant military build-down and a demobilization and reintegration programme for former combatants.[124]

Conscription was, however, re-introduced by a parliamentary vote in December 1997, against the votes of Renamo members of parliament, with effect from 1999. Part of the rationale was the lack of funds for an all-volunteer army, set to expand from around 5,000 to 15,000 personnel. Mozambicans between the ages of 18 and 35 will be liable for two years' service.[125]

4.8 Angola

The armed forces of Angola are, by far, the strongest in Southern Africa after those of South Afria.

The constitution of Angola clearly stipulates that "The defense of the country shall be the right and the highest indeclinable duty of every citizen." and that "Military service shall be compulsory. The manner in which it is fulfilled shall be established by law"[126]. In actual fact, however, Angola has abolished and reintroduced conscription as well as emplyed it in quite an irregular manner.

The Lusaka Protocol of 15 November 1994, codifying the cease-fire between the MPLA government and UNITA, contained two elaborate annexes outlining the military aspects of the truce: Mercenaries were to be repatriated, and UNITA forces were to be quartered, disarmed and eventually demobilized under international supervision. In due course, a new (prall-volunteer) army (FAA: *Forças Armadas Angolanas*, i.e. Angolan Armed Forces) would be created (also under UN monitoring) in the form of "single, national and nonpartisan armed forces obeying the sovereign organs of the Republic of Angola." This new FAA were formally established on the 10th of June 1997.

Annex 4 further stipulated that "The composition of the Angolan Armed Forces will reflect the principle of proportionality between

Government and UNITA military forces as provided for in the Bicesse Accords"and that "The military personnel in excess of the number to be agreed between the Angolan Government and UNITA for the composition of FAA will be demobilized and integrated into civilian society...".[127] The implementation of the protocol, however, left a lot to be desired, as UNITA quartered far fewer combatants than agreed to—in fact forcefully conscripted civilians (including children) as substitutes, holding the real fighters in reserve. The government, in its turn, also seems to have redeployed some of its paramilitary forces (the Rapid Reaction Police, nicknamed "Ninjas") rather than demobilizing them.[128] Some demobilization of the regular forces did, howeverm occur, especially after the implementation of a reintegration programme in 1997.

After the resumption of the armed struggle by UNITA and the escalation into a fully-fledged civil war in 1998-99, the government conscripted males between the age of 15 and 34, in a manner remincent of mediaval European practices. It was describved by Human Rights Watch (HRW) as "a policy of preying on poor communities and unemployed young men. Those who could prove that they had jobs usually were released, and those with financial means could buy their way out of the military."[129]

This practice was formalized when the Angolan parliament in November 1998 decided to register all male youths approaching military age. In January 1999 the government started a campaign of mass conscription, calling for all males between 20 and 22 to register at municipal military posts, having already warned them against leaving Angola and emphasizing that noncompliance was punishable and that draft dodgers would be immediately arrested. The formal enlistment negan in April 1999 (for the first time since 1991). While putting the main blam on UNITA, HRW in its *World Report 1999* reported that "There were also abuses during forced recruitment for the Angolan military often of children. Between June and August, the government conscripted males aged fifteen to thirty-four for combat. Extra soldiers were sent to remote areas and unemployed teenagers rounded up and sent for military training."[130] U.N. officials complained in May 1999 that the Angolan authorities, in response to the faltering conscription drive inside Angola (only a twenty percent success rate) had resorted to press-ganging refugees into their war effort. Allegedly FAA forces had even crossed the border into the DRC in order to round refugees for military service[131]—all of which in contravention of the Military Service Law of 1999. The first "regularly conscripted" recruits were used in (counter-) offensives against UNITA in 1999 and 2000.[132]

The above is not the whole story, however, as there are other armed forces in Angola than those of the government, mainly those of UNITA. They fall into different categories.

- Forcefully recruited civilians, including child soldiers (down to the age of ten!)[133]
- Mercenaries, mainly from the South African-based EO (Executive Outcomes) and (since 1997), the US-based MPRI (Military Professional Resources Inc.). Both the government and UNITA have hired mercs[134], financed (as far as the latter is concerned) by the revenue from diamond sales.[135]

4.9 South Africa

South Africa abolished conscription with the entry into force of the new constitution in 1994, partly because the "total strategy" devised by the apartheid regime under P.W. Botha was called off, partly in an attempt to create racially balanced armed forces. The switch to all-professional armed forces was seen as likely to result in a "blackening of the ranks".[136]

The subsequent shift to an all-volunteer army was made even more complicated by the integration of no less than seven different armies into a new, unified SANDF (South African National Defence Force): the former SADF (South African Defence Force), the small armies of the four quasi-independent "homelands" (Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei and Venda), the armed wing of the ANC, the MK)[137] and that of the PAC, APLA—all combined with a general reduction in size in the medium term (following a short-term increase).[138] The integration was accompanied by crash training courses intended to provide (especially MK) commanders with the requisite professional skills to allow them to assume commands within the SANDF.

All of the above were accompanied by a profound re-orientation of the SANDF both with regard to missions and to organisation. First of all, the previous offensive posture was abandoned in favour on a defensive one, with no ambitions to intervene except as part of multinational peacekeeping operations[139]—even though a small-scale intervention in Lesotho was undertaken in Lesotho in 1998 (with rather unimpressive results).[140] Secondly, major efforts were made to bring the armed forces under civilian and democratic control, e.g. by means of constitutional and legal instruments, through the establishment of a civilian defence secretariat and a parliamentary oversight committee.[141] Democratisation was not without problems, e.g. because it entailed union rights for the

troops.[142]

While this restructuring-cum-downsizing programme appeared to have been succesfull, the new structure has not remained uncontested. In September 2000, suggestions for a re-introduction of conscriptions were thus, much to everybody's surprise, made by none other than the South African Minister of Defence.[143] Since then, however, nothing has come of this suggestion.

Just as is the case in the other countries above, the security sector in South Africa is very diversified. Efforts have been made at reforming the police force in order to make it both more efficient and accountable to the citizens;[144] but this has far from achieved a monopoly on the use of force for the State. On the contrary, private security firms have proliferated and the number of privately-owned weapons has steadily increased—both in the hands of criminals and of law-abiding citizens who dare not rely on the State to provide protection.[145]

Some former employees of the armed forces (mainly from the SADF) have, furthermore, sought alternative employment as mercenaries, e.g. in the (until 1998) Pretoria-based private security company (PMC) Executive Outcomes. Legislation was, however, passed in 1998 to regulate its activities[146] with the result that EO closed down, while most of its activities were carried on by Sandline.[147] While the legislation did not prohibit employment in PMCs–the SANDF has adopted the practice of making the shift to private employment a one-way street, i.e. prevented military personnel who have left the ranks to become mercenaries from returning.[148]

5 CONCLUSION

We have thus seen that the armed forces in Southern Africa are quite diverse, as is the entire security sector. There are signifant differences between countries as well as within countries over time—and it all differs a lot from the "European paradigm" of a clear separation of external from internal security and a monopoly on the use of of force for both purposes.

All the African armed forces have a basis in tradition, both from pre-colonial times and the colonial era, but even more so from the liberation struggle—and all thus have a guerilla legacy. Those of Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa were created through a merger of formerly opposed armies, as was also envisaged for Angola in the Bicesse and Lusaka accords. All of them are attempting to create genuinely national armed forces that are unpolitical "servants of the nation"—providing for national defence and performing other military

tasks (e.g. peacekeeping) as well as serving as a "melting pot" for (often diverse and sometimes mutually hostile) ethnic and other groups, thereby also creating the foundations for a strong State. None of them have, however, quite succeded in this endeavour yet—which, it must be remembered, took the Europeans several centuries.

While shortcomings thus remain, both with regard to "professionalism" and civil-military relations in general, the most serious deficit may be in terms of capacities. Most African armed forces are incapable of a stalwart national defence, making bourders "porous" and constituting a standing invitation to neighbouring states to meddle in their internal affairs, e.g. by support for rebel movements—and only few of them are really capable of shouldering the tasks of regional peacekeeping when things go wrong. Whether the best way to address these shortcomings is to aim for large armies based on conscription or "lean but mean" professional armed forces—and whether private military companies have a legitimate role to play—is a question which can only be answered on the basis of further research.

6 NOTES

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