



# African Security Governance Emerging Issues

Edited by Gavin Cawthra

# **African Security Governance**

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# Introduction

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*Gavin Cawthra*

This book could have been called *Southern African Security Governance: Emerging Issues*, since it largely deals with southern African case studies, and with issues pertinent to security governance in southern Africa. However, we decided that because many of the issues in southern Africa are relevant for the continent as a whole, and that many references were made to the whole of Africa, it was appropriate to go with the wider title. The book certainly doesn't claim to be comprehensive for Africa, either in scope or in theme, but focuses on some selected emerging issues relevant to security governance on the continent.

These issues include policing transformation, intelligence transformation, challenges of nuclear proliferation, regional security, peace diplomacy, the relationship between development and security, and new challenges in governance of the military.

This book is the product of a rather lengthy process within the Southern African Defence and Security Management (SADSEM) Network, a grouping of ten tertiary institutions involved in common programmes to build capacity for the effective democratic management and governance of security in the region. It also involved cooperation with the Danish Institute for International Studies (DISS) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

The process was initiated by an International Roundtable on African Perspectives on Global Security Agendas, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, with the support of the FES, and hosted by the Centre for Defence and Security Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in November 2005. This workshop, attended by delegates from different regions of Africa as well as international participants, identified a broad range of emerging security agendas with which Africans need to engage.

While it wasn't possible to follow up on all these issues, many of them were taken up in a subsequent seminar held in Windhoek, Namibia, in March 2006, when researchers from the SADSEM Network and their counterparts at DISS met in terms of a Danida-funded cooperation agreement, to share and critique some of their work in progress and reflect on some of the themes identified at the earlier workshop. This in turn led to the codification of a number of key themes and papers, which the researchers continued to develop, and an outline and set of principles for the organisation of this book was agreed.

About a year later, in Johannesburg, the researchers met again with their draft papers, which were presented for peer review at a seminar sponsored by the FES. They were then revised on the basis of the review comments, edited and finally updated.

The papers deal generically with African security governance, in some cases in relation to thematic or sectoral issues, in others within states and in a few cases at the sub-regional level.

Possible frameworks for analysis are established by Dietrich Jung and Bjørn Møller, who identify some of the key conceptual concerns that underpin much of the book and which are reflected in many of the subsequent chapters. Jung takes as his point of departure historical sociology, and uses this as a lens through which to interrogate some of the key issues in security theory, including the relationship between human and state security, the widening of security and the global security regime. He argues that state-building processes in Africa (and elsewhere in the developing world) are rather different to those that took place in Europe and are characterised by tensions between states and societies. Societal and historical realities are too often ignored as the international community and the West in particular seek to impose military security through a new 'civilising mission' (what others have called 'liberal imperialism').

Møller more directly interrogates new concepts of security, the assumptions behind security sector reform, and the nature of the security sector itself in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world. He argues – like Jung – that these Western concepts might not suit Africa, where the security sector is constituted and acts in very different ways. He goes on to examine the complexity of the security sector in the global South, including private and non-statutory. He concludes that it might be impossible, or at least unwise, to attempt to incorporate the whole of the security sector into the formal state, and that regulation of non-statutory forces might be a better route.

Together these two introductory chapters establish a conceptual framework for the rest of the book, in which the key issue is the nature of the state and its relationship to broader social actors in the field of security; in other words, security governance.

The following chapters examine some key issues in African security governance; again, these are not meant to be comprehensive, nor are they necessarily the most important themes. An effort is made to cover the wider security sector, beyond the usual research preoccupation with the defence sector. Elnora van der Spuy deals with the transformation of safety and security, while Sandra Africa deals with the transformation of intelligence. In all cases, the South African experience of security sector reform is taken as a point of departure to examine the wider implications for Africa.

Van der Spuy locates police reform in the context of wider security sector reform and security governance, and argues that police reform is a 'dependent variable' as 'much hinges on the growth of a political culture that rejects violence in politics' and on positive economic growth, as well as an international climate 'in which the virtues of democracy and the rule of law' are upheld, even if nominally so. This returns us to the wider themes of state and society and their role in security.

Africa similarly locates intelligence transformation in wider security and societal contexts, but expresses reservations about whether the South African experience can be replicated or generalised – again stressing the importance of historical and social contexts. She puts some faith, however, in the emergence of an Africa-wide intelligence cooperation organisation, which she feels could become a vehicle for spreading good governance practices within the African intelligence community.

The final chapter in this thematic section deals with the under-researched issue of the implications of nuclear weapons for Africa. Actually, Gavin Cawthra and Bjørn Møller go beyond this, looking also at the impact of uranium mining and civil nuclear power. They conclude that important issues arise with regard to South Africa's continuing efforts to expand its domestic civil nuclear infrastructure, which in turn has an influence on its nuclear diplomacy, but that there is no threat at all of nuclear weapons proliferation on the continent since South Africa has terminated its weapons programmes and a continental non-proliferation regime is in place. The important thing, however, is to work not only towards non-proliferation but also for disarmament by the current nuclear powers.

The final section of this book contains five case studies, based on research into the Southern African Development Community (SADC), South Africa's role in Burundi, and issues related to security governance in Botswana, Zambia and Namibia, but again in most cases looking at the wider implications for the continent.

Anthoni van Nieuwkerk examines the efforts of SADC to establish a security governance regime, through a range of committees, structures, pacts and treaties. Although progress has been made, he cautions that SADC is not yet – and perhaps is unlikely to become – a 'security community', in particular because of divergent national interests, especially between smaller countries and a dominant South Africa.

Using South Africa's deployment with the African Union and later United Nations missions in Burundi, Thomas Mandrup assesses the extent to which the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is capable of contributing to African peace support operations, and hence to the emerging challenges in South Africa of peace diplomacy. He concludes that its capacities are limited and that policy frameworks are inadequate (or at least are not actioned) but that despite this the SANDF was able to fulfil its mandate and make an effective contribution to security governance.

Mpho Molomo tackles the complex and challenging issue of the relationship between security and development, one of the conceptual issues lying at the heart of the security governance problematic, through focusing on the Botswana case of a self-declared 'developmental democracy'. As in the other case studies, he explores the implications of this for the wider region. He concludes that the conceptual convergence between security, economic development and human development has been matched in practice in Botswana although the results have been mixed at best. He is more pessimistic about the prospects for this approach at a regional level, given the lack of macro-economic stability and harmonisation and the persistence of national self-interested behaviour.

Finally, two chapters focus on the governance of the defence function (and on civil–military relations) in Namibia and Zambia respectively. Both Vincent Mwange and Godfrey Haantobolo are fairly upbeat about the way democratic control has been established, although they point to serious deficiencies, especially with regard to the limited participation of civil society and the inefficiencies in parliamentary oversight. Nor can it be assumed that the liberal-democratic model of defence governance is

set in stone: certainly in Zambia different forms of control existed under different political regimes.

In conclusion, this book has situated a number of thematic, sectoral and national studies in the context of a wider understanding of security – both human security and state security – and in the context of a broad understanding of the security sector, incorporating state as well as non-state actors. These discussions have been grounded in an understanding of security sector reform as being context-specific, relational and situated within regional and global imperatives. It will hopefully contribute to the exploration of some of the emerging issues and challenges, and be of use to scholars and practitioners alike.



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Africa faces a seemingly ever-increasing range of security challenges. The traditional threats of civil and border conflicts, crises of governance and military coups may have receded but they remain active. Meanwhile, other issues have risen to prominence, such as globalisation, security sector reform, terrorism, private security actors, peacekeeping and peace-building and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

This book is a result of research carried out over a number of years by the Southern African Defence and Security Management Network (SADSEM) on many of these new and emerging security issues, in cooperation with the Danish Institute for International Studies and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

The broad focus of this book is on security governance – the role of state and a wide range of social actors in the areas of both human and state security. It deals with a range of sectors, themes and national case studies and makes an important contribution to debates on security sector reform. The topics covered include policing transformation, intelligence governance, regulation of private security actors, challenges of nuclear proliferation, regional security, peace diplomacy and peace missions, the relationship between development and security and new challenges in governance of the military.

Written by scholars as well as practitioners, and African as well as international researchers, *African Security Governance* brings a variety of insights to new as well as traditional security concerns.

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