

# 7. National defence reform and the African Union

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## I. Introduction

Significant strides were made in the African security sector in 2003. At the political–strategic level certain conflicts edged closer to resolution, albeit falteringly, as demonstrated by the relative successes of the facilitated peace processes under way in Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Liberia and Sudan.<sup>1</sup>

Recently installed military governments, so long the bane of many developing countries, found themselves under immense pressure from the African Union (AU),<sup>2</sup> various African sub-regional groupings and key states in their regions to disengage from the political process. The return to barracks by the armed forces of the Central African Republic (CAR), Côte d’Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau was primarily the result of this pressure—a form of sanction against military governments that had already been applied by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Sierra Leone in 1997 and by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Lesotho in 1998. In a pronounced strategic shift from the limited politics of diplomatic engagement to the creation of more robust African peacekeeping and intervention capabilities, both the AU and certain sub-regional organizations such as ECOWAS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and SADC began to fashion peace and security strategies and structures that envisaged a substantially enhanced role for these bodies in the management and resolution of African conflicts.<sup>3</sup>

An incrementally widening circle of national governments initiated security sector reviews, White Paper processes and restructuring initiatives designed to enhance the professionalism of their security forces and their accountability to elected civil authorities. These initiatives, which traverse those colonial and linguistic boundaries that have bedevilled African unity, are evident in countries as diverse as Ghana, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South

<sup>1</sup> See also chapter 3 in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> The AU member states are listed in the glossary in this volume. The text of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, agreed at Lomé, Togo, on 11 July 2000, is available at URL <[http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/key\\_oau/au\\_act.htm](http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/key_oau/au_act.htm)>.

<sup>3</sup> IGAD is recognized as a prominent regional economic community in Africa but does not form a pillar of the African Economic Community because the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has been designated as the East African pillar. The other pillars are the ECOWAS, SADC, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS/CEEAC), and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU). For the members of ECOMOG, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC and AMU see the glossary in this volume.

Africa and Uganda. All these initiatives, national and regional, are responding to international donor pressure and in some cases aid flows.

Nonetheless, structural tensions continue to pervade African societies and their respective polities. The successful management of conflicts in Angola, Burundi, the DRC, Liberia, Rwanda and Sudan was preceded by deep-seated political, economic, structural and, in certain instances, ethnic rivalries that had their roots in the pre-colonial and colonial history of Africa. Ultimately, the attainment of durable and sustainable conditions of peace and security in Africa requires the formulation and implementation of a complex strategy integrating political, economic, social, cultural, spiritual and security components into its architecture. It is with this weighty task that both the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) have been entrusted.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter does not attempt to address all aspects and challenges of what is frequently referred to as the 'human security paradigm'. It acknowledges that while peace, stability and security are *contingent* on broader political, economic and social processes, they are not *necessarily derived* from them. Indeed, there are many examples of relatively well-integrated societies that have been torn apart by incrementally increasing violence and deteriorating conditions of physical security.

There is no universal reconstruction template that can be applied to post-conflict societies. Whether it is the restructuring of national armies, reduction of foreign debt, privatization of public enterprises or reduction of poverty that is prioritized as the key issue to be addressed, such goals can only be achieved by nationals of the country concerned based on the unique correlation of forces (physical and psychological) that pertains in that country at any given time.

This chapter, in accordance with the observations made above, examines a range of different concrete initiatives in the area of African security sector reform and security sector transformation (SST).<sup>5</sup> Section II examines those initiatives currently under way that seek to re-professionalize the African security agencies, primarily the armed forces, and those mechanisms being instituted to maintain effective civil oversight of the activities of such agencies. Section III examines the extent to which many of these initiatives are being 'regionalized' and the activities of the AU Peace and Security Council. Section IV offers conclusions.

<sup>4</sup> On NEPAD see URL <<http://www.nepad.org>>; and Adisa, J., 'The African Union: the visions, programmes, policies and challenges', *SIPRI Yearbook 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003), pp. 79–84.

<sup>5</sup> Transformation by its very nature implies a fundamental reappraisal of the manner in which an organization operates, whereas reform refers more to either a partial process of institutional restructuring or an attempt to improve the performance of an organization in relation to its specified outputs, e.g., the current British-funded Performance Improvement Programme in Ghana. On security sector reform see chapter 8 in this volume.

## II. Reforming national defence establishments

### Background

Since the mid-1990s, much of Africa has been engaged in defence transformation and defence reform initiatives. These are by no means the first transformational initiatives of their kind. However, previous processes were occasioned more by practical necessity than by normative design. Significant processes of this earlier type include the integration of guerrilla and regular forces to create new national armies in Zimbabwe (1980), Uganda (1986), Namibia (1989), Mozambique (1992), Angola (1994) and South Africa (1994). The defence transformation and reform initiatives from the mid-1990s onwards, however, were significantly different in both their intent and their scope.

Most defence restructuring initiatives in post-colonial African countries had been confined to incremental reforms designed, when they occurred, to improve the military capacity of the forces regardless of their impact on the broader polity and society. They were moderate reform programmes and not of a transformational nature.

The transformation initiatives (be they defence White Papers, defence reviews, defence restructuring processes, military integration processes or demobilization programmes) were typified by a desire on the part of diverse governments, in some cases actively encouraged by outside donors, to ensure that the management of their national defence function occurred in a transparent manner, was aligned to national developmental and budgetary realities, and was effectively subordinated to the oversight and control of duly elected civil authorities.

The new-style defence transformation or reform processes referred to below were the product of a variety of interrelated factors. The latter could include a significant change in the political environment of the country concerned (Angola, Sierra Leone and South Africa), a major shift in the strategic environment (South Africa and Uganda), a redefinition of the country's developmental and economic priorities (Angola and South Africa) and an institutional crisis within the armed forces (Sierra Leone and South Africa).

This section addresses the scope and the efficacy of some of these initiatives at the national level during the course of 2003. Three types of national SST process are chosen to highlight the complexity of this process. The first type refers to either those countries where *security sector transformation* processes (wide-ranging, radical and fundamental restructuring of defence, police, intelligence, paramilitary and other organizations) have been successfully completed or those countries where such processes are currently being managed. Two examples are offered in this regard—Sierra Leone and South Africa. The second type refers to those countries where *security sector reform* processes (piecemeal and partial restructuring of security forces) have been initiated but historical and institutional challenges complicate their successful resolution. Uganda is used here as a case study. The third type refers to those countries

where *partial reform initiatives* have been initiated but the armed forces have largely remained unaffected. Angola is used to illustrate this tendency.

### **An appropriate and accountable defence architecture for Sierra Leone**

Sierra Leone has been engaged, in both a systematic and a piecemeal fashion, in possibly one of the longest defence restructuring processes in recent African history. The ousting of the junta of Major Johnny Paul Koroma in March 1998 created a partial 'space' within which various defence reform initiatives could be initiated.<sup>6</sup> The target of these reforms—a venal, fragmented, dispirited and deeply politicized military—restricted the potential success of these initiatives, as did the absence of a purposeful and cohesive state to direct them.

The first moves towards restructuring the Sierra Leonean defence establishment most probably came from the ECOMOG forces, primarily Nigerian, under the leadership of Brigadier-General Maxwell Kobe, later to become Sierra Leone's acting Chief of Defence Staff, who sought to provide the elementary training at officer and non-commissioned officer level required to establish a modern national defence force.

Additional interventions designed to support the Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in its attempts to reprofessionalize the armed forces came from a variety of sources—the British Government, as the former colonial power and the primary interlocutor in this field; the United Nations Development Programme, as the facilitator of the civil society interface; and the US Agency for International Development's Office for Transitional Initiatives. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) incursions of 1998–99 and 2000 derailed many of these initiatives, but the decisive intervention of the British Government in support of the Sierra Leonean Government and the effective repulsing of the RUF force in 2000–2001<sup>7</sup> achieved the stable backdrop against which the current defence reform programme is proceeding.<sup>8</sup>

The reform programme has been framed against the backdrop of the events of 2002–2003. The death of Foday Sankoh, Sam Bokarie (also known as 'General Mosquito') and Koroma, the former coup leader, from the rebel side deprived the RUF of the residual leadership it possessed after the signing of the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement. The arraignment and arrest of the former Deputy Minister of Defence, Chief Hinga Norman, by the Special Court for Sierra Leone also removed a powerful and often controversial figure from the military map of Sierra Leone.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council and the Revolutionary United Front overthrew President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in a coup in May 1997. ECOMOG troops, together with the local Kamajor militia, reinstalled Kabbah in Mar. 1998 after heavy fighting.

<sup>7</sup> See Reno, W., 'War and the failure of peacekeeping in Sierra Leone', *SIPRI Yearbook 2001: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2001), pp. 149–61; and Seybolt, T. B., 'Major armed conflicts', *SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2002), pp. 34–36.

<sup>8</sup> The present author was personally involved in a number of these initiatives between 1998 and 2002.

<sup>9</sup> The 1999 Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone is available at URL <[http://www.usip.org/library/pa/sl/sierraleone\\_07071999\\_toc.html](http://www.usip.org/library/pa/sl/sierraleone_07071999_toc.html)>. For a discussion of the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone see chapter 5 in this volume.

Sierra Leone's defence transformation programme has been characterized by four major initiatives. The first was the appointment of a 'new' and less tainted generation of political and military leaders within the defence hierarchy. The second involved the restructuring of the Ministry of Defence (MOD), hitherto an emasculated administrative structure, to ensure more effective oversight of and strategic direction for the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). The third was the restructuring and integration of the RSLAF to create a more representative national institution than had been the case, and the fourth was the initiation of a demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programme in the country.<sup>10</sup>

The appointment of Ambassador Joe Blell, former ambassador to Nigeria during the coup years and widely respected among the different sectors of state and society, as the Deputy Minister of Defence brought a civilian with no military experience into the most senior security post in the country. This contrasted with the powerful base among the Kamajors of the former post-holder, Chief Hinga Norman.<sup>11</sup> The post of Minister of Defence is held by President Kabbah, although Ambassador Blell remains the de facto Minister of Defence under this institutional arrangement. The appointment of Brigadier-General Tom Carew, one of the few officers who remained consistently loyal to the Kabbah Government during the post-1996 period, as Sierra Leonean Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) effectively depoliticized the most senior military post in the country's security establishment. The appointment of a seasoned civil servant, K. O. Ba, as the Director General (DG) of the Department of Defence has brought the requisite level of civilian leadership into the defence department. In 2002 a new Ministry of Defence was created with a mixed civilian and military staff of around 165 people. Both the CDS and the DG were located in the same organizational structure, reporting to Blell.

In 2003, the responsibilities devolved to the MOD in principle began to become a practical reality. The DG is accountable to parliament for defence spending and, as such, is the MOD's principal accounting officer. The ministry, under the DG, is also responsible for the formulation and management of defence policy. The MOD maintains professional control over the armed forces via the authority vested in the CDS as the commander of the RSLAF. Finally, the MOD is responsible for providing the requisite levels of administrative and logistical support to the RSLAF in the execution of their duties.

The RSLAF restructuring process was completed in 2003. Overseen by a British-led International Military Advisory and Training Team, a Military Reintegration Process (MRP) was initiated whereby soldiers and combatants could be identified and reintegrated into a national army<sup>12</sup> consisting of former members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (those forces loyal to the late Paul Koroma), the former Sierra Leonean Army, the Revolutionary United Front (those forces loyal to the late Foday Sankoh) and the Kamajors.

<sup>10</sup> See Sierra Leone Ministry of Defense, *Defense White Paper: Informing the People* (Ministry of Defense: Freetown, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> The Civil Defence Forces, a militia also known as the Kamajors, were loyal to Norman.

<sup>12</sup> Sierra Leone Ministry of Defense (note 10).

The present force structure of the RSLAF bears little resemblance to the ramshackle structure inherited by the Kabbah Government from the Koroma junta in 1998. The RSLAF now has a maritime and an air wing as well as a variety of new units and headquarters structures.<sup>13</sup>

Although the transformation of the RSLAF has largely been supported by external donors, the government has also demonstrated its commitment to the process through increased financial allocations. Based on available statistics, military expenditure increased from \$15.5 million in 2001 to about \$17.9 million in 2003, an increase of over 15 per cent in real terms.<sup>14</sup> The government is aware of the need to maintain this level (or higher) of funding for a reasonable length of time for the transformation efforts to bear fruit.

The sheer scale of destruction in Sierra Leone during the civil war makes it likely that the current security sector reform process will continue for many years. A broad policy framework has been established and a national security review and defence review are also envisaged. Other issues already identified in the White Paper, which are at an early stage of operationalization, include:

1. The health and welfare needs of military personnel (including needs related to human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, AIDS) must be revisited. This was an enduring problem during previous military administrations and contributed to the rash of military interventions that occurred during the 1980s and the 1990s.

2. A comprehensive DDR plan is to be designed and initiated. The integration of former adversaries into a national army was motivated as much by principles of national reconciliation as by military expediency. However, the force is ageing; many of its members are untrainable; and it needs to be reduced to affordable and appropriate force levels in the near future. Although an informal process of demobilization did occur, a formal demobilization process benefiting both serving and former members of the different forces will require consideration in future.

3. A vigorous equal opportunities programme is in the process of being implemented, highlighting the extreme sensitivities that persist around the existence of ethnic imbalances or, in some cases, ethnic dominance within the country's private and public sectors.

While Sierra Leone has made substantial progress since the ECOMOG intervention in March 1998, much still needs to be done. Enduring problems of venality and patrimonialism, as well as internal divisions and welfare problems in the RSLAF, will affect the progress of the reform process.

<sup>13</sup> These include the Joint Force Command, the Joint Support Command, the Joint Communications Unit, the Joint Logistics Unit, the Joint Medical Unit, the Joint Provost Unit, the Armed Forces Personnel Centre, the Engineer Regiment, the Armed Forces Training Centre and the Armed Forces Education Centre. The Military Medical capabilities of the RSLAF have also been considerably expanded to include a refurbished military hospital and a Military School of Nursing.

<sup>14</sup> See chapter 10 in this volume.



### South Africa: completing the defence transformation process

South Africa presents, notwithstanding the inherent problems discussed below, arguably one of the most successful post-cold war transformation processes embarked on internationally. The successful integration of formerly implacable adversaries into a cohesive national defence establishment had a pragmatic basis. The existence of a sound economy and a strong state as well as the lengthy negotiated settlement created a framework within which SST had little choice but to succeed.

There were four key elements to the successful South African transition. First, it entailed the integration of eight formerly warring armed formations into a cohesive national defence force—a process that was completed in 2003. Second, it witnessed the creation of powerful parliamentary defence, policing and intelligence committees whose role was not only confined to legislative oversight but also included active involvement in the process of formulating defence policy.<sup>15</sup>

Third, it entailed the organizational and cultural reorientation of the defence establishment, to which end the Department of Defence Transformation Unit was established in 1995. This process was completed in 2003 when the broad organizational framework for both the force design and force structure was approved. Finally, it included the initiation of the historic defence review process, whereby thousands of South Africans participated in a national debate in order to build a consensus on the objectives of defence.<sup>16</sup>

Two major transformational initiatives emerged in the South African defence arena during 2003: the acquisition of the first equipment items with which the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) will execute its tasks in the coming decades; and the initiation of a transformation process within the country's sizeable reserve force, which held many lessons for other African defence establishments.

In November 1998 the South African Parliament and the Cabinet approved a Strategic Defence Package (SDP) based on recommendations presented to and approved by both bodies in October. The contract for the package was signed in 1999 at a total cost of 30.3 billion rand (\$4.8 billion) spread over a 12-year period starting from fiscal year (FY) 2000–2001.<sup>17</sup> The SDP provided for the purchase of 4 corvettes from a German frigate consortium, 3 submarines from the German corporation Ferrostaal, 28 Gripen fighters from a British Aero-

<sup>15</sup> See Williams, R., 'Integration or absorption? The creation of the South African National Defence Force, 1993 to 1999', *African Security Review*, vol. 11, no. 2 (Feb. 2002), available at URL <<http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/ASR/11No2/Williams.html>>.

<sup>16</sup> South African Ministry of Defense, *Defense White Paper* (Ministry of Defense: Pretoria, 1996); and South African Ministry of Defense, *South African Defense Review* (Ministry of Defense: Pretoria, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> The total cost of the SDP has since then been a major source of controversy because many critics and the Auditor General have argued that the total cost of the package would by 2012 be several billion rand above the initial sum, once other costs such as inflation, exchange rates and bank loans were added. See, e.g., 'South African MPs left cold by arms deal', *Military Affairs*, 19 Oct. 2000, p. 5; and 'Parliamentary committee chairman on spiralling cost of arms purchases' *Johannesburg Saturday Star*, 28 Apr. 2001, p. 9, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report—Africa (FBIS-AFR)*, FBIS-AFR-2001-0428, 30 Apr. 2001.

space (BAE) System/Saab consortium, 24 Hawk jet trainers from BAE and 30 Agusta A-109 light utility helicopters from the Italian company Agusta.

In November 2003 SAS *Amatola*, was the first of the corvettes to be equipped with South African combat suites and technology systems. This event, while not immediately apparent as an instance of defence transformation, represented the logical outcome of a defence review process that was both consultative and transparent. The South African defence review process was jointly managed and overseen by the MOD and the Joint Standing Parliamentary Committee on Defence. It ensured that a vast range of civil society and private sector actors were involved in the process. Despite accusations of impropriety against some members of the government during the contracting process,<sup>18</sup> the arrival of the SAS *Amatola* demonstrated that defence transformation processes were as much about defence outcomes as securing a national consensus on a country's defence needs.<sup>19</sup>

The implications for other African countries of the South African defence review process, the first to be completed on the continent, were obvious. One of the key outcomes of a transparent and methodologically sound review is the identification and, where financially feasible, procurement of the necessary equipment and systems to allow the armed forces to execute their constitutionally mandated responsibilities.

The main focus of the South African defence transformation process in 1994–2002 was on integrating the regular personnel from the eight former military formations into the SANDF and the restructuring of the country's civil–military relations. At its height, during 1995, the SANDF had about 101 000 personnel. In 2003 these force levels had diminished, through natural attrition, severance packages and demobilization, to some 74 000 personnel. From a force that during the pre-1990 period had been overwhelmingly dominated by white males, the regular component of the SANDF in 2003 consisted of 63.2 per cent black South Africans, 10.6 per cent 'Coloureds', or people of mixed race, 24.8 per cent white South Africans and 1.4 per cent Asians. Women constituted 16 574 (20 per cent) of the force and were allowed to serve in any of the combat or non-combat musterings in the force (including fighting ships, fighter aircraft, tank commanders, infantry fighting vehicles, special forces and infantry).<sup>20</sup> This contrasted starkly with the figure of approximately 10 per cent during the pre-1990 period, when women were solely confined to non-combat musterings (signals, administration, finance and support). In addition, new policies were introduced including the institution of the national DOD Equal Opportunities Council, the Civic Education Council, a policy on non-discrimination, a policy against sexual harassment and a policy prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

<sup>18</sup> 'SA arms deal under investigation', BBC News Online, 5 Apr. 2001, URL <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1262969.stm>>.

<sup>19</sup> For some dissenting views on the country's defence needs during the defence review process see Crawford-Browne, T., 'The arms deal forecast to cost R287 billion by 2010', Presentation to the Jubilee 2000 National Conference, East London, 2 Mar. 2001.

<sup>20</sup> South African Ministry of Defence, *South African Defense Review* (note 16), p. 71.



This appraisal of the demographics and force levels of the new organization ignores the fact that the SANDF also consisted of some 60 000 active reservists mustered in territorial militias—all of which were army, in 183 units, with active force levels of 54 000 personnel, largely based in the conservative rural areas of the country and responsible mainly for supporting the South African Police Service—and conventional force reserves—95 units from the army, the air force and the military health services. The vast majority of the members of these units were white and virtually all were commanded by white senior officers.

There were both political and pragmatic reasons behind the South African Government's massive restructuring of the reserve forces in 2003. In 2002 the South African Police arrested a large number of white members of a right-wing conspiratorial organization known as the 'Boermag' (Afrikaner Force) throughout the country. These individuals were alleged to have been involved in preparing a coup d'état against the government. During subsequent investigations and court hearings it was revealed not only that many had been members of the SANDF's territorial militias, but also that a number of them had used both the infrastructure and inventory of the units for their own conspiratorial ends.

South African President Thabo Mbeki's State of the Nation speech on 8 January 2003 thus contained the instruction, subsequently endorsed by both the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Safety and Security, that all territorial militia units would be disbanded over a six-year period and their responsibilities transferred to the South African Police. This decision was greeted with strong protests—mainly from the agricultural sector and the parliamentary opposition.

In reality, however, the decision was prudent and pragmatic in military terms and dovetailed neatly with a parallel transformation process that had been occurring in the conventional force reserve structures of the SANDF since 2002. South African defence policy was explicit on the role of the armed forces in the internal arena. Both the Defence White Paper and the Defence Review argued that support to the police was only warranted in exceptional circumstances—situations where the police manifestly lacked the capacity to maintain law and order on their own, for example, large-scale violent protests and localized insurgencies. Failure to disengage the armed forces from an internal policing role would have run two major risks: the probable politicization of the armed forces because of their deployment in non-traditional and highly politicized environments; and the erosion of their budget and force planning cycle.

Within the SANDF a process of institutional restructuring, known as Project Phoenix, had been initiated in 2002. This was primarily concerned with restructuring and providing better resources to the SANDF's conventional force reserves, which made up the bulk of the force's conventional capabilities, to enable the country to meet its defence needs—defence against aggression, participation in peace missions and other collateral tasks. A further result

of this project was the ranking and placement of senior Umkhonto We Sizwe<sup>21</sup> and Azanian People's Liberation Army personnel in the reserve forces—a process that the Reserve Force Council had been calling for since 1995.

The restructuring of the South African Reserve Forces provided many lessons for other African defence transformation processes: first, the military utility of reserve forces—their capacity to supplement the operational capabilities of the regular forces; second, the civic utility of reserve forces—their ability to act as a moderating influence on the corporate ambitions of the regular force (the so-called 'citizens-in-uniform'); and third, their cost-effectiveness and low maintenance requirements. Historically, virtually all pre-colonial African defence establishments were exclusively reserve force in structure. Currently, meaningful reserve systems exist in only a handful of African militaries—the Arab Maghreb Union countries (conscript- rather than volunteer-based), Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

### **The Ugandan defence review process: new requirements in a 'rough neighbourhood'**

The Ugandan defence review process, initiated in 2002 against a backdrop of prior defence restructuring interventions, was the product of concrete political, strategic and military considerations. The military–strategic factors that gave rise to the defence review were as numerous as they were enduring and complex.

In the north of the country the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), despite its peculiar and underdeveloped ideology, is engaged in a persistent and brutal campaign against the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF). Various military operations against the LRA, most notably the well-publicized Operation Iron Fist, have failed to defeat it.<sup>22</sup> Undoubtedly, much of the LRA's military capability was a product of the support received from the Sudanese Government. Uganda also faces rebel incursions in the north-west of its territory—mounted from the DRC. These insurgents lack a clear set of ideological beliefs, are a loose grouping of rebel forces (some possessing names such as the People's Redemption Army), and are brutal and unpredictable in their tactics against both the local population and the local security forces (the UPDF, police and civil militias).

Despite historical ties between the Ugandan National Resistance Movement and the Rwandan Patriotic Front,<sup>23</sup> tensions between the two countries persisted in 2003. Although no direct military confrontation occurred between the UPDF and the Rwandan Patriotic Army, notwithstanding ongoing rumours of

<sup>21</sup> Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) was the military wing of the African National Congress. It was officially disbanded on 1 Aug. 1990.

<sup>22</sup> Somerville, K., 'Uganda's rebels keep the faith', BBC News Online, 3 July 2002. URL <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2083241.stm>>.

<sup>23</sup> The former provided safe haven and military support to the latter prior to the Rwandan Patriotic Army's entry into Rwanda in 1990.

military build-ups on the border, conflicts between their proxy forces in the DRC continued until the signing of the ceasefire in the DRC in March 2003.<sup>24</sup>

Cross-border clashes with Kenyan tribesmen over cattle and grazing access, internal dissent from discontented political opposition parties, and ill-discipline among some soldiers, which frequently manifested itself as banditry and crime, impelled the Ugandan Government to reconsider both its defence posture and its defence needs. Heavily dependent on donor aid, the Ugandan Government approached the British Government (through the then International Development Minister, Clare Short, with whom President Yoweri Museveni enjoyed a good relationship) to prevail on donors to lift the 2 per cent ceiling imposed on defence spending. Prior to this request, Ugandan military expenditure had become a source of concern to many of its external donors, who suspected that more resources were being committed to defence than official statistics revealed. (Official military expenditure in Uganda rose from \$120 million in 1998 to \$152 million in 2002, an increase of about 27 per cent in real terms. In both years military expenditure constituted 2.3 per cent of GDP).<sup>25</sup>

Recognizing the nature of the Ugandan security environment, the British Government agreed to lobby donors with the proviso that Uganda initiate a defence review process to justify the increase in its spending. A Ugandan Defence Review Programme (UDRP) was accordingly established, to be coordinated by a Defence Reform Unit located in the MOD, and a defence review was initiated in 2002.

The review focused on the broad defence policy environment (an appraisal of the strategic environment, foreign policy context and the security policy framework) in late 2002 and on the substantive issues of defence reform in 2003.<sup>26</sup> These included defining defence roles and tasks in the future, examining options with regard to force design and structure, examining strategies for improving defence capabilities and outputs, and highlighting some of the key human resource challenges to be confronted in future. The envisaged output of the defence review process is a White Paper on Defence—a draft of which already exists.

The defence review process encountered many obstacles during 2003. Possibly the major challenge, one not unique to Uganda, was securing sufficient ‘buy-in’ from the political leadership and the executive levels of the security establishment. The novelty of the process, and its highly consultative nature, inevitably estranged some of the more traditional and technocratic officers in the military establishment. Additional problems included the often alien nature

<sup>24</sup> See chapter 4 in this volume.

<sup>25</sup> For an analysis of Ugandan military spending and the influence of international donors see Omitoogun, W., *Military Expenditure Data in Africa: A Survey of Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda*, SIPRI Research Report no. 17 (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003) pp. 95–108.

<sup>26</sup> See Rusoke, R. (Col.), ‘Defence reform in Uganda: a case study’, eds A. Lala and A. M. FitzGerald, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR), *Providing Security for People: Security Sector Reform in Africa*, GFN Paper no. 23 (GFN-SSR: Shrivenham, 2003), URL <[http://www.gfn-ssr.org/document\\_result.cfm?id=319](http://www.gfn-ssr.org/document_result.cfm?id=319)>.

of the methodology adopted, the difficulty of coordinating the participation of senior government in the process, and the uneven levels of interest in the process and competence displayed by civil society actors.

The formal political motivation for the initiation of the Ugandan defence review had two major drivers. The first related to the troubled strategic environment and the need for the country to provide the UPDF with adequate resources with which to counter these threats. This was undoubtedly a valid starting point. Notwithstanding the relative diminution of threats in the west of the country, the persistent problems in the north warranted a re-equipping and retraining of the UPDF for more effective counter-insurgency tactics—both of which required resources.

The second motivation was more institutional and related to the need to ‘professionalize’ the UPDF and to effect an orderly transition from a guerrilla movement—the National Revolutionary Army (NRA)—to a modern, technologically capable defence force. This called for the judicious consideration of the equipment and human resources required to effect the transition.

A further, less explicit, motivation for the defence review must be located in the history of Uganda in general and of the UPDF in particular. Prior to President Museveni’s capture of Kampala in 1986, all three previous regimes (those of Milton Obote, Idi Amin and Obote again, installed by Tanzania in 1979) had ‘fallen’ along with their military establishments. Although elements of former armies had been absorbed into the increasingly ramshackle structures of the pre-1986 army, command and control, force preparation and provision, and institutional culture had all been severely eroded.

It has frequently been stated by observers of the UDRP that President Museveni—the founder of the NRA, the current Chair of the Army Council and a president who still carries the rank of lieutenant-general—wants to ensure that the armed forces remain intact after he leaves office and do not descend into internecine strife. In the light of Uganda’s appallingly violent history, this is undoubtedly a valid observation. A more nuanced overview of the defence review process, however, should acknowledge its limitations and examine the president’s political concerns regarding the future of the UPDF.

The first concern relates to the future of the UPDF. Whatever the nature of the current crises confronting Uganda, few would dispute the stabilizing role played by the UPDF in the post-1986 Ugandan transition. The fact that the UPDF began only as late as 2003 to speak of ‘professionalizing’ by transforming itself from a guerrilla force to a modern army bears partial testimony to this reality. The quasi-guerrilla culture of the UPDF and its deep-seated political loyalty characterize a force that was maintained in this state precisely to ensure the success and consolidation of the gains of the 1986 victory.

Second, a deep and enduring loyalty exists between the founders of the NRA and the generation of commanders who participated in the final assault on Kampala. These are fondly known as the ‘historicals’ (akin to the *mgwenya* and the *chimurengas* of the South African and Zimbabwean liberation movements) and it is known that Museveni is concerned about their welfare once

they leave active service. The defence review, in part, provides a platform where these welfare issues can be raised.

Finally, there is little doubt that the Ugandan Government is entering the entire defence reform and defence review process as a Faustian bargain with international donors. If the donors endorse greater military expenditure, the Ugandan Government will, not too reluctantly, initiate a process of defence reform—which could, in many ways, benefit the government's own national objectives.

### **Demobilization and Angola's partial defence reform process: reforming for the sake of pragmatism**

Angola presents an interesting case of a government that is engaging, of its own volition and with little outside assistance, in a wide-ranging and challenging demobilization process following the end of the conflict in 2002 with the death of Jonas Savimbi.<sup>27</sup> However, recent developments highlight the fact that demobilization implies neither the reform nor the transformation of Angola's defence architecture.

Demobilization is often associated with those processes of human resource conversion that are perceived as integral to broader peace-building processes. At present the Angolan Government has some 85 585 personnel billeted in its different quartering cantonments, yet its level of military expenditure remains largely unchanged. In 2003 defence and security expenditure was about 48 billion kwanzas (\$461 million)<sup>28</sup> or 36 per cent of total government expenditure. According to official statistics on the 2004 budget, the total allocation to defence and security is being reduced to 32 per cent of total expenditure in 2004.

At the end of 2002 the force levels of the Angolan Army (FAA) were 130 500 active soldiers and some 15 000 paramilitaries (excluding the police)—the largest force levels of any defence establishment in Sub-Saharan Africa. There is no immediate plan to reduce these force levels, lending credence to the belief that they will be used to bolster government power in the former Uniao Nacional Para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) stronghold in the south and the oil-rich northern region of Cabinda—specifically to avert a self-determination struggle and a potential civil war in both areas. What was perhaps most surprising about the death of Jonas Savimbi was the rapidity with which UNITA crumbled—testifying to the remarkable cult of the personality that existed around Savimbi. A further reason for maintaining, and in some cases increasing, force levels was the possibility that they could be used in Angola's various expeditionary campaigns in the central African region. Angola increasingly regards itself as a sub-regional superpower, as demon-

<sup>27</sup> Wiharta, S., 'Multilateral peace missions', *SIPRI Yearbook 2003* (note 4), pp. 128–29.

<sup>28</sup> These figures should be seen in the context of highly uncertain economic statistics because of the impact of war on the Angolan economy. The dollar figure is at constant 2000 prices and exchange rates.

strated by the use of its forces in both the DRC and the Republic of Congo since 1999.

Angola's DDR programme is being overseen by the FAA and the Joint Monitoring Commission. By July 2003 some 85 585 UNITA soldiers and 280 261 family members were resident at national quartering facilities—which had been expanded to 35 different locations to cater for the unprecedented influx of former UNITA soldiers, itself testimony to the surprising force levels which UNITA possessed immediately prior to Savimbi's death. The entire DDR process is supposed to follow a number of different stages, but to date only 5000 former UNITA combatants have been integrated into the FAA and the police and a mere 11 000 soldiers and 33 000 of their family members have been resettled.<sup>29</sup>

For understandable political reasons, the Angolan Government has not extended the process of defence restructuring to other components of the security sector. This is largely because of the fact that its application for funding to the United Nations (UN) was unsuccessful. The role of parliament in overseeing and directing the activities of the armed forces remains weak and civil society has virtually no influence over the defence debate, notwithstanding the emergence of a handful of think tanks. Little mention is made of re-professionalizing the armed forces, the MOD remains a tool of political control rather than of strategic management, and the ethnic imbalance between the mulattos from the northern and coastal regions and the Ovimbundu from the south, Savimbi's former support base, is an unresolved issue throughout the Angolan civil service.

In Angola in particular, and increasingly in African civil–military relations, a pronounced inter-penetration of power and influence between the ruling elite (not necessarily the ruling party) the business elite and the command echelons of the armed forces makes the extent to which appropriate defence reform can occur problematic. A high level of political will allowed South Africa to initiate and undertake transformational processes which were, in retrospect, revolutionary in their scope and magnitude. Profound security problems coupled with significant donor pressure facilitated the initiation of the Ugandan defence reform programme. Virtual state collapse and the background presence of the United Kingdom compelled Sierra Leone to undertake a wide-ranging process of defence reform—which is gradually beginning to bear fruit. For countries such as Angola, however, different inducements and incentives must be devised. Economically powerful, strategically significant and with much sought-after resources, motivation for reform will have to be sought in two quarters: from within the ruling elite itself, a process that would be marked more by pragmatism than normative predisposition; and from its partner states—the 1997 Defence Pact countries.<sup>30</sup> With the exception of Namibia, however, Angola's peers have a questionable commitment to the process of

<sup>29</sup> Otieno, G., 'Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration in Angola', *African Security Review*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Jan. 2003), pp. 55–57.

<sup>30</sup> The 1997 Mutual Defence Pact members are Angola, the DRC, Namibia and Zimbabwe.



defence reform. There is also the question of what pressure will be exerted, and to what effect, by external donors.

Without a degree of enlightened self-interest it seems unlikely that the Angolan defence establishment will be substantially reformed in the near future. If anything, the advent of peace and the unfolding economic opportunities in Central Africa may well witness the Angolan Government refurbishing its armed forces for more robust force projection in support of its foreign policy objectives in the region.

### III. Carrying the continent forward: the African Union and the activation of the Peace and Security Council

The African Union was formally established in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002. The legal basis for the AU was provided by the Constitutive Act of the African Union on 11 July 2000 in Lome, Togo.<sup>31</sup>

The objectives of the AU are *inter alia* to: (a) accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent; (b) promote peace, security and stability on the continent; (c) promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies; and (d) establish the necessary conditions to enable Africa to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations.<sup>32</sup>

The attainment of peace and stability on the African continent is perceived by the AU as one of the essential preconditions for growth and development. To this end, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) was formally established in 2003 with the following key objectives: (a) to promote peace, security and stability in Africa; (b) to anticipate and prevent conflicts; (c) to promote and implement peace building and post-conflict reconstruction activities to consolidate peace and prevent the resurgence of violence; (d) to develop a common defence policy for the AU; and (e) to promote and encourage democratic practices, good governance and the rule of law.<sup>33</sup>

Apart from the establishment of the PSC, the two major security-related activities of the AU in 2003 were the initiation of a process to formulate a Common African Security and Defence Policy (CASDP) and the commencement of a planning process to establish an African Standby Force.<sup>34</sup>

The decision to proceed with plans to establish a CASDP was essentially a response, initiated by President Mbeki, to Libyan President Muammar Qadhafi's call for the establishment of an Pan-African Army, which had been made—and adopted as a resolution—at the launch of the AU in Durban.<sup>35</sup> In

<sup>31</sup> See Adisa (note 4); and Constitutive Act of the African Union (note 2). The organs of the AU are enumerated in Art. 5 of the Constitutive Act.

<sup>32</sup> Constitutive Act of the African Union (note 2), Articles 3a, 3f, 3j and 3i, respectively.

<sup>33</sup> Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, Articles a–e, p. 5. The protocol was signed at the OAU/AU Summit, Durban, South Africa, on 9 July 2002 and is available at URL <[http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/summit\\_council/secprot.htm](http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/summit_council/secprot.htm)>.

<sup>34</sup> 'Africa leaders agree joint force', BBC News Online, 28 Feb. 2004, URL <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3496204.stm>>.

<sup>35</sup> See Adisa (note 4).

2003 several meetings of experts were held to discuss the framework of such a CASDP, and a broad draft policy framework has been established which examines such issues as peacekeeping, enhancing sub-regional security capacities, small arms proliferation, security sector reform and demobilization.

The proposal for the establishment of an African Standby Force is more ambitious. It calls for 'The establishment of multi-disciplinary contingents with civilian and military components from African states which can, if required, be rapidly deployed at appropriate notice' adding that 'such standby contingents, their strengths, readiness and location, will be determined by the African Union Peace Support Standard Operating Procedures'.<sup>36</sup>

Preliminary work was undertaken on the establishment of the force during 2003—although, in effect, the activation of such a contingent will take many years to accomplish. It is envisaged that its responsibilities will include: (a) observation and monitoring missions; (b) other types of peace support missions; (c) intervention in a member state in grave circumstances or at its request in order to restore peace and stability;<sup>37</sup> (d) preventive deployment to minimize or prevent conflict in either individual states or regions; (e) peace-building, including demobilization, disarmament and reintegration; (f) humanitarian assistance; and (g) any other functions mandated by the PSC.

It was also proposed that a Force Commander be chosen, that a Military Staff Committee be established as the cell responsible for operational and staff duties, that requisite levels of training be given to all contingents and that the training and doctrinal features of African armed forces be standardized.<sup>38</sup>

### External assistance

Since the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development in October 2001, peace and stability have been seen as critical to its success, as testified to by its key objectives: (a) to improve early-warning capacity in Africa, especially information gathering and analysis; (b) to ensure that early warning leads to early and effective action; (c) to promote sustainable reconstruction and development, including disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation; (d) to curb the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking in small arms and light weapons on the continent; and (e) to promote democracy, good governance and respect for human rights through appropriate security sector policy and institutional reforms.<sup>39</sup> The British Government is already active in providing assistance with the establishment of the PSC, the European Union has pledged €40 million, Canada C\$500 million (c. \$370 mil-

<sup>36</sup> African Union, Assembly of the Union, 2nd Extraordinary Session, 27–28 Feb. 2004, Sirte, Libya, URL <[http://www.africa-union.org/Official\\_documents/Decisions\\_Declarations](http://www.africa-union.org/Official_documents/Decisions_Declarations)>.

<sup>37</sup> The Constitutive Act of the African Union (note 2), Articles 4h and j, allow such interventions in cases of gross human rights violations, civil war or genocide.

<sup>38</sup> Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, Addis Ababa, 2003, URL <<http://www.pmg.org.za/docs/2003>>.

<sup>39</sup> NEPAD, *Conditions for Sustainable Development: Towards the Implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development*, Progress report and initial action plan, June 2002.

lion) and the South African private sector is also entering into private partnerships with proposed NEPAD programmes.

These proposals received further expression in the Group of Eight (G8) industrialized nations Africa Action Plan, formulated in 2002 and refined in 2003.<sup>40</sup> The plan commits the G8 to: (a) support African efforts to resolve principal conflicts, particularly those in Angola, the DRC, Sierra Leone and Sudan, with particular emphasis on DDR; (b) provide technical and financial assistance so that by 2010 African countries and regional and sub-regional organizations are able to prevent and resolve violent conflict and undertake peace support operations in accordance with the UN Charter; (c) support efforts by African countries and the UN to better regulate the activities of arms brokers and to eliminate the flow of illicit weapons to and within Africa; (d) support African efforts to eliminate and remove anti-personnel mines; (e) work with African governments, civil society and others to address the linkage between armed conflict and the exploitation of natural resources; and (f) provide more effective peace-building support to societies emerging from or seeking to prevent armed conflicts.

The fact that both the AU and NEPAD have developed a strong focus on peace and security issues led to a degree of tension between the PSC and the NEPAD Secretariat, based in Pretoria. This was further underscored by the AU's insistence that NEPAD was a programme of the AU and not a separate continental structure. South Africa's position as chair of the NEPAD Peace and Security Sub-Committee also precipitated unease among some members of the PSC Secretariat.

In order to avoid a duplication of tasks a meeting was convened in Addis Ababa in February 2003 to achieve a greater level of coordination and integration of efforts. Both the AU and the NEPAD Secretariat consequently identified the following principles and areas of common agreement with regard to African peace and stability.

1. The African Union is the continental body with the primary responsibility for implementing the African agenda on peace and security in general, and conflict prevention, management and resolution in particular.

2. NEPAD adds value by strengthening the efforts of the AU in the areas of advocacy and the mobilization of support for the implementation of national, regional and continental peace and security initiatives, including in the critical area of post-conflict reconstruction.

3. The AU–NEPAD peace and security agenda is a single and indivisible agenda for addressing issues and challenges related to peace and security in Africa.

4. The objective of the integrated AU–NEPAD peace and security agenda is to ensure the simultaneous and collaborative enhancement of the strategic and organizational capacities of regional and continental organizations.

<sup>40</sup> G8, 'G8 Africa Action Plan', points 1.5–1.6, available at URL <[http://www.g8.gc.ca/2002\\_kananaskis/kananaskis/afraction-en.asp](http://www.g8.gc.ca/2002_kananaskis/kananaskis/afraction-en.asp)>.

5. Peace and security remain key preconditions for the attainment of sustainable and durable economic growth and development on the African continent and should be reflected as such in the diverse activities of both the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat.

It was further agreed that both the AU and NEPAD's activities in the peace and security arena would be referred to in future as the AU–NEPAD Peace and Security Strategy. To this end it was agreed that the key building blocks of this strategy would comprise: (a) developing mechanisms to assist in the achievement of peace and security in Africa; (b) improving the capacity for conflict prevention, management and resolution including the development of peacekeeping capacities; (c) improving early-warning capacity in Africa; (d) promoting an African definition of disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reconstruction in post-conflict situations; (e) coordinating the capacity of African states to respond to terrorism; (f) ensuring integrated responses and strategies to prevent the proliferation of small arms; (g) improving governance in the security sector; and (h) assisting in resource mobilization for the African Union Peace Fund.<sup>41</sup>

It is important to stress, however, that NEPAD is a programme of the AU and not a separate structure. In essence it is a resource mobilizer that will ensure that the requisite publicity and resources are available to the AU for its diverse programmes.

There are a number of key challenges facing the operationalization of the AU–NEPAD Peace and Security Strategy. A level of detail must be added to the strategy which is, thus far, largely a vision and in need of further depth. The areas of intervention have been prioritized within the strategy, but neither the countries that are to be prioritized nor the criteria that is to be used have been identified.

The following criteria could be applied: (a) the extent to which the intervention contributes in a fundamental manner to the stabilization of the country concerned (e.g., Sierra Leone); (b) the extent to which the intervention contributes to sub-regional peace and security (e.g., Burundi, the DRC and Rwanda); and (c) the extent to which the intervention contributes to building sustainable capacities in relevant conflict-resolution structures.

The building blocks of any continental strategy are the capabilities of the sub-regional organizations themselves. An assessment needs to be made of their capacities, policies and the extent to which they have instituted, or should institute, appropriate confidence- and security-building measures within their respective areas. A template of best practice and appropriate databases need to be continually updated with regard to these interventions.

If the Common African Defence and Security Policy is to mean anything, it should, at its various stages of inception, focus on two practicable levels of operation—those initiatives that are already occurring in the different sub-regions: peacekeeping, disaster management, early warning, and so on, and

<sup>41</sup> Report of AU–NEPAD Consultations on Peace and Security, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 17–18 Feb. 2003, URL <<http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000225/index.php>>.

those strategic initiatives that can contribute to the better management of the continental and sub-regional processes, for example, the activation of the PSC in the AU and the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security in SADC.

#### IV. Conclusions

The discussion of developments in this chapter is by no means exhaustive. A plethora of similar initiatives are occurring elsewhere in Africa, ranging from reorganization of sub-regional security architecture to the development of peacekeeping capacities in the myriad of bilateral and multilateral initiatives that exist on the continent. In the light of these developments, and with the generally positive outputs emerging from these security sector transformation processes, the forthcoming decade may well be the one in which Africa establishes security institutions and security arrangements that are genuinely accountable in behaviour and capable in their professional predisposition.

While the institution of the AU and NEPAD and the activation of the various sub-regional bodies represent a positive step forward in the direction of a practical Pan-Africanism, it is important to stress that immense challenges must be faced in order to operationalize them. Already, many African countries have been slow to submit themselves to the African Peer Review Process (Ghana and South Africa are the first countries to have done so) and differences exist between Egypt and South Africa about in which of their respective countries the first Pan-African Parliament will be situated.

Further challenges will include the following: (a) building capacity at the national level of government, without which sub-regional organizations will be rendered toothless; (b) ensuring that synergy exists at both organizational and policy level between national, sub-regional and organizational bodies and that appropriate resources are identified for their different tasks; (c) the risk of undue competition and rivalry between the 'superpowers' of the continent (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, and South Africa) for the dominant positions in African organizations; (d) the danger of over-extending capabilities—both civil and military;<sup>42</sup> and (e) the enduring and perennial problem of initiating too wide a range of initiatives in all sectors of the AU–NEPAD without having the resources, capacity and planning ability to complete them all.

<sup>42</sup> This is a lesson that Nigeria learned in both Liberia and Sierra Leone and that South Africa runs the risk of learning by its deployments in Burundi and the DRC as well as the requests for it to contribute a relatively large contingent to the African Standby Force.

