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Editorial

From a defence and security point of view, the second half of 2023 continued to be overshadowed by the ongoing conflicts in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East – the most recent being the Israeli–Hamas War that broke out in early October. These conflicts continue to have vast geopolitical implications, not only making their immediate regions unstable and volatile, but also having no clear resolutions in sight. While these conflicts will continue to stimulate debate in academic and military circles, they also provide a unique opportunity within defence and security spheres to explore topics, such as doctrinal developments, force structure and design, military operations, defence policy, and alliances.

In this issue of *Scientia Militaria*, Vol. 51, No. 2, 2023, the articles consider both historic and contemporary issues associated with war and conflict, as well as defence- and security-related matters. As always, it is trusted that these articles will provide key insights and act as a source of influence for individuals involved in the broader ambit of military planning, operations, management, and higher education.

The article by Louis Bester from Stellenbosch University argues that the terrorist attacks that occurred on 11 September 2001 in the United States of America led to a significant shift in combatting the new security threat in the so-called “War on Terrorism”. This event drew international attention to security risks associated with ungoverned spaces, failed states, and the spread of terror. Consequently, it brought together the agendas of addressing failed states and countering terrorism, creating a potent framework for humanitarian organisations in which to operate. This consequently led to the emergence of interventions by non-governmental organisations, exemplified by initiatives such as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Furthermore, the deployment of European special forces to Mali in 2013 as part of MINUSMA aimed to restore constitutional order to the Malian government. This mission is still ongoing, serving as a relevant example of how special forces are employed within the context of peace missions in Africa. Bester’s article provides an overview of the post-Cold War security dynamics in the region, the nature of conflict in Africa, and the utilisation of special forces in peacekeeping operations.

In his article, Emile Coetzee from North-West University focusses on Commandant Barnie van der Merwe – a South African Defence Force (SADF) career soldier who found

himself entangled in allegations of tender fraud and bribery in the acquisition of military vehicles and equipment supplies for the Defence Force in 1957. Following his arrest and subsequent conviction for corruption, his military career came to a halt in September 1963. Van der Merwe's case played a pivotal role in prompting the establishment of the 1964 Cillie Commission of Inquiry, which aimed to investigate suspected irregularities in arms procurement within the broader SADF and the Department of Defence. The findings by the commission illuminated the intricate web of corruption involving individuals – such as Van der Merwe – who were driven by personal enrichment. Coetzee's article delves into the details of Van der Merwe's illicit activities, identifying the specific nature of his crimes, and examining the historical significance of his criminal career.

The article by Anna la Grange from the University of Potsdam shows that, during the Second World War, the Union of South Africa introduced emergency regulations, including an internment policy, as measures to suppress anti-war activities within the country. These regulations and the internment policy had a notable influence on one of the most prominent anti-war organisations, known as the Ossewabrandwag, leading to the detention of many of its members in internment camps during the war. In 1946, a group of individuals, primarily comprising former Ossewabrandwag members who had been interned during the war, came together to establish the Bond van Oudgeïnterneerdes en Politieke Gevangenes (BOPG), roughly translated as “the Association of Former Internees and Political Prisoners”. La Grange utilised the BOPG collection, which forms part of the Ossewabrandwag Archive located in Potchefstroom, South Africa, to offer a concise historical background of the BOPG. She investigated the organisation itself, and explored the potential influence of the organisation on its members by highlighting nostalgia or a longing for the past as a central aspect of its existence. By regarding the BOPG as a direct and enduring social expression related to the internment policy of the Union of South Africa, La Grange's article presents an initial effort to examine the BOPG and expound its role in the broader context of South African experiences and memories of the Second World War.

In their article, Marno Swart and Eben Coetzee – from Stellenbosch University and the University of the Free State respectively – argue that the field of International Relations remains defined by an enduring conflict between two opposing theories, namely offensive realism and liberal internationalism. They scrutinise which theory – offensive realism or liberal internationalism – provides a more convincing rationale for the formation of an alliance between the intelligence agencies of Israel and South Africa. In doing so, their article acknowledges the intricate and multifaceted character of intelligence cooperation within the broader context of statecraft and foreign policy. While scholars have indeed probed the explanatory capacity of offensive realism and liberal internationalism in elucidating the foreign policy actions of democratic and mixed partnerships (comprising both democratic and non-democratic elements), there has been a noticeable absence of efforts to apply these theories to the interactions of intelligence services. Consequently, the article endeavours to bridge this gap in the literature by providing an assessment of the relative effectiveness of offensive realism and liberal internationalism in accounting for the establishment of an alliance between the intelligence services of Israel and South Africa.

The article by Check Achu and Issiaka Diarra – from the Human Sciences Research Council and the University of Arts and Humanities of Bamako, Mali respectively – investigated the role of non-state actors in facilitating terrorism and insecurity in Mali. The authors analysed the security situation in Mali within the broader context of insecurity and religious conflicts in West Africa, and argue that transhumance, as a migratory pattern, and the permeability of international boundaries in the Sahel region, act as factors contributing to the insecurity and instability in Mali. Nevertheless, many contend that the root causes of terrorist acts and violent conflicts in post-independence Africa are not solely the result of unfulfilled promises to alleviate poverty and unemployment, but rather stem from people’s experiences of inequality and relative deprivation. Achu Check and Diarra thus sought to elucidate some of the crucial theoretical considerations that Malian political leaders should take into account as they implement measures to address the fundamental challenges confronting the country. The authors also elaborate on the concept of ungoverned spaces, and assert that the vast, uninhabited areas in Mali specifically serve as breeding grounds for terrorists engaged in nefarious activities. In conclusion, Achu Check and Diarra propose that the Malian government should engage in renegotiating a social contract with the people of Mali and initiate efforts to rebuild a positive relationship between the Malian populace and the government.

In the final article, Desiré Fouché, Hennie Smit and Ivan Henrico from Stellenbosch University report on utilising the GFN online calculator to assess the ecological footprint of individual members of the Army Support Base in the Eastern Cape. The online ecological footprint survey was employed to gather quantitative data from the responses of each participant. Statistical analysis was conducted using the STATISTICA 14.0 software to determine the ecological footprints of the individual members at the Army Support Base in the Eastern Cape and their collective ecological footprints. Across various categories, officers consistently recorded the highest ecological footprints, while non-commissioned officers, Public Service Act personnel, and privates in general, registered lower scores. Additionally, the article shows that, in most categories, males outsourced females, indicating a higher ecological footprint for males and, consequently, a more substantial impact on the environment. Fouché et al. show that the results of this study hold significance, as the study represents the first calculation of an ecological footprint for a military base in South Africa, and is one of a few global studies with a similar focus. They conclude that their findings could serve as a foundational point for future research within units of the South African National Defence Force, ultimately contributing to more sustainable resource usage.

A selection of book reviews by Hussein Solomon, Abel Esterhuysen, Laetitia Olivier, Louis Bester and Evert Kleynhans conclude this issue of *Scientia Militaria*

The Editors

Evert Kleynhans  & Anri Delport 