

South African Journal *of Military Science*

Editorial

From a defence and security point of view, mid-2024 continued to be overshadowed by the continuing conflicts in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East – especially the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian War (February 2022 to date) and the Israeli–Hamas War (October 2023 to date). In Southern Africa, however, the focus remains on the continuing deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC). As argued in the previous issue, the geo-strategic shift of the regional organisation from Mozambique to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in mid-December 2023 coincided with the withdrawal of the United Nations peacekeeping mission from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) – which is set to take place in stages until the end of 2024. While it is generally accepted that the MONUSCO mission failed to achieve any notable gains in terms of creating enduring peace and stability in the country after a period of 20 years, it remains unclear how both the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and SAMIDRC will fill the current security and defence vacuum created in the eastern DRC. Amidst an ever-deteriorating tactical situation, the SAMIDRC contingent continues to face considerable challenges relating to its mandate, force structure, equipment, and logistical provisions. Moreover, the SAMIDRC force has suffered even further casualties and operational setbacks throughout the last few months, which even included a serious case of alleged “fragging” among the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) contingent. While the security situation in the mineral-rich eastern DRC continues to deteriorate with concomitant risks triggering a wider regional conflict in Central Africa, it is further worthy to note the recent press allegations that both Rwanda and Uganda are actively supporting the well-armed M23 rebels that are destabilising the region.

These conflicts, and others, will continue to have substantial 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*, Volume 52, Issue 2, 2024, 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 Chris Pfeiffer, an independent scholar, discusses the evolution of the Directorate Military Intelligence (DMI) of the South African Defence Force (SADF) between 1961 and 1971. It shows that, after South Africa had left the Commonwealth in 1961, the SADF had to develop its own intelligence capacity, as the British intelligence services had ceased intelligence provision to South Africa. The SADF also had limited experience in the field of intelligence as far as personnel, training, and structures were concerned. Moreover, DMI had no mandate, occupied an insubordinate position in the higher military hierarchy, and no national legislation or departmental prescripts existed to direct its functions. Certain DMI functions also continuously migrated to other structures in the defence force, which hampered its development. Towards the end of the decade, DMI was temporarily disbanded, and its functions taken over by a newly created Bureau of State Security (BOSS). Despite these limitations, the DMI evolved into a comprehensive autonomous intelligence organisation over a period of ten years, directed by national legislation, and legitimised as one of the three principal intelligence organisations in South Africa. Pfeiffer's article shows that DMI performed the main intelligence functions as is globally accepted from the role of an intelligence organisation, viz. collection, analysis, counterintelligence, and covert action.

In his article, Ernst Heydenrych, from the Boston City Campus & Business School in Cape Town, argues that the Department of Defence and the SANDF have been plagued by defence procurement irregularities since the inception of democracy. Moreover, several scholars have expressed doubts over the ability of certain oversight mechanisms to undertake proper supervision of the military, and of defence procurement specifically. Heydenrych's article evaluates the ability of Parliament, the Military Ombud, the Auditor-General of South Africa, and the Public Protector to extract accountability from the Department of Defence for its defence procurement activities. Heydenrych then discusses how these four mechanisms constitute the basis for evaluating whether a renewed approach to oversight, in the form of combined assurance, might allow for extracting greater accountability from the military for its non-compliance with the regulatory frameworks of South African defence procurement.

The article by Louis Venter, Marietjie Oelofse, and Johan Van Zyl, from the University of the Free State and War Museum of the Boer Republics respectively, shows that the British forces that served in South African during the Second Anglo-Boer War (also known as the South African War) of 1899–1902, were an amalgam of several types of soldiers. These men came from varying geographic and socio-economic backgrounds, and also had very different reasons for enlisting. The article discusses the composition of the British forces during the war, and adopts a military and socio-historical approach to understand who served in South Africa, and why. To this end, the different types of British soldiers are considered as separate (but ultimately intertwined) groupings, including regular (or career) soldiers, British volunteers, colonial volunteers, and “non-white” combatants. In doing so, Venter *et al.*'s article represents a wide-viewed perspective of the British military system during the late Victorian era.

In their article, Travis Morris, Tara Kulkarni, Yangmo Ku, and Megan Liptak, from Norwich University in Vermont, United States, discuss how the oldest private military college in the United States aims to prepare future military and civilian leaders to navigate

leadership and educational challenges successfully. They argue that one method of preparing leaders is through academic centres, and show that this task is accomplished by formally establishing research centres that exist outside of regular academic programming at Norwich University. The centres are uniquely positioned to understand the priorities of the US Reserve Officer Training Corps Cadet Command and the US Department of Defense to prepare future junior military leaders to be prepared for twenty-first-century security challenges. The authors specifically focus on how experiential learning, leadership laboratories, and research at Norwich University prepare cadets to be effective junior military leaders.

The article by Danic Parenteau, from the Royal Military College Saint-Jean in Quebec, Canada, attempts to answer the fundamental question: why do future officers of the armed forces need to receive a university education? In other words, which reasons justify the professional requirement to hold a university degree for candidates to this profession? The author argues that this fundamental question still deserves academic attention, as university education is a condition for recruitment for most Western armed forces, and still forms an integral part of the training and education programme offered to naval and officer cadets attending military academies today. Parenteau shows seven distinct but somewhat interrelated reasons in support of this professional requirement. The article focuses exclusively on generalist officers, and leaves aside the case of specialists, such as medical officers, legal officers, or engineers, as these military occupations already have their own specific professional requirements in terms of university education. In addition, the article also does not report on the case of officers promoted from the ranks, for whom there is usually no such qualification requirement.

In the final article, Dong-ha Seo, from the Korean Military Academy in Seoul, Republic of Korea, discusses how to build military cadets' ability to fight against disinformation in a post-truth age. The article shows that disinformation – often called “fake news” – seeks to shape or change perceptions of information users. Seo argues that the understanding of disinformation by military cadets is crucial because sowing distrust and doubt among members is dangerous, and even fatal to the armed forces. This places great emphasis on mutual trust as its core value. During their years at the military academy, cadets should improve their ability to discern truths before acquiring skills relevant to counter a disinformation campaign. Seo argues that the best way to enhance cadets' ability to discern truths – even in a media-saturated age – is to participate in deep reading, especially reading imaginative literature that fosters inventive as well as critical thinking. The article thus argues that the grasping of human frailty through deep reading can help to develop an ability to discern truths.

The final three articles were first presented at the 8th edition of the International Symposium of Military Academies that was held in Doha, Qatar in October 2023. We thank Prof Ian Parenteau from RMC Saint-Jean, Canada for sourcing the contributions.

A selection of book reviews conclude this issue of *Scientia Militaria*.

The Editors

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