

The Botswana Defence Force and public trust: The military dilemma in a democracy

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Introduction

The level of trust that citizens have in their armed forces is paramount to good civil–military relations. In a democracy, it is the responsibility of the armed forces to gain public confidence, because a military that is not trusted by the population lacks legitimacy and will have difficulties justifying its expenses and even its existence.

Botswana is the oldest democracy in Africa. A look at the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) takes one into the journey of civil–military relations. Botswana has never been through a conventional war, whereas all her neighbours have been involved in some form of war. Zimbabwe went through the war of liberation, Namibia had an armed struggle for independence and South Africans fought a lengthy guerrilla war to claim their freedom. Although beyond her borders, these conflicts have had a major impact on civil–military dynamics in Botswana. The political volatility of Southern Africa has had a direct effect on the trust the nation has needed to place in the BDF. The interaction between the BDF and civil society is of great interest to soldiers and broader society. The Botswana attach a high price to the behaviour of their institutions, including the armed forces and the conduct of the BDF—both in peacetime and in times of conflict—is always a matter of public interest.

Experience in Africa has taught us that an irresponsible military can produce untold suffering. The often healthy but inherently suspicious relationship between the military and civil institutions calls for constant dialogue. In post-apartheid Southern Africa and in the post-cold war era the BDF has had to redouble its civil-military efforts to gain legitimacy among and the trust of, the citizens of Botswana. Roles and obligations have been redefined and there has been an ongoing balancing of military objectives vs civil expectations.

Botswana Defence Force and public trust

The BDF was formed by an act of Parliament on 15th April 1977. The preamble to the act reads: “an act to provide for the establishment, administration, recruitment, conditions of service, training, command, discipline and employment of Botswana Defence Force...”¹. Professor Richard Dale claims that careful reading of the BDF² Act fails to “provide a detailed description of the army except organization, procedures of court martial and related aspects of the mil-

itary judicial system”³ However, he does identify six significant points about the structure and mission of the BDF:

- the president is the commander in chief of the armed forces, in line with article 49, section 1-4 of the Botswana constitution;
- the president can discharge his/her duties through the Defence Council;
- the president appoints the BDF Commander and officers above the rank of Lieutenant Colonel;
- the president can dispatch members of the BDF beyond the borders of the Republic;
- a link is drawn between the BDF and the Botswana Police Force; and
- the act provides for a youthful army with entry limits of 18–45 years of age.⁴

The formation of the BDF was a direct result of several factors, one of which was pressure from civil society. Upon independence in 1966 the Botswana government was reluctant to form a standing army. Former military archivist, Bonolo Ditirwa, says the philosophy of the government at the time was that ‘in Botswana’s military weakness lay its strength as no country was likely to attack a defenceless neighbour’.⁵ However, as the armed conflict escalated in neighbouring Southern Rhodesia, it became necessary for Botswana to form an army. According to Dale, ‘the escalation of violence between the African Nationalists in Southern Rhodesia led to the kidnappings of people in Botswana triggering obvious protests from Botswana’.⁶ Ditirwa notes the Smith regime’s incursions into Botswana that destroyed the village of Mapoka and affected the smaller settlements of Ramokgwebana, Moroka, and Nlakhwane. While the protection of Botswana’s territorial integrity was a critical motivating factor in the establishment of a defence force, so too was civil pressure. This factor alone could explain why the BDF was so popular during the Rhodesian war. Whenever a section of the BDF was passing through a village in the late seventies, everyone would stop to salute and sing praises. Fighting Ian Smith’s regime gave the BDF its greatest legitimacy and led to public trust, events on the southern front produced a different public reaction altogether.

Public trust and Pretoria’s cross-border raids

When Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980, the event was almost as momentous for Botswana as it was for Zimbabwe. Although its military contributions to that struggle were limited, many Batswana believed that the BDF was a principal player in the liberation of Zimbabwe. At the time however, the cross border raids being conducted from South Africa presented serious setbacks for the BDF both in military terms and in relation to public confidence. The decade from 1980 and on to independence was profoundly destabilizing for South Africa and consequently for Botswana. With the liberation of Zimbabwe, atten-

tion shifted to apartheid South Africa. Boosted by events in Zimbabwe, Umkhonto we Sizwe—the armed wing of the African National Congress—and the Pan Africanist Congress's Azanian People's Liberation Army, intensified their attacks on the South African regime from their operational transits in Botswana and other neighbouring countries. Pretoria reacted through cross-border raids.

On 14 June 1985 a 'convoy of South African Defence Force commandos, with a backup force of tanks and armoured vehicles',⁷ launched an attack on the citizens of Botswana. This raid marked the beginning of many attacks of a similar nature aimed at intimidating the South African liberation movements and their hosts. Many innocent Batswana and South African's were killed in these raids. A lot of pressure was mounted on the BDF to put a stop to these deliberate acts of aggression by South Africa but the BDF never fired a shot at the enemy. Repeated failures to protect the public seriously damaged the popular reputation of the BDF. Here was an army that could not protect its people from external aggression.

Faced with escalating pressure, the army started mounting roadblocks and imposing curfews in an effort to appear to be taking some action. In Botswana, curfews and roadblocks were new phenomena. The reaction from a population that had never known curfews was predictable and they quickly became impatient with the new security measures. As a result there was a great deal of tension between civil and military institutions, which did not help the image of the BDF.

The soldiers of the BDF at the time had operated under conditions of battle-readiness for a prolonged period, the strain began to take a toll on them and this began to show. Eager to prove that they were not as useless as the population thought them to be, the BDF made mistake after mistake. The most prominent one involved the killing of a certain Mr. Archibald who was gunned down at a BDF roadblock in Francistown in the company of his wife and children. The wife successfully sued the Attorney General for the loss of support she and her three children suffered upon the death of her husband⁸ While this particular incident attracted modest condemnation locally, it sparked an international outcry. The case received a lot of media coverage and there was speculation that the killing was racially motivated.

On the night of 20 April 1990 the BDF was involved in the death of another civilian. Sergeant Manjesa was ordered to take a patrol of soldiers to investigate a report made by two young men that they had seen a suspicious minibus parked near Mogoditshane village. The sergeant took a section of nine men each with an AK 47 rifle and 120 rounds of ammunition and headed to the scene. When they arrived they found two people in the vehicle. The BDF patrol fired two warning shots in the direction of the bus and the occupants started to move the vehicle. Immediately a hail of bullets was fired at the vehi-

cle and one occupant was killed.⁹ This incident worsened relations between the army and the people. Here was an army that could not face the South African Defence Force but which was only too quick to open fire on its own civilians. Anti-military sentiments were very high. Batswana, especially University of Botswana students, were openly calling for the dismantling of the BDF. The latter incident coincided with the annual BDF day celebrations, which the students would usually have attended. Instead, they stayed away and held a rally of their own. On the day of the celebrations a BDF paratrooper mistakenly landed at the University and was almost killed by a mob of students. These were difficult times for the BDF but after the end of apartheid it was ready to mend its civil-military relations.

Armed forces in a democracy: The military dilemma

To the extent that the military is a creation of the state, it is a political institution. In Botswana, as in other democracies, armed forces are part of the political order. Martin Edmonds supports this view when he argues that, 'as a state institution, a political construct, the armed forces have a permanent political label, and are symbolic of the political ideology and principles of the constitution upon which the regime is based'.¹⁰ Because the military is such a powerful institution, the government it serves will regulate it closely. Louis Goodman warns that there is a danger that, left on its own,

"The military will defend its own narrow interests without regard for larger social good. At times, the various services that make up the armed forces may so relentlessly pursue their particular corporate interests that they end up directly competing with political parties for power. As the largest, most organized institution in most societies, military establishments have tremendous capacity to realize their own organizational interests if they choose to do so. The armed forces can inflict significant harm on the democratisation process through pursuit of its own narrow institutional interests or its intimidation of potential rivals."¹¹

Within the context of Botswana both the legislature and the executive regulate the armed forces. However, this control is often subtle and indirect. Most of the time the army functions with a high degree of autonomy to enable it to carry out its security functions. The legislature and the executive only intervene when there is reason to suspect abuse of power. The same understanding applies to the judiciary: except in extreme circumstances the judiciary keeps a cautious distance from the activities of the military, trusting the control exercised on the conduct of the military by the legislature, the executive and military law. Edmonds emphasizes this point, observing that:

“Armed services are a symbol of state sovereignty and independence, and it is their manifest destiny to act as saviours of their country in time of emergency. [...] This status and image of the armed forces gives them a residual legitimacy, which they enjoy. An asset which is not accorded to other institutions. In other words, armed forces can operate in the political arena with much greater freedom than almost all others, simply because of their close, and potentially disinterested, identification with the state itself.”¹²

This is not to suggest that the military is above the law. In instances of misconduct the judiciary’s bird’s eye view enables it to pounce on the uniformed forces both at an individual and a collective level. Many soldiers who have been tried and convicted in Botswana mistakenly believed that they belonged to an untouchable institution.

In a democracy, civilian control of the armed forces is a matter of paramount importance. In Botswana for instance, the army falls under the executive arm of government. This arrangement subjects the military to the checks and balances of a legitimate government. This delicate balance of power delineates the place of the executive in the chain of command and defines its place within the political superstructure. The arrangement clears any possible confusion regarding the superior and the subordinate. From this it becomes apparent that in a democracy the army has to be loyal to the government of the day and has to obey its lawful instructions. Any departure from this principle should invite punitive action. The BDF Act confers overwhelming powers on the president of the republic. Including:

- section 4 of the act gives the president power over the regular and reserve forces;
- section 5 gives him/her power to assign to the army any task that he/she deems fit;
- section 6 allows the head of state to deploy the BDF outside the borders of Botswana
- section 7 empowers him/her to send with or without his/her consent any soldier or officer outside the country for military training; and
- section 8 gives the president power to determine members of the Defence Council.¹

The Defence Council

The Constitution provides for a defence council to ensure that civilians are appointed to crucial military policy making positions. The council is a key link in the chain of civil–military co-operation, but it has not met in years. The picture is improving though, and the council met recently because of threats

made to the president over salary structures. As one of the special forums under which civilians and soldiers meet to diffuse tension there is need for more serious use of the channel provided by the defence council.

Democracy occurs at the level of government but also at grassroots level and the issue must be raised of whether the conduct of the BDF is compatible with the expectations of people in a democracy. To answer this question an operating model of a democracy and criteria for judging the role of the armed forces under the same system must be developed. Democracy as a concept has become very complicated, but in simple terms it means a political government that has been freely elected by the people and is accountable to them. Democracy involves openness, legitimacy and public acceptance and some critics have extended the idea of transparency to the armed forces. Schellenberg argues that 'military strategy and tactics are subjects of continual study in [the] defence establishment, and they are proper subjects of study and criticism for political leaders and the public in a democracy'.¹⁴

Many BDF officers would challenge Schellenberg's assertion. Students of warfare argue that transparency can cripple any military establishment and that the ideal of openness is inconsistent with the functional responsibility of the military. Even in the most progressive democracies it has become acceptable to afford the armed forces some measure of secrecy. The relationship between the military and civil society has been characterised by a conflict between a perceived need for concealment on the part of the military and a determination to create a culture of transparency on the part of civil society. This trend is noticeable in Botswana. Many BDF officers argue that if they are to protect the nation and democracy itself from abuse, they need to operate in an environment of secrecy. A leading scholar on secrecy, Sissela Bok, supports this view claiming that, 'military secrecy is necessary if states are to defend themselves against enemy forces, and military secrets have to be kept away from the state's own citizens in order not to reach its enemies'. She goes on to say that:

"without secrecy there may be no shelter from assaults, no way to guard oneself, one's plans, one's actions against aggressors. The rationale for military secrecy, grounded in self-preservation and fundamental to the protection of everything of value in human lives, can be employed to justify both individual and collective secrecy."¹⁵

The understanding that, in order to be effective armed forces need some measure of secrecy, is widely recognized in democratic countries.

Freedom of information laws

An overview of all countries with freedom of information legislation shows that special exemption is accorded to all national defence information. For

instance, Canada's Access to Information Act prohibits the head of a government institution from disclosing:

- any information relating to military tactics or strategy, or relating to military exercises or operations undertaken in preparation against hostilities or suppression of subversive activities;
- any information relating to the quantity, characteristics, capabilities or deployment of weapons or other defence equipment;
- any information relating to the military force, unit or personnel of any organization or person responsible for the detection, or prevention of subversive activities;
- any information obtained or prepared for the purpose of intelligence relating to the defence of Canada or any allied state or the suppression of subversive or hostile activities; and
- any information obtained for the purpose of intelligence respecting foreign states, international organization of states or of their citizens.¹⁶

According to this act, citizens have the right to access intelligence information. A similar situation exists in many liberal democracies. The dilemma facing the armed forces in Botswana is that their right to secrecy is not absolute. The army has to strike a difficult balance between issues fit for public access and those that might jeopardize national security if they become public.

The need for secrecy is only one part of a complicated and broader problem. Goodman cautions that the end of international conflict should not make us over-complacent. The need for a combat ready army should be primary to all governments. In recent years the BDF has made this a priority but, interestingly, the citizens of Botswana have not necessarily agreed with this imperative. Contrary to civilian expectation, the cessation of hostilities in Southern Africa has increased military spending. This is in line with the logic outlined by Goodman but out of tune with civil thinking in Botswana. The question of the BDF's growing military budget and its effect on civil-military relations has been a matter of serious concern to the people. However, the attacks from the then South African Defence Force have taught the BDF a lesson. This lesson is that regardless of how much humanitarian assistance is offered, nations still require the capacity to apply force, if challenged, to defend the interests of their citizens. In line with this drive to develop this capacity, the BDF's military expenditure has risen from 208 million pula to 824 million pula within ten years. This means that by 1998, Botswana's annual military budget had grown to almost four times what it was in 1989.

This kind of spending has been challenged by civil society. Critics point to massive deficits in capacity in the healthcare and education sectors which do not receive such generous financial attention. These issues demand attention and the more they are ignored, the more they erode civil confidence in the

army. Under such conditions it becomes necessary for the military to justify high spending.

Military scholars in the BDF have been quick to agree with Goodman's sentiment that 'assembling an army is no easy task, especially one with full inter-operational capacity'.¹⁷ One military thinker, Major Gaborone, in particular says that in criticizing Botswana's military expenditure people lose sight of the fact that, compared to her neighbours, Botswana has been spending very modestly on its defence force. He says:

"the GDP of any country allocated to defence assumes significance once discussed in a wider context of what needs to be defended. Under normal circumstances, a compromise has to be struck between the available economic means on one hand and the real threats as perceived by policy makers at the other end of the spectrum."¹⁸

Given the fact that the BDF is in its infancy Gaborone warns that intense capital input may be necessary and should be no cause for alarm. In the light of Botswana's economic prosperity, Gaborone sees it as appropriate to build an army that should guard its interest when the need arises. Gaborone says:

"as an element of national power, the military should ideally reflect the capacity of the country to finance national security. All factors held constant, the level of development attributable to Botswana should determine the nature and stage of the development of the armed forces."

He suggests that the internal dimension of security continues to be the most significant variable on defence plans.¹⁹

However, many critics believe that the notion that Botswana is experiencing economic prosperity is inaccurate and that to commit so much of its budget to developing defence capacity reflects, at best, an error of judgment and at worst an oversimplification of the dynamics of Botswana's economy.

Samuel Huntington explores the paradox of civil-military relations when he observes that in a democracy the military is:

"Shaped by two forces: a functional imperative stemming from the threats to the society's security and a societal imperative arising from the social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society. Military institutions, which reflect only social values, may be incapable of performing effectively their military function. On the other hand, it may be impossible to contain within society military institutions shaped purely by functional imperatives. The interaction of these two forces is the nub of the problem of civil-military relations."²⁰

Critics would be right to question the relevance of Huntington's publication to Botswana society, given the fact that he wrote for his time and the society he

lived in. However, the BDF finds itself caught up in a similar paradox. On the one hand is the need for a powerful army and on the other the need for one that has a social face. These contrasting images are as difficult to reconcile in the BDF as they were in Huntington's time. To develop positive civil–military relations the military must act prudently and remain committed to finding ways of creating harmony with civil society. It is the responsibility of the BDF to explore this further.

While the issues around secrecy and spending just outlined are major stumbling blocks to good civil–military relations in Botswana, there are many smaller problems. Soldiers enjoy significant privileges, they do not pay for water and electricity, their children are driven to school free of charge, they do not pay for their accommodation and the state takes care of their sporting teams. The fact that soldiers are better catered for than any other department creates jealousy and tension, further complicating civil–military relations.

The participation of former military generals in politics has been another area of interest. The BDF's first commander, General Mompoti Merafes retired from the military and went into politics. His successor, General Ian Khama Seretse Khama, took up the Vice Presidency of the country. These moves have prompted questions from the public regarding the relationship of the BDF with the ruling Botswana Democratic Party. However, these generals served the country with distinction until their retirement and their political neutrality was not questioned during their careers. It was their constitutional rights as citizens of Botswana to align themselves politically and pursue whatever career they choose.

The reclamation of public trust

The challenge facing the BDF in the post-apartheid era should be predicated on service to the society. In reclaiming public trust the BDF should learn from the wisdom of Goodpaster when he says, that:

“Military establishment is designed, operated, and supported to serve security goals and interests of the society at large. This is the fundamental, all embracing relationship of civil and military in our democratically governed society. All that the military is and does should be aligned to these goals.”²¹

Harmonizing civil–military relationships calls for acknowledgement of the interdependence of military and civil institutions. Civilians form the basis of a state and the military serves and is therefore part of that state. Goodpaster further says that:

“For national societies as for individuals, safety and self-preservation

remain the first rule of life. Today as in the past, the security interests of people require that they, their territory, and commerce should be protected against attack and against outside pressure, or efforts at coercion and interference based upon threats or military attacks.”²²

The 1994 South African elections transformed the balance of power in Southern Africa. With a new democratic dispensation in place in South Africa, the BDF had to be seen to be useful. From as early as 1996 a new public relations offensive was launched, under the then BDF Commander, Seretse Khama, targeting the media, academia, and the general population. When Khama retired in 1998 he was succeeded by Lieutenant General Matshwenyego Fisher. In November 1999, Fisher publicly disclosed the findings of a commission he had set up to investigate recruitment irregularities in the BDF—cases of improper conduct were exposed and legal action was promised. This move projected a very positive outlook of an accountable and transparent military and the public regained much faith in its defence institutions.

Another positive development is the army’s dramatic change in attitude to the media, where the press has come to be seen as a partner in national development. This less hostile approach from the BDF is working for the mutual benefit of both institutions. The inclusion of women in Botswana’s military remains a subject for heated debate. Women are not allowed to serve in the BDF. This is despite calls from female politicians and other human rights organisations that view this exclusion as discriminatory and gender insensitive, an opinion which is shared by many Batswana. The military argues that the inclusion of women will swell expenses as conditions conducive to their stay will have to be created. The opening of BDF facilities to military spouses has already greatly enhanced its relationship with society.

Under these new conditions the image of a protector as opposed to an aggressor is being marketed. From 1996 onwards relations with academics and academic institutions have also improved dramatically. This is partly due to the fact that Fisher’s new administration is much more willing to engage with academics and is not threatened by a critical approach. This kind of thinking is new as, historically, the military establishment of Botswana has viewed the academic sector with suspicion and scepticism.

In response to international invitations, the BDF has now participated in several humanitarian missions. It is important to mention here that so far it has done very well in peacekeeping operations. The operations in Somalia and in Mozambique brought very good reports from the international community. In the sub-region a joint operation between the BDF and the SANDF put a stop to the political mayhem in Lesotho that posed a threat to the region. In the case of the operation in Lesotho there was some tension around the rapid deployment of troops and the nature of the consultation process around Botswana’s

involvement. Some Batswana felt the decision was unilateral and disagreed with the deployment of BDF troops in Lesotho. However, humanitarian and peacekeeping operations look like a universal post-cold war trend. Michael Desch argues that the external fighting mission that kept the military outwardly focused and subordinate to civilian authority has become less central.

In addition, civilian leaders are increasingly asking the military to take on a greater domestic role in such areas as counter-terrorism, anti-narcotics operations, disaster relief operations, riot control, and even social welfare provision.²³ According to Goodman:

“The Pakistani army became actively involved in road building and dam construction, while in Cote d’Ivoire armed forces trained civilians in agricultural production. In all the above cases the military possessed the critical skills necessary but in short supply, and have been known to assist in communication, construction, education, procurement, transportation and other non-combatant missions generally perceived as socially beneficial. Finding civilians to undertake these tasks was viewed as uneconomic because the military had personnel already possessing these skills.”²⁴

In Botswana, the government was forced to deploy the BDF to help police fight dangerous criminals. This happened after residents of Gaborone expressed concern about the skyrocketing rate of crime. This operation started around 1994. In a conference hosted by the African Centre for Strategic Studies, Fisher, commander of the BDF, observed that:

“Clearly when the situation becomes more than a law enforcement problem, then it becomes a direct concern to the military planners. When for example crime organisations begin to acquire and use lethal weapons such as mines, machine guns, light anti-tank weapons... the situation is getting out of hand. As they engage in violent confrontation against law enforcement agencies they become a significant security concern. The military may be called in as happened in Zambia with Mushala Gang, in Zimbabwe with Gwesela and in Botswana with Siphosho.”²⁵

A joint operation entitled Operation Provide Comfort, between the Criminal Investigation Department of the Police and the army was launched. From 1994 onwards, Operation Provide Comfort was embraced by the population of Gaborone. The success of this operation was significant. However, it must be emphasized that such operations should be transitory. Unless the republic is itself threatened, the army should leave law enforcement issues to the police. The involvement of the army in internal issues can erode its public support.

Public education is another area of focus. The armed forces are responsible

for educating the public about the nature of their job and the BDF needs to work very hard on this area. The BDF should learn from the wisdom of Andrew Goodpaster when he says that civil–military relations, ‘generates a multiplicity of educational needs and processes, if these relations themselves and the substantive activities to which they pertain are to be correctly understood and sensibly regulated.’²⁶ The military could also tap the skill of academic institutions to promote research and to contribute to the shaping of military policy.

Another area of civil–military interest in Botswana has been the participation of the BDF in anti-poaching activities. Botswana love their animals so much that when it was obvious that game scouts were overstretched, they welcomed the deployment of their army into a traditionally civilian area. This participation has brought the army, the people and other arms of government closer together. The understanding between all the stakeholders is that once the Department of Wildlife has developed the capacity to handle highly sophisticated poachers, the army will withdraw.

Some cautionary measures on BDF participation in non-combatant matters

Much has been said about the new roles and public expectations of the BDF under a new military climate, but caution should be taken to ensure that the defence force does not lose its primary focus. Goodman warns that:

“A real danger exists that involvement in alternate missions may lead the military to neglect its core mission by failing to maintain combat readiness. The difficulties the Russian army has encountered in dealing with its Chechen adversaries illustrates how a regime’s own legitimacy may be called into question if its own armed forces cannot carry out their core mission effectively.”²⁷

Goodman goes further to warn that:

“Longer term harm may be inflicted on the political system when the military takes on responsibilities in arenas where civilian public or private entities could emerge and develop critical expertise if the social or political space was not already occupied by the armed forces.”²⁸

Similarly the police in Botswana have mused about the military’s increasing involvement in domestic crime fighting, pointing to the clash of operating strategies as a major problem. It is important therefore that everybody is clear on the new roles of the BDF in the post-apartheid era. The following guidelines are useful:

- A recognition that the army is not above civil society and that like any arm

of the state it is controlled by those democratically elected to govern.

- Loyalty to any government chosen by the people.
- Commitment to duty, not to party politics.
- Commitment to military professionalism.

Secondly, there should be criteria for evaluating military participation in domestic issues in Botswana. Military involvement should only be possible in civil matters if the police, and other civil experts lack the requisite skills. Involvement of the defence force should only occur if it would promote the image of the military. Goodman says that:

“If the national being depends on a particular task being carried out, and no institution other than the military can undertake it successfully, then the military’s assumption of that responsibility is appropriate. If on the other hand, a particular mission does not further the national interest or can be done better or more economically by another party, then the military’s involvement may have a negative impact.”²⁹

The BDF can use some of the questions that follow to determine their level of involvement in civil duties:

- Is the military’s involvement a product of national consensus or not?
- Does the armed forces involvement enhance its profile or not? Are the people generally excited by their involvement? An opinion poll can always be done to ascertain that.
- Is this involvement done at the expense of the army’s core business?

The answers to these questions should set specific parameters for military participation in non-combatant roles. Once they have been satisfactorily answered a clear-cut timetable, detailing time limits should be advanced. This is necessary to restrain the army from turning itself into a *de facto* government. To minimize abuse and ensure checks and balances, the national constitution, military laws, national security legislation, and penal codes must include provisions specifying restrictions on the secondary role of the BDF.

In Botswana a lot of work remains to be done to make our military laws compliant with non-operational issues. With more and more humanitarian assignments coming its way the government should seriously review its outdated statutes. Military institutions and civil society should actively seek an understanding of each other’s roles and the limits of military involvement should be clearly pronounced and widely articulated.

Conclusion

Relations between the BDF and civil society have sometimes been characterized by tensions. The trust or mistrust of the citizens in the armed forces of Botswana has been shaped to a large degree by its response to external factors. While the participation of the BDF in the Rhodesian war was remarkable, the mistakes the BDF committed in response to invasions by the SADF seriously estranged it from the population. The independence of South Africa had a positive effect on Botswana's civil-military relations. The BDF has pursued a vigorous program to reach out to a citizenry ready to pardon its armed forces. Much work has been devoted to peacekeeping, humanitarian missions, and the internal promotion of a healthy civil-military environment. The future challenge of the BDF lies in educating the public and sustaining the difficult balance of pleasing the citizens while maintaining the operational readiness necessary to respond to external threats. The success of civil-military relations in Botswana seems to rest in a constant evaluation and re-evaluation of potential sources of conflict between the military and the populace. A case-by-case review of every possible area of civil-military confrontation should be able to produce the desired balance.

Endnotes

1. Botswana Defence Force Act CAP 21:05.
2. BDF is an abbreviated form of the Botswana Defence Force, and it will be used as such throughout this text.
3. R Dale, *The Creation and Use of the Botswana Defence Force*, Paper presented at the International Conference of the Intersarsity Seminar on Armed Forces and Security, Chicago, 21-23 October 1983, p 220.
4. R Dale, op cit, pp 220-221.
5. B Ditirwa, *The Role of the Military in State-Formation and Nation Building in Botswana*, A paper presented at the African Centre for Security Studies, Pretoria, March 2000, pp 4-7.
6. R Dale, Op Cit, p 219.
7. G Ansel, *SADF Raids Gaborone*, The Botswana Guardian, Wednesday 14 1985, p 1.
8. Archibald v Attorney General, Lobatse Court of Appeal, 8 April 1991, pp 169-191.
9. The facts of the case, as read out in the Lobatse court of appeal.
10. M Edmonds, *Armed Services and Society*, Leicester University Press, 1988, p 95.
11. L Goodman, Military Roles Past and Present, in L Diamond & M Plattner (eds), *Civil-Military Relations in a Democracy*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1995, p 38.
12. L Goodman, op cit, pp 97-98.
13. BDF Act, Cap 21:05, 15 April 1977.

14. T Schellenberg, *Modern Archives, Principles and Techniques*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1956, pp 227–267.
15. B Sissela, *Secrets: On the Ethics of Power and Concealment*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1982, p 192.
16. Canada's *Access to Information Act, 1980–83*, pp 52–54.
17. Goodman, op cit, p 33.
18. M Gaborone, *Determinants of Defence Budgets in Developing Countries*, An unpublished thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the 'psc' and award of MSc Degree at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, 2001, p 34.
19. M Gaborone, op cit, p 23.
20. S Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory of and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1957, p 2.
21. A Goodpaster, Educational Aspects of Civil-Military Relations, in A Goodpaster & S Huntington (eds), *Civil-Military Relations in a Democracy*, by American Enterprise Institute For Policy, Washington DC, 1977, p 31.
22. A Goodpaster, op cit, p 31.
23. M Desch, Threat Environment and Military Missions, in A Goodpaster & S Huntington (eds), *Civil-Military Relations in a Democracy*, by American Enterprise Institute For Policy, Washington DC, 1977, p 31
24. Goodman, op cit, p 31.
25. L M Fisher, New Threats and New Roles for the Military, *Role of the Military in Democratization: A Southern African Perspective*, a paper presented to African Centre of Strategic Studies, Gaborone, Botswana, 18 June 1996, p 19.
26. Goodpaster, op cit, p 29.
27. Goodpaster, op cit, p 39.
28. Ibid.
29. Goodman, op cit, p 37.