Chapter Fouteen

South Africa in 2020
An internal security perspective

Johan Burger

INTRODUCTION

It is official. The biggest threat to the internal security of this country is crime and the socio-economic causes of crime. This has been acknowledged in at least three White Papers since 1994, an acknowledgement that implicitly recognises that the 'war' on crime, because of the variety of its dimensions, will require a range of long and short-term 'battles'. This is contrary to the popular belief that this is a 'war' to be won or lost in the security (criminal justice) dimension alone. The identified threat in all its complexity is certain to remain with us for the foreseeable future. The time frame of a 'foreseeable future' is uncertain and depends on a number of variables such as short-term actions by the police (and the rest of the criminal justice system) and longer-term actions by the rest of the state machinery and civil society.

In addition to crime in general, the violent nature of crime in South Africa is causing a dangerous psychosis of fear that increasingly leads to discontent with government and its structures and to vigilante activity. If murder, for example, continues its downward trend of the last 11 years, it may take another 15 years before we reach the world average of 5,5 per 100 000. Rape shows no sign of decreasing and robbery, as will be shown below, is at much higher levels than 11 years ago. If this situation is allowed to continue over a protracted period and to further deteriorate it could lead to a complete collapse of government at grass roots level and finally to anarchy and chaos.

For the purpose of providing an internal security perspective of South Africa in 2020, it is necessary firstly to clarify 'internal security' as a concept; secondly to consider South Africa's security challenges for 2020 and the strategies in place to address them; thirdly to consider alternative interventions should these strategies fail; and lastly to consider possible additional roles, functions and capabilities for the SA Army if called upon to intervene.

CONCEPTUALISING INTERNAL SECURITY

It is argued in this paper that internal security and national security have become interchangeable concepts. In other words the origin of the threat, in a way, becomes irrelevant. Any threat to the national security of the state (state in its broad definition), whether external or internal, is also a threat to its internal security. It is therefore necessary to discuss briefly the development of 'national security' from the traditional to more modern-day meaning and within the South African context.

The concept of 'national security' developed from an earlier and purely military application. In this regard Hough (2002) provides two examples of more traditional definitions:

- [The] ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms; to protect its nature, institutions and governance from disruptions from outside; and to control its borders
- [The] condition of freedom from external physical threat which a nation state enjoys

Buzan (cited in Snyder 1999:79) challenges the traditional understanding of security and argues that the security of human collectivities is affected by four major factors, in addition to the military factor, namely political, economic, societal and environmental. In other words, external military threat is seen as just one of five forms of threat a state could face. Buzan (in Snyder 1999:80-81) also challenges the traditional notion of state as the only 'referent object' of security, even when the security of 'people' is included.

Snyder (1999:83-84) argues in favour of 'people' as the referent object of security and calls on the support of Booth, to whom 'emancipation' is the freeing of people, both as individuals or groups, from physical human

constraints, such as poverty, poor education, political oppression and war. After discussing societies and the environment as possible referent objects of security, Snyder concludes with the following statement:

> The state derives tremendous power from its claim to be the guardian of national security ... Challenging the traditional understanding of security as state security ... is therefore to pose a political challenge to the power of the state ... . (1999:84-89, 97)

On the question of whether national security should include domestic (or internal) security, Hough (2002:1) points out that some analysts are concerned that such a broadening of the term may legitimise domestic violence and lead to a confusion between regime security and state security. According to him, recent studies on Third World security have started to emphasise the importance of the internal dimension of security. He cites as an example Thomas Imobighe, a Nigerian intellectual who wrote that the most serious security challenges faced by sub-Saharan African countries are those related to the undermining of national cohesion, as well as internal socio-economic and political stability and progress (Hough 2002).

In South Africa's *White Paper on Intelligence* (1995:7), support is expressed for the broader view of national security. For example, according to the *White Paper* (1995:9), in recent years the focus in terms of security has moved from a narrow and exclusively military-strategic approach to a much broader application, in terms of which the main threat to South Africa's national security can be described as follows:

> The main threats to the well-being of individuals and the interests of nations across the world do not primarily come from a neighbouring army, but from other internal and external challenges such as economic collapse, overpopulation, mass-migration, ethnic rivalry, political oppression, terrorism, crime and disease ... .

A year later, in the *White Paper on National Defence* (1996:3), the South African government reiterates its view that national security is no longer regarded as a predominantly military and police problem. The concept has clearly been broadened to incorporate political, economic, social and environmental issues. Subsequently, the *White Paper on National*

Defence makes it clear that it perceives the greatest threat to the South African people as:

> socio-economic problems like poverty, unemployment, poor education, the lack of housing and the absence of adequate social services, as well as the high level of crime and violence.

The broadening of the concept of national security to include the political, economic, social, cultural and personal dimensions, in addition to the military dimension, was again confirmed by the *White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions,* which was tabled in the South African Parliament in February 1999.

Against this background it is evident that the concept of national security can no longer be limited only to external threats such as military threats. Therefore, national security (or internal security) can be defined as a condition of freedom from either or both external and internal (domestic) threats, which may manifest in any of the following ways:

- Threats against the state (or the people) or the individual
- Risk factors, in addition to military threats, such as political, economic, societal and environmental threats (including problems such as poverty, unemployment, poor education and training, a lack of housing and inadequate social services)
- Crime and violence and the threat of anarchy

SECURITY CHALLENGES FOR 2020

The crime situation in South Africa is serious and no one disputes this. Currently it is the most talked about and, as far as the media is concerned, most reported upon topic. But it is the violent nature of crime, which has become endemic to this country, that causes the greatest concern. There are legitimate fears that although crime in general seems to be decreasing, the level of violence is escalating. The result is an increase in the fear of crime and growing distrust in the police and government in general to deal effectively with crime.

However, the recognition of crime and its risk factors as a national (or internal) security threat implies an understanding that these are multidimensional and that the state's effort to combat them requires much more than only a police or even a criminal justice approach. To

understand this statement fully and to determine the security challenges for 2020, it is necessary first to do a statistical analysis of crime in South Africa. Secondly, the level of fear of crime must be determined and, thirdly, the risk factors of crime must be considered. This discussion will be followed by an exposition of current crime combating strategies, their operational results and the impact on crime.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CRIMES IN SOUTH AFRICA

The statistical analysis that follows is based on the figures for a selection of serious and violent crimes from the 2005/06 Annual Report of the South African Police Service. It should be pointed out that these statistics account only for crimes reported to the police and therefore, as is the experience elsewhere, represent only about 50 per cent of the real crime picture. This varies, of course, for different crime types. Murder, for example, generally represents a fairly accurate figure because it is difficult to hide dead bodies. Car theft is also normally well represented in the official crime figures because cars are mostly insured and insurance companies require a police reference number before they accept a claim. Robbery, on the other hand, is notoriously under-reported because, in most cases, the items that are stolen are not insured or their value does not justify the effort. Because of the sensitivity and trauma associated with sex crimes such as rape, these are also poorly-reported crime types.

Table 1 provides a summary of the serious and violent crimes that are regarded as our biggest cause for concern. A comparison is provided for three financial years since 1994/95 in an effort to determine possible trends. Unfortunately, the figures for car hijackings and cash-in-transit

Table 1: Comparative figures for serious and violent crimes (Measured per 100 000 of the population)

	1994/95	1999/2000	2005/06
Murder	66,9	52,5	39,5
Attempted murder	69,1	65,4	43,9
Rape	115,3	122,8	117,1
Robbery (aggravated)	218,5	229,5	255,3
Robbery (common)	84,2	173,5	159,4

Source: Annual Report of the South African Police Service 2005/2006 1

Table 2: Car hijackings and cash-in-transit robberies
(Per 100 000)

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Hijackings	35,4	32,3	29,7	26,7	27,4
(Real figures)					
Cash-in-transit robberies	238	374	192	220	383

Source: Annual Report of the South African Police Service 2005/2006

robberies are available only from 2001/02 (Table 2). In the latter case the real figures are given because, although still serious, the numbers are too small to determine a meaningful ratio per 100 000.

According to the SAPS Annual Report (2006:50-59) there have been promising signs over the last five years that crime is on the decrease. For example, between 2004/05 and 2005/06 the listed serious and violent crimes decreased as follows:

- Murder: 2,0 per cent
- Attempted murder: 16,6 per cent
- Rape: 1,0 per cent
- Robbery with aggravated circumstances: 6,2 per cent
- Common robbery (an element of violence is present, but no weapons are used): 18,3 per cent

Car hijackings, on the other hand, which decreased in the previous financial year by 10,1 per cent, increased in the last financial year (2005/06) by 2,6 per cent. Cash-in-transit robberies increased by 74,1 per cent and robberies at shopping malls (not in the tables) by 32 per cent (SAPS Annual Report 2005/2006).

The decreases mentioned are indeed promising, but it must be kept in mind that they are decreases from extremely high levels and it will take a long time before they reach levels that would impact positively on public feelings of safety. The murder rate, for example, decreased from 66,9 per 100 000 in 1994/95 to 39,5 per 100 000 in 2005/06, but is still almost eight times the world average of 5,5 per 100 000 and 20 times higher than the British rate of just under 2 per 100 000. In other words, if we maintain the current reduction rate in murder it will take us approximately another 15 years to reach the international norm. The South African figure becomes even more disturbing if one looks at the

real number of 18 528 people who were murdered in one year, i.e. 50 murders per day.

Rape has remained at the same high level over the last 11 years and shows no sign of decreasing to the extent that some of the other serious crimes have done. In real terms the figure of 117,1 per 100 000 in 2005/06 represents almost 55 000 rapes, i.e. 150 women being raped each day in this country. This is an alarming situation, especially in view of the result of independent research, which shows that between 33 and 66 per cent of rape cases are never reported to the police. Rape is also not a very policeable crime and happens mostly indoors in areas outside the normal reach of police activities. Recent research has shown that in 75 per cent of rape incidents the victim and perpetrator know each other.

However, it is robbery and the violence that accompanies it that has the biggest psychological impact on the ordinary person. In this regard it is robbery at one's home (also referred to as house-robbery), robbery of cars (hijacking) and robbery at places of entertainment (e.g. shopping malls, restaurants, etc.) that make people afraid. If this situation is allowed to continue and, even worse, allowed to deteriorate further, it will create a psychosis of fear, which, in turn, could lead to irrational and even unlawful behaviour by individuals and groups.

Unlike murder and attempted murder, robbery (both aggravated and common) displays a different trend. Whereas murder has consistently decreased since 1994/95 (by approximately 40 per cent over the last 11 years), robbery with aggravating circumstances increased from 218,5 per 100 000 in 1994/95 to 288,1 per 100 000 in 2003/04, before decreasing again to 255,3 per 100 000. The latter figure is still 17 per cent higher than in 1994/95. Common robbery increased rapidly from 84,2 per 100 000 in 1994/95 to 223,4 per 100 000 in 2003/04 before decreasing to 159,4 per 100 000 in 2005/06. This means that in spite of decreases over the last three years, common robbery is now 90 per cent higher than 11 years ago.

It is obvious from these figures that crime is set to remain a priority concern on the domestic agenda for some time. It will be useful now to consider the psychological impact of crime and violence on the public mind (the fear of crime).

THE FEAR OF CRIME

Based on the outcome of two Victims of Crime Surveys (Burton et al 2004) it is possible to determine both the validity of police claims about

crime trends and public perceptions about crime and safety in South Africa. A comparison of the overall victimisation rate shows that there was a slight decrease (1,6 per cent) in the crime rate between 1998 and 2003 (Burton et al 2004:103). It is a pity that since 2003 similar victims-of-crime surveys have not been conducted. However, the results of the above surveys do seem to support claims by the police that crime in general is on the decrease or has at least stabilised.

The most surprising result of the victims of crime surveys was the marked change in public perceptions about crime and safety. In 1998, for example, 32 per cent of the respondents said that they felt *very safe* when walking alone in their area, against 25 per cent who indicated that they felt *very unsafe*. In 2003 only 10 per cent felt *very safe* and a staggering 58 per cent felt *very unsafe* (Burton et al 2004:53). In other words, in spite of signs of stabilisation and even decreases in the crime rate, the number of people who felt very unsafe more than doubled in the space of five years.

The significance of this discrepancy – stabilisation in crime rates and deterioration in public perceptions about their safety – is that it indicates a loss of faith in government and specifically in the criminal justice system. It also has the potential to lead to an escalation in vigilante activity and lawlessness. However, it is argued in this paper that the solution to our crime problem is much broader than only 'fixing' the criminal justice system, and must include well co-ordinated actions to deal with the other risk factors of crime as well, i.e. the socio-economic and political root causes of crime.

THE RISK FACTORS OF CRIME

Risk factors of crime refer to more than just the causes of crime and include aspects such as the so-called enabling factors of crime (e.g. weaknesses in the criminal justice system and in environmental design, as well as the criminogenic or facilitating factors of crime). The latter terms usually refer to conditions, substances or commodities, such as firearms, drugs, alcohol, etc., that would increase the likelihood of a crime being committed. This discussion focuses mainly on the root or socio-economic causes of crime, but the overarching term is used here to indicate firstly that there is a distinction between causes and enabling factors and secondly that the impact of the criminal justice system (including the police) clearly lies more with enabling factors than with causes.

Criminology, as a science, promised to search for and deliver the causes of crime, but it proved to be a far more complicated task than was originally thought. According to Henry and Milovanovic (1996:99):

> Causation in criminology, rather than being the result of a steady accumulation of knowledge, has instead been a litany of false starts and abandoned idols, raising more questions about causality than confirmation of its efficacy.

Bartol (1995:2) makes it clear that there is no all-encompassing psychological explanation for crime, any more than there is a sociological, anthropological, psychiatric, economic or historic explanation. Therefore, if an attempt is to be made to explain and control criminal behaviour, it is crucial to find a way to integrate the data, theory and general viewpoints of each of the relevant disciplines.

Bouza (1993:29), a retired police chief, agrees that there are no simple answers about the causes of crime. He cites street crime as an example: it is rooted in poverty, but not all poor people are criminals. According to Bouza (1993:33) crime in the United States is probably and primarily influenced by social problems such as racism and poverty. He refers to what he terms a 'social struggle':

> Stability, social controls, strong family ties, an influential church, a sound educational plant and all of the invisible social glue binding a community into a coherent neighbourhood result in a safe area. Transition, mobility, rapid social change and a transient population result in an unsafe area. (Bouza 1993:31)

Sherman (1998) also points to poverty as a crime risk factor when he states that substantial reductions in crime can only be achieved by prevention in areas of concentrated poverty, where the majority of homicides occur and where homicide rates are much higher than the national average. According to him, theoretical and empirical research has provided strong support for the crime prevention value of employment.

According to Sherman, the evidence in the United States shows an undisputed relationship between 'staggeringly' high unemployment rates and high-crime communities. Research has also shown that police crackdowns in areas of high unemployment have given large numbers of young men criminal records for minor offences, limiting their chances

of employment and increasing their likelihood of entering into further and more serious criminality (Sherman 1998).

In their discussion of four major theoretical explanations for the link between employment and crime, Bushway and Reuter refer *inter alia* to the following claim by Wilson (who made an analysis of inner-city problems in Chicago in 1996):

> [M]any of today's problems in the inner-city ghetto neighbourhoods – crime, family dissolution, welfare, low levels of social organisation and so on – are fundamentally a consequence of a disappearance of work. (Bushway & Reuter 1998:159)

Bushway and Reuter also found that employment is undoubtedly the primary factor in the development of healthy social bonds and institutions in a community and, conversely, that unemployment usually results in crime and disorder. In the conclusion to their discussion the authors mention two other very relevant findings, namely:

- That the isolation of areas of high poverty from the legitimate job market may be a critical reason for the lack of motivation among the youth in those areas
- That drug markets in impoverished areas provide substantial alternative employment to legal markets

Waller (1999:20) summarises the strong international consensus on common factors (risk factors) associated with delinquency, violence and insecurity. He lists these factors as follows:

- Poverty and unemployment deriving from social exclusion, especially for the youth
- Dysfunctional families with uncaring and inconsistent parental attitudes, violence or parental conflicts
- Social valuation of a culture of violence
- Presence of facilitators (such as firearms and drugs)
- Discrimination and exclusion deriving from sexist, racist or other forms of oppression
- Degradation of urban environments and social bonds
- Inadequate surveillance of places and the availability of goods that are easy to transport and sell

Studies have shown that alcohol and drug abuse correlate with violent crime, while the use of guns in crime causes a greater risk of homicide (Sherman 1998:44). According to Bayley (1994:10) crime experts generally accept that factors such as employment status, income, education levels, gender, age, ethnic mix and family composition are the best predictors of crime. Citing a number of sources on the subject, he estimates that as much as 90 per cent of the difference in crime rates among communities can be explained by differences in these factors.

Against this background it is necessary to consider current South African strategic thinking about the fight against crime.

CRIME COMBATING STRATEGIES

For the purposes of this discussion 'crime combating' is used as an overarching term inclusive of both short-term police activities and longer-term inter-agency interventions to address the root causes of crime. In this regard two of the more pertinent strategies over the last ten years are the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) of 1996 and the National Crime Combating Strategy (NCCS) of 2000.

THE NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGY (NCPS)

When the government's draft National Growth and Development Strategy (NGDS) was tabled in February 1996, safety and security was included as one of its six pillars. When the NCPS was approved just a few months later, in May 1996, it was regarded as the core component of the NGDS safety and security pillar (National Crime Prevention Strategy 1996:4).

The NCPS was developed by an interdepartmental strategy team in direct response to concerns expressed by the South African government about the high levels of crime in the country (NCPS 1996). These concerns were addressed in two ways: first, through the NCPS as the longer-term strategy aimed at addressing the social and developmental factors thought to facilitate crime and, secondly, shorter-term high-profile visible policing measures intended to reassure the public (Rauch 2002:10).

According to the NCPS, its primary objective is to reduce crime levels in South Africa. It goes on to list ten supporting objectives that are deemed necessary to achieve the primary objective (NCPS 1996:5-6). The following two supporting objectives are particularly relevant:

- Establishing a comprehensive policy framework which addresses all policy areas which impact on crime, as part of the greater initiative to improve economic growth and development
- Generating a shared understanding among South Africans of what crime prevention involves

The NCPS takes a strong stand against the simplistic view that more police – and in particular more visible police – will solve the crime problem:

> … it is only necessary to consider the magnitude of the problems of rape and domestic violence, child abuse, etc. to recognise that while this approach may provide solutions for some kinds of crime, it will not deal with other serious criminal activities, such as those which take place within the private realm (NCPS 1996:45)

According to the NCPS there is no single cause of crime and violence and monocausal explanations will only lead to simplistic solutions. Accordingly, effective crime prevention will be possible only if the overlapping social, economic, political and psychological causes of crime are properly analysed and understood (NCPS 1996:9). The NCPS also emphasises the importance of making a conceptual distinction between the 'root causes' and 'enabling factors' of crime. The NCPS explains that 'enabling factors' are those circumstances that facilitate crime or make it easier for criminals to commit crime and get away with it. An inefficient criminal justice system would be an example of an enabling factor. Root causes, on the other hand, are those factors that create the initial motivation to commit an offence (NCPS1996:11).

One of the more salient and often quoted features of the NCPS is its so-called 'four pillar' approach to crime prevention. The 'four pillars' are derived from the identification of the 'four most crucial areas for intervention in addressing crime' (NCPS1996:50-80):

- The criminal justice system
- Community values and education
- Environmental design
- Transnational crime

According to the NCPS, it does not represent all government activities that may contribute to crime prevention but rather serves to emphasise

areas of crime prevention not covered by other components of the NGDS. Examples of these 'areas of crime prevention', which may eventually also impact on the prevention of crime, are job creation, welfare safety nets and meeting basic needs (NCPS 1996:49). The NCPS also makes it clear that crime prevention cannot be tackled by government alone, or by one sector of government alone. What is needed is an 'integrated, multi-agency approach' (NCPS 1996:80-81).

The NCPS is an excellent strategy, although some may argue it is more policy than strategy. It recognises that the police can only contribute short-term visible policing measures, while much more is needed to address crime in the longer term. In this regard, it places a specific focus on those issues that are associated with the social and developmental factors thought to cause or facilitate crime (Rauch 2002:9). However, a decade after its launch few people would agree that the NCPS has lived up to expectations. On the contrary, at this stage the NCPS can only be regarded as a good strategy on paper, *but* one that has failed in practice.

Rauch (2002), a senior consultant on criminal justice issues and formerly a member of the Secretariat for Safety and Security, has identified the reasons below for the failure of the NCPS.

The launch of the NCPS in 1996 followed too soon after the launch of the 1996/7 Annual Police Plan. This was a 'public relations blunder', to which the public reaction was that this (the NCPS) is 'just another plan'. For government it resulted in a conceptual confusion between the police's short-term 'plan' and the long-term goals and objectives of the NCPS. According to Rauch (2002:9):

> It created a conceptual gulf between immediate short-term policing responses to rising crime rates, and the need for a developmental approach aimed at the causes of crime – a gulf that still exists today.

The NCPS itself contained very little detail on how the programmes it proposed were to be developed and implemented. It was a mistake to assume that co-operation between government departments would arise naturally and spontaneously. This was crucial considering that the:

> [s]uccessful implementation of the NCPS was predicated on the assumption that interdepartmental co-operation was achievable, and that government departments and other role-players would be able

> (and willing) to agree on joint priorities and share information (Rauch 2002:13).

The NCPS did not fully conceptualise or explain the relationship between the four 'pillars' or categories of crime prevention and the seven national priority crimes it identified. The result was an implementation approach with a strong focus on the 'pillars' and, consequently, the establishment of structures and processes that had little in common with the content of the crimes they were supposed to address.

No government funding was dedicated to the implementation of the NCPS. Instead, government departments were encouraged to rationalise their existing resources to accommodate the NCPS. Obviously this did not take place. In the absence of detailed guidance and dedicated funding, the Secretariat for Safety and Security approached Business against Crime (BAC) for support. BAC identified the first 'pillar' of the NCPS, the 're-engineering' of the criminal justice system, as its immediate focus area. The result was, once again, that the first real implementation activity – as far as the NCPS is concerned – neglected the real aim of the NCPS, namely its situational or social approach to crime prevention.

The 1997 review of the NCPS, which became necessary when it was realised that the implementation of the strategy was less than successful, resulted in an even greater focus on short-term criminal justice issues rather than the longer-term prevention approach (Rauch 2002:12-18). However, Rauch argues that on the positive side the review did succeed in making a conceptual link between law enforcement and crime prevention and between short-term actions and long-term approaches (Rauch 2002:12).

THE NATIONAL CRIME COMBATING STRATEGY (NCCS)

By the late 1990s and with crimes escalating to alarming proportions there was growing impatience with the 'failure' of the NCPS to stem the tide. There seemed to be little appreciation for the medium and long-term objectives of the NCPS. The call was for a plan that could deliver immediate results.

The South African Police Service, with support from the SANDF, replied with Operation Monozite in 1999. Operation Monozite focused on police station areas where 50 per cent or more of the crime in a province occurred. This operation employed high-density tactics on

the 'flood-and-flush' principle and focused specifically on roadblocks, cordon-and-search actions and air-supported operations. In many ways, Operation Monozite was used to test operational concepts for use in future crime combating operations.

In early 2000 the police published a special edition of the *SAPS Bulletin* with an article entitled 'The new strategic focus of the SA Police Service for 2000-2003' (SAPS Bulletin 2000). The 'strategic focus' of the police resulted in what was initially known as the SAPS Crime Combating Strategy, but was subsequently renamed the National Crime Combating Strategy (NCCS).[2] The NCCS was designed to focus on four operational and two organisational priorities. These priorities were described as follows:

- Operational priorities: organised crime, serious and violent crime, crimes against women and children and service delivery
- Organisational priorities: budget and resource management, human resource management

The following time frame was set for the implementation of the NCCS (with the initial ideal of multi-agency co-operation):

- A short-term stabilisation phase (2000-2003)
- A medium-term normalisation phase (2000-2005)
- A long-term socio-economic development phase (2000-2020) (SAPS Bulletin 2000:1)

The first two phases were clearly aimed at directly confronting criminals and the so-called enabling factors of crime (discussed above), while the third phase is aimed at the root causes of crime.

The police, again with the assistance of the military, adopted the proven operational concepts of Operation Monozite for performing their part in the NCCS and subsequently launched Operation Crackdown. Crackdown consisted of both a geographic and an organised crime approach to address serious and violent crimes, as well as organised crime. The two approaches of Operation Crackdown were informed by a CTA (crime threat analysis) and an OCTA (organised crime threat analysis) respectively (SAPS Bulletin 2000:1).[3]

One hundred and forty-five police station areas (precincts), out of almost 1 200 nationally, were identified for Operation Crackdown on

Table 3: Comparative actions and results of police crime combating operations between 2002/2003 and 2005/2006

Type of action	Mar-02	Apr-03	May-04	Jun-05
Roadblocks	61 213	72 443	61 084	43 666
Cordon-and-search operations	63 465	76 233	81 342	30 808
Vehicles searched	3 581 684	3 598 990	4 105 761	3 011 607
Premises searched	355 833	608 483	617 460	8 346 620
Persons searched	7 570 187	8 906 239	9 938 366	472 230
Stop-and-search operations	156 885	166 278	276 538	551 838
Air-supported operations	2 205	1 644	1 922	1 314
Vehicle patrols	491 025	676 329	826 493	778 469
Foot patrols	645 766	320 112	385 201	401 314

Source: Annual Reports of the South African Police Service, 2002/03 to 2005/06

Operational results	Mar-02	Apr-03	May-04	Jun-05
Arrests (serious and violent crimes)	444 738	445 779	449 352	549 227
Arrests (less serious crimes)	647 951	564 022	681 128	583 379
Number of firearms recovered/ confiscated (22 120 firearms were reported lost/stolen in 2002/2003, 20 164 in 2003/2004 and 15 837 in 2004/2005)	21 027	35 248	23 813	29 691
Number of vehicles recovered (111 528 vehicles were reported stolen/robbed in 2002/2003, 104 720 in 2003/2004 and 93 518 in 2004/2005)	45 152	34 055	43 041	17 133

Source: Annual Reports of the South African Police Service, 2002/03 to 2005/06

the basis that the areas were responsible for 50 per cent or more of all serious, violent and organised crime in the country. Once identified, these station areas were initially clustered into 32 'crime combating zones' or geographical areas. A 'crime combating task group' – comprising police

officials from various operational branches, as well as members from the Metropolitan Police Services and the SANDF – was deployed for each zone (SAPS Bulletin 2000:2). Similarly, as part of the organised crime approach, a number of 'organised crime task teams' were appointed. Unlike the crime combating task teams, however, the organised crime task teams were not allocated or restricted to specific geographical areas, because of the nature of this type of crime.

The police also set in motion a joint co-operative venture with other government departments, including Justice, Correctional Services, Health and Water Affairs and departments in the Social Cluster, *inter alia* to address 'social instabilities' in the identified high crime areas (SAPS Bulletin 2000). However, it soon became evident that this venture was not achieving much. As with the NCPS, there appears to have been very little understanding for the need to deal comprehensively with the root causes of crime. The crime combating operations of the police can, at best, create some space for the other government agencies to perform their role in this regard.

The operational actions and results of Operation Crackdown (Table 3) are certainly impressive, bearing in mind that these do not include the activities and results achieved by normal policing. However, these results also cause a number of problems for the courts and prisons, such as blockages, backlogs (courts) and overcrowding (prisons). At a parliamentary media briefing on 13 February 2004, Dr Penuell Maduna, the then Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development, stated that South Africa's prison population stood at 185 632 at that stage, while the prison capacity was only 110 874 (Maduna 2004). This translated to an overpopulation of 74 758 or 65 per cent. According to the official statistics of the Department of Correctional Services, the situation improved during 2006 to an overpopulation of 37,11 per cent. In real figures there is bed capacity in South Africa's prisons for 114 796 and an inmate population of 157 402 (Department of Correctional Services 2006).

STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

According to the Strategic Plan for the South African Police Service 2005-2010 (SAPS 2005:23-24) the police's strategic direction is informed by the following four scenarios, which were presented to Cabinet in July 2003:

- *S'gudi S'nais:* This is an intolerable future. Powerful individuals become involved in a power struggle that leads to increased tension and conflict. This scenario would increase the burden of the police to an impossible level
- *Dulisanang* (*We're all in this together*): This is a tolerable but undesirable future. The country unites around an agreed set of social values, but experiences economic problems and an increase in crimes of greed
- *Skedonk* (*It goes, but only just*): A weakened, divided South Africa tries to survive in a world going through an economic crisis. Those at the lower levels of society have become poorer and the higher levels of crime could lead to lawlessness. The result would be a further overburdening of the criminal justice system
- *Shosholoza:* This scenario depicts a tolerable and desired future. The world is characterised by multilateralism and a robust global economy in which South Africa experiences economic growth and increased social cohesion

The obvious strategic direction of the police is to pursue the Shosholoza scenario 'while neutralising and/or preventing the prospects of the undesirable scenarios from taking root' (SAPS 2005:24). To enable them to achieve their objective within the broader Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (JCPS), the police have listed nine so-called implementation strategies (SAPS 2005:25):

- Human resource management strategy
- National crime combating strategy
- Firearms strategy
- Crimes against women and children strategy
- Corruption and fraud prevention strategy
- Prevention of police attacks and killings strategy
- Risk management strategy
- Technology strategy
- Information strategy

In terms of their human resource management strategy, the SAPS have already increased their numbers from approximately 121 000 in 2001 to 155 320 in March 2006, with the target for 2008/09 set at 179 000 (South African Police Service 2006:6). The current police/population ratio of 1:385 already compares favourably with the world average of

1:300-400 and will further improve with the addition of more staff over the next two to three years. During 2006 the police also embarked on a comprehensive restructuring exercise aimed at decentralising specialised units and other members, currently stationed at various head offices, to police stations. Police management expects this move to improve policing and service delivery at grass roots level.

As far as crime is concerned the National Crime Combating Strategy (NCCS) remains the main crime-fighting strategy, with the police employing a number of operations within this strategic framework. However, over the last number of years the SANDF progressively withdrew its active participation in police crime combating operations as part of the so-called exit-entry strategy between the two departments. This strategy also includes the closing of the commandos and the withdrawal of army units from borderline protection. This is a phased process and is expected to be completed by March 2009. The police will take over responsibility for borderline control and for rural safety, the latter having been a responsibility of the commandos for many years.

The main aim of personnel increases in the police is to enable it to enhance visible policing and to perform its traditional tasks more effectively, as well as to take over the above functions previously performed by the military. Many question the ability of the police to perform borderline control effectively and to provide rural safety. There are also indications of growing distrust of the police performing their primary crime combating functions. This again became evident during the first half of 2006 when there was a sudden spate of high-profile violent crimes in this country and, as shown above, an exceptionally high increase in cash-in-transit robberies. This led to calls for military intervention, something many still see as essential in view of the perceived military expertise and armament of some of these crime syndicates.

There is no doubt that some of the criticism against the police is unfair, especially in view of the absence of a clear and concerted effort by other government structures to tackle the root causes of crime, but there certainly are areas where the police are not performing as well as they should. This was partly acknowledged by the Minister for Safety and Security when, at a press conference on 1 August 2006, he announced additional measures by the police to curb the new upsurge in violent crimes in particular (Nqakula 2006). The minister made it clear that far more emphasis will be put on the eradication of organised

crime. For this purpose special teams will be established to deal with crime syndicates, while other teams will be formed to search for and arrest suspects for whom warrants of arrest are outstanding. Intelligence units will assist these teams and will receive additional funding and human resources. In view of indications of the increasing involvement of foreigners in crime in South Africa, the minister also announced stricter border control measures. For this purpose a national border control and security strategy had been finalised and a national border control centre set up.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it is evident that South Africa is still in for a rough ride over the next decade or more, even within a more tolerable scenario. The major challenges for the internal security of South Africa remain crime and the risk factors of crime. In spite of positive indications that crime in general is on the decrease, it is still at exceptionally high levels. If the current rate in crime decreases can be maintained (specifically violent crime), it may still take another 15 years or more to reach internationally accepted levels. However, for this positive trend to continue at least two important challenges need to be addressed, namely the risk factors of crime and organised crime. Steps were recently announced by the Minister for Safety and Security to address organised crime more effectively and are apparently also underway within the JCPS to deal more effectively with the enabling factors of crime such as weaknesses in the criminal justice system.

It remains a huge concern that there does not seem to be a similar concerted effort to deal with another important aspect of the risk factor approach, namely the economic and socio-political root causes of crime. It seems more than likely, looking at the four scenarios of the police, that this country is still some way from the *Shosholoza* scenario and that it will for some time to come linger on in a situation very similar to the *Skedonk* scenario. In this regard the following pertinent issues should be considered:

- The growing gap between rich and poor and the real potential for revolution inherent in the apparent increases in the levels of poverty among the masses

- Unemployment and poverty, which, although not always directly responsible for crime, can create conditions that are conducive to crime
- Organised crime syndicates that often exploit the above conditions to recruit new members or to solicit support in particular communities (e.g. buying their silence)

The real or perceived growth in crime syndicate activity and visible evidence of a certain level of military expertise also cause a number of concerns:

- There appears to be far too much space for crime syndicates in terms of their abuse of democratic freedoms and deficiencies within the criminal justice sector
- There are increasing signs that heavily armed groups and individuals with military experience and expertise are involved in organised crime and that they are increasingly inclined to use deadly force to achieve their objectives
- Attacks carried out by some of these syndicates are of such a violent nature and involve so many well-armed and well-trained persons that there are public concerns about the ability of the police and private security companies to combat them, hence the call to involve the military

As far as the South African Army is concerned, it is obvious – against this background – that they will have to maintain (or acquire, where necessary) the ability to intervene or assist in the following possible situations:

- Large-scale public disorder and even complete lawlessness and anarchy. For this purpose the army should both train and equip its members to enable them to perform an internal stabilisation role. Training will have to include aspects such as the exercising of police powers, which will have to be conferred on soldiers for the duration of their deployment in a police role or a support role, **and** police doctrines as opposed to military doctrines, etc.
- The possibility of revolutionary activity may develop if the desired socio-economic development is not achieved and this country experiences the type of situation depicted by the *S'gudi S'nais* scenario. Therefore the

army should – even if only for purposes of the worst-case scenario – be trained in techniques to counter a possible revolutionary situation.
- If the situation regarding organised crime, specifically armed attacks, is not brought under control, the army may be required to intervene or at least to assist the police. The army should prepare themselves for this type of armed intervention in situations where members of the public will very often be present.

NOTES

1 Also see the SAPS Annual Report 2002/2003 (2003:24-30) for the 1994/1995 crime figures.
2 Also see the SAPS Annual Report 2001/2002 (2002:24)
3 Also see the SAPS Annual Report 2001/2002 (2002:15).

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