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Civil-military relations in Namibia, 1990-2005

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CONTENTS

INDEX

Abstract
Declaration
Acknowledgements
Acronyms

CHAPTER 1
Background and research problem 1

Background 1

Nature and scope of empirical material 2

Significance of the research 3

Study focus 3

Research problem 4

CHAPTER 2
Research questions and methodology 10

Research questions 10

Methodology 11

Methods of data collection 11

Sample selection 12

Primary documents 13

Secondary sources 13

Archival materials 13

Data analysis 14

Reliability, validity and ethical issues 15

The limitations of the research 16

Conclusion 17

CHAPTER 3
Literature review 18
Introduction 18
Definitions 20
The problem 22
Control 23
Characteristics 31
SADC 32
Civil-military relations in democratic transition 33
Civil-military relations in the African context 39
Conclusion 45

CHAPTER 4
Namibia's civil-military relations in transition 48
The colonial legacy 48
The liberation struggle experience 54
Independence and the establishment of the NDF 60
The role of the military 62
Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration (DDR) 66
Conclusion 84

CHAPTER 5
The context of Civil-Military Relations 86
BMATT driven civil-military relations 86
Governance contexts 90
Social context 95
Operational context 103
Conclusion 110

CHAPTER 6
Executive control 99
Conclusion 110

CHAPTER 7
Parliamentary oversight 124
Conclusion 133

CHAPTER 8
Civil-Military Relations within the Ministry of Defence 134
Structure of the Ministry of Defence 136
Factors that shaped the Ministry of Defence 141
The Namibian Defence Force 145
The Army 146
The Air force 147
The Navy 147
Defence budget 151
Recruitment and promotion 155
Conclusion 158

CHAPTER 9
The role of civil society and political parties in civil-military relations 160
The media 168
Political parties 173
Conclusion 178

CHAPTER 10
Analysis 180
Transitional process to independence 180
The role of the UN 181
The drafting of Namibia's Constitution by the Constituent Assembly 183
Post-independence and DDR experience 185
DDR shortcomings 186
Government's skills initiated projects for ex-combatants: deficiencies 187
Amnesty and reconciliation 188

The NDF/MoD 189
Political leadership of the country 191
The nature of civil-military relations 193
Transparency in the Defence Budget 193
Budgeting process and implications 195
The interface between the Executive and the Legislature 196
Consolidated state and democracy 198
A “case study” of testing civil-military relations 199
Clarifying the role of the military 200
Deficiencies in the oversight mechanisms 203
A link between representative democracy and civil control of the military 203
Inadequacies in democratic governance 206
The responsibility of civil society in civil control of the military 209
Restructuring of the society 212
Perceptions on the level of protection against external threat 212
Strength of civil-military relations in Namibia 215
Deficiencies in civil control of the military 219
Strength of civil control of the security sector 220
Deficiencies in management of military facilities 221

CHAPTER 11
Conclusion 223

References

Abstract

The period 1960-63 saw the independence of many African countries. Since then, the continent has experienced numerous military coups, attempted coups or military interference in politics. Consequently, many countries have found it important that the power of the military be used responsibly and for the benefit of the society. To achieve this they opted for subordination of the military to civilian authorities, yet coups and coup attempts have persisted. In contrast to this scenario on the continent there has not been a coup d'etat, attempted coup d'etat, or any form of unacceptable influence over the political process by the military in Namibia since independence in 1990. The purpose of this study was to determine the political institutions in the country that are necessary for democratic civil-military relations and how they have effectively contributed to the prevailing peace and stability in Namibia.

Much has been written on civil-military relations; however, very little research has been produced on democratic civil-military relations in Namibia since independence. This thesis is a study of how Namibia took the path of democratic civil-military relations that have ensured civil control over the military. The research was informed by examining the generally held assumptions about civil-military relations as espoused in the literature to better understand the phenomenon of civil-military relations in Namibia that has ensured civil supremacy over the military. In this regard, the study was a qualitative method of research. This method helped to describe the concepts of civil-military relations using the guiding theoretical framework and thereafter helped to examine civil-military relations being applied in Namibia.

One of the main findings of the research was that civil-military relations in Namibia are characterised by Western liberal civil-military relations traditions. The nature of civil-military relations in Namibia was influenced by factors such as historical legacy, the liberation struggle experience and the international context that shaped the Namibian state. It was also established through this study that the two main shortcomings of civil-military relations in the country were the inadequacy in parliamentary oversight of the defence and security, and serious deficiencies with regard to limited participation of civil society.

(347 words)

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

…….
Matomola Vincent Mwange

Date:

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I pray that the results of this research will be interesting and helpful to others.

Acronyms used in this study

ACN	Aksie Christelik Nasionaal
AG8	Administrator General Proclamation
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
BMATT	British Military Assistance Team
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCDS	Cabinet Committee on Defence and Security
CCN	Council of Churches in Namibia
CDA	Christian Democratic Action for Social Justice
CDF	Chief of Defence Force
CLM	Caprivi Liberation Movement
CoD	Congress of Democrats
COs	Civil Organisations
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
DB	Development Brigade
DBC	Development Brigade Corporation
DTA	Democratic Turnhalle Alliance
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DD	Disarmament and Demobilisation
FCN	Federal Convention of Namibia
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Mozambique
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISDSC	Interstate Defence and Security Committee
Koevoet	South Africa sponsored counter-insurgency unit
MISA	Media Institute for Southern Africa
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MONUA	United Nations Observer Mission in Angola
NANGOF	Namibia Non Governmental Organisations Forum
NDF	Namibian Defence Force
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NID	Namibia Institute for Democracy
NNDP	Namibia National Democratic Party
NNF	Namibia Patriotic Front
NP	National Party
NUNW	National Union of Namibian Workers
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OPDSC	Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PLAN	People's Liberation Army of Namibia
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADF	South Africa Defence Force
SANDF	South African National Defence Forces

SIPE	Socio-economic Integration Programme for E-combatants
SWA	South West Africa
SWATF	South West African Territorial Force
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
SWAPO-D	South West Africa People's Organisation-Democrats
SWANU	South West Africa National Union
SMC	Senior Management Committee
TI	Transparency International
UDF	United Democratic Front of Namibia
UN	United Nations
UNAVEM	United Nations Angola Verification Mission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independêcia Total de Angola
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAG	United Nations Transitory Assistance Group
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army