

Civil-military relations in Lesotho, 1966–1998: Problems and prospects

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Introduction

As an institution of state, the military in Lesotho was mired in controversy and steeped in intrigue from the start. On the eve of independence, the main contestants for political power perceived the military as a tool that they could potentially use against their rivals. Nowhere is this more exemplified than in the debates around future control of the military that raged alongside other constitutional issues of the day. Indeed, for much of the post-colonial period the military was used as a tool—politicised and partisan. Later, the military seized power and governed in its own name. The problem today, as this brief history aims to demonstrate, is essentially two-pronged. On the one hand, it involves bringing the military back in—putting in place structures, mechanisms and philosophies designed to promote the military's acceptance of civil supremacy. On the other hand, it ought to involve significant alterations to political society's perception of the military as a tool to be used in partisan games that often leads to calamitous outcomes.

In order to understand the historical context of the current pattern of civil-military relations, we classify Lesotho's political development into four broad phases and we assess the type of civil-military relations under each phase. The first phase could be characterized as the era of embryonic democracy during the period 1965-1970, where civil-military relations were generally stable, given the relative stability of the political system. We argue, in the main, that the bulk of the problems experienced later had their seeds sown during this period, in spite of the projected image of stability.

The second phase is the era of *de facto* one-party authoritarian rule between 1970 and 1986, which was marked by unstable civil-military relations predicated upon patronage and politicisation of the armed forces, both of which compromised professionalism and ethical integrity of the defence force. During this period, the Basotho National Party (BNP) government exercised stringent control over the armed forces and shaped the military to serve its own political ends. A move designed not only to develop capacity to ward off external threats but also to weaken internal opposition. This era was one of intense disagreements, faction fighting, and leadership squabbles within the BNP. These disagreements threw the ruling party into disarray, and created intense conflict between the party and the armed forces primarily over issues of internal law and order and the regime's sour relations with apartheid South Africa. The relations between the ruling party and the armed forces deterioro-

rated so drastically that in 1986 the army undertook a military coup, dislodging the BNP government with tacit support from apartheid South Africa.

The 1986 military coup ushered in the third phase in Lesotho's political development—the era of military authoritarianism between 1986 and 1993. Civil–military relations continued to deteriorate as the military assumed executive functions. Once again, professionalism was sacrificed in favour of political expediency and internal paralysis within the defence force was noticeable. Witness, for instance, the frequent revolts by junior officers that not only changed the leadership of the army but also gave rise to a succession of military administrations. A severe crisis of governance occurred precisely because the military lacked the moral title to rule. This situation adversely affected civil–military relations with dire consequences for political stability and economic progress.

The fourth phase is the era of fragile democracy spanning the period from 1993 to date. This followed the withdrawal of the military from direct political control over the state due largely to internal and external pressure for democratisation and demilitarisation, that led to the ascendance of civilian authority after the 1993 general election. Initially, problems of adjustment to the new political reality saw protracted conflicts between the executive authority and the defence force. For example, faction fighting within the army over its relationship with the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) government, King Letsie III's temporary displacement of a democratically elected government in 1994 and tensions that surfaced in the aftermath of the 1998 election. Despite the conflicts of 1994 and 1998, this current phase marked a major shift in civil–military relations especially the momentum of legal, institutional and policy reforms that have thus far been put in place.

Evolution of a modern army to 1986

From its inception in 1963 as the paramilitary wing of the Basotho Mounted Police (BMP) charged with internal security aspects of police work, the Police Mobile Unit (PMU) was plagued by conflicting perceptions of the necessity for its existence and the role it should play. None among the political elite was under any illusion that, once founded, the military could defend the country's borders to any significant degree—given Lesotho's precarious position as a tiny country, totally surrounded by apartheid South Africa. As such, there was an abiding sense that the new body would have an internal political role whose nature and content remained, for the time being, unknown given uncertainty about which party would inherit the emerging post-colonial state. Constitutional debates on future control of the army, whether the head of state or the head of government should be at the helm of a future army, showed clearly that the institution was considered by key actors of the day to be essential in any future contest for power.¹

From various vantage points, the new body could either maintain stability and order or it could crush the opposition. Retrospective accounts of the role of the PMU in its early years abound, themselves borne of the need to account for and to legitimize. In the opinion of Leeman, the PMU was a force to ensure that the BNP maintained its tenuous and illegitimate grip on political power.² On the other hand, Sixishe sees the PMU as a force that maintained law and order in the face of a marauding opposition bent on destabilising the BNP government.³ What we know, however, is that the PMU, strengthened by technical support and military aid from Britain and South Africa respectively, was central to and decisive in enabling government to deal effectively with concerted challenges to its power.⁴ For example, the PMU's role in the following incidents is instructive:

- In December 1965, ten people lost their lives as state security personnel clashed with opposition and monarchy supporters at Thaba Bosiu.⁵
- In the aftermath of the 1970 elections, when the constitution was suspended and a state of emergency declared, scores of people were killed and property destroyed.⁶
- In March 1970, hundreds of diamond diggers died as they protested their eviction from the diamond diggings at Kao, after government had sold prospecting rights to foreign companies.⁷
- Again, in the aftermath of the 1974 uprising scores of people died at the hands of the security forces.⁸

That said, it is notable that the head of the PMU at the time, Fred Roach, who had been instrumental in keeping the BNP in power, was also implicated in a coup attempt in 1972, leading to his dismissal.⁹

The Lesotho liberation army challenge

These and other events culminated in the exile in 1974 of the ..., where a decision to launch armed struggle against the BNP government was taken and the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) formed. Ultimately, the LLA came to be based in and operate from South Africa; but the road to Vlakplaas and other hit squad locations in South Africa was circuitous involving stops in countries like Botswana, Zambia, Libya, Tanzania, and Uganda. In 1979, attacks on government installations such as offices, electricity pylons, telephone posts, and bridges began.¹⁰ Frequent clashes between the LLA and the PMU were also evident. Beginning in 1980, the LLA added the assassination of prominent political figures associated with the BNP government to its tactics.¹¹ For example, Koenyama Chakela, a high ranking BCP executive committee member who had recently returned to Lesotho under a government-declared amnesty, was murdered by the LLA. Cabinet minister, Jobo Rampeta, suffered the same

fate at the hands of the LLA, and another cabinet minister, Chief Peete Peete, escaped with injuries in an attack which claimed his mother's life. According to the International Defence and Aid Fund, more than forty attacks of various kinds were launched by the LLA on Lesotho territory in 1983.¹²

State responses

State responses to this significant challenge were many and varied. First, the Lesotho Paramilitary Force (LPF) was formed in 1980. This signaled a period of unprecedented growth and rapid modernisation of Lesotho's armed forces as the LLA challenge was met head-on and government was forced to commit ever more of the country's meagre resources to military-related expenditure, including periodic recruitment drives.¹³ In 1982 the LPF was transformed from being a paramilitary force to a standing army and its name changed to the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF). Throughout this period, the military, together with the police and the intelligence services, became the chief violators of human rights. In 1974 and again in 1982, the Internal Security Act was amended to give government more repressive powers.¹⁴ Amnesty International, among others, was especially critical of the regimes human rights record, citing high numbers of political prisoners, deaths in detention, torture, prison conditions and deaths related to the political situation in the country.¹⁵ Government's hostility towards organised labour was also a concern to international labour organisations.¹⁶

Second, an elaborate diplomatic strategy was launched. The circle of Lesotho's friends abroad was widened to include countries of the then eastern bloc, China, North Korea, and Cuba. Lesotho joined regional, continental, and international voices against South Africa for its apartheid policies and its regional strategy of destabilisation.¹⁷ The LLA, government argued, was sponsored in its activities by South Africa in an attempt to secure Lesotho's compliance to apartheid. The proximity of most attacks to the Lesotho-South Africa border, instances of South African Defence Force (SADF) uniforms found on LLA fighters killed by the LDF, how those LLA members who escaped capture would flee into South African territory, and regular diplomatic overtures by South Africa that linked Lesotho's expulsion of the ANC with South Africa's willingness to do the same to the LLA, were all cited by the regime as proof of its claim.¹⁸

Third, a political strategy intended to solve the regime's legitimacy crisis at home was launched. The centrepiece of this strategy was the attempt to hold and win elections while taking advantage of opposition disarray brought on among others by fifteen years of unconstitutional rule and repression. Although the BNP won the 1965 election narrowly (see Table 1), it lost the 1970 election to the BCP (see Table 2). However, the BNP used its hegemony and control over the state security apparatus to annul the 1970 election, declare a state of emergency, and institutionalise a dictatorial rule.

Table 1: General Election for the National Assembly, 1965

Contestants	No. of Votes	% of votes	No. of seats
BNP	108,162	41.6	31
BCP	103,050	39.7	25
MFP	42,837	16.5	4
MTP	5,697	2.2	0
Independents	79	0.03	0
Total	259,825	100	60

This election outcome ensured Lesotho's short-lived political stability only up to 1970 when the next elections were held.

Table 2: General Election for the National Assembly, 1970

Contestants	No. of Votes	% of votes	No. of seats
BCP	152,907	49.8	36
BNP	108,162	42.2	23
MFP	22,279	7.3	1
Other	1,909	0.7	0
Total	285,257	100	60

The outcome of this election did not determine Lesotho's political destiny as the ruling party interrupted the whole process mid-stream upon realising an impending defeat and declared the election null and void and then instituted a de facto one-party state. Subsequently, in response mainly to donor pressure, the Interim National Assembly passed an election law and the date for elections was set for August 1985. The exiled BCP rejected the idea of participating in those elections, while a collection of smaller parties financed by South Africa, known as the Basotho Democratic Alliance (BDA), first toyed with the idea of participating and later changed their minds as conditions for participation proved too arduous and loaded in favour of the ruling party.¹⁹ In the event, opposition parties boycotted the nomination process and the BNP declared itself the winner. As such, of all strategies employed by the BNP, the political strategy failed dismally as the regime's problems of legitimacy were worsened by the unfulfilled promise of elections.

The Basotho National Party falls

For the remainder of 1985, the regime had to contend with an increasingly disgruntled populace, a hostile neighbour, divisions within its ranks, and an army whose loyalty it was beginning to doubt. The BNP Youth League was in the mid-1980s an armed wing of the ruling party, trained in North Korea and locally that gained notoriety for terrorising real and imagined opponents of the regime as well as other factions within the BNP. It is believed that prior to the 1986 military coup the youth league had informed the head of the military, Major General J.M. Lekhanya, that his services were no longer required. This was against a background of heightened tension, as divisions between factions of the ruling party and their counterparts among factions of the army began to show. They differed on issues of how best to maintain internal law and order and how best to manage relations with apartheid South Africa. Having effectively seized power in the aftermath of the abortive 1985 elections, and with allies in the army, the youth league seemed poised to govern Lesotho. It is possible that they would have done were it not for the 1986 military coup.

Citing Lesotho's refusal to expel the ANC and Lesotho's territory being used for attacks against its territory, South Africa imposed a border blockade on 1 January 1986, resulting in massive shortages of fuel and foodstuffs in Lesotho, especially in Maseru.²⁰ Opposition politicians, among them C.D. Molapo of the BDA, B.M. Khaketla of the Marema-Tlou Freedom Party (MFP), and G. Ramoreboli of the United Democratic Party (UDP), traveled to Pretoria in an attempt to negotiate the lifting of the border blockade. They were not successful. On 17 January, Lekhanya led a delegation to Pretoria in a further attempt to negotiate the lifting of the blockade. They, too, were not successful.²¹

The military participated actively in these events. In addition to attempting to negotiate with South Africa, they also, on 15 January, surrounded the government office complex, sent home civil servants and forcibly took the Prime Minister from his office and escorted him to the King's Palace. There they demanded that the BNP Youth League be disarmed and disbanded. From 17 to 18 January fierce fighting ensued between the LDF and the Youth League (and a faction of the LDF allied to the Youth League). The LDF came out victorious and proceeded to arrest Youth League activists, their leaders, and sympathetic army officers. These events culminated in the announcement on Radio Lesotho on 20 January that there had been a military takeover. A jubilant public took to the streets in what was more a celebration of the fall of the BNP than it was an embrace of military rule.

The rise and fall of military rule

The reasons for the military coup in 1986 vary depending on the preferred vantage points of observers. For some the coup represented the success of

South Africa's destabilisation of Lesotho.²² For others power struggles between BNP factions, which included the military, were responsible, because they caused insecurity among some BNP members, opponents of the regime, and the nation in general.²³ Still others pointed to worsening relations between the King and the BNP government over his constitutional status.²⁴ Whatever the reason or reasons behind the coup, the fact remained that the Lesotho military was severely compromised. Not only because of its association with the BNP government, but also because of its close association with the apartheid security establishment—an association that continued even as government's anti-apartheid rhetoric continued and even as the army itself used sophisticated weaponry originating in the eastern bloc.²⁵

The military-monarch alliance and its problems

Henceforth Lesotho was ruled by a military regime that had the King at its helm. In addition to dissolving parliament and government, Lesotho (no. two) Order of 1986 vested executive and legislative powers in the King, and provided for the establishment of a six-man military council headed by Lekhanya. This order also provided for the appointment of a council of ministers, chosen by the King on the advice of the military council and chaired by the major general, that would 'assist the King in the general administration of Lesotho'. As such, the new regime was characterised variously as military-monarch power sharing,²⁶ as a military kingdom,²⁷ and as a military-chieftainship-bureaucratic alliance.²⁸ Later it transpired that what had been portrayed as military-monarch power sharing was an unequal partnership, with the military as the senior partner. This state of affairs led to tensions between the would-be partners outlined below.²⁹

Another significant piece of legislation was the Suspension of Political Activities Order (no. four) of 1986, which suspended all political activity in the country 'until such time as the goal of national reconciliation had been achieved'. To this point, the king and the military were in agreement on the takeover of political power and on the need to all but ban political parties.

One area of disagreement was the nature of relations between Lesotho and South Africa. Following the coup, the ANC and other South African refugees were deported from Lesotho. Those who remained were not safe as they were hunted down by local and South African hit squads. A military hospital at Makoanyane Barracks was built with South African help. The Highlands Water Treaty was signed between the two countries after decades of disagreement. The regime in Lesotho frequently warned Basotho miners to disassociate themselves from the activities of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). When the Pope visited Lesotho and a bus full of pilgrims was hijacked by the LLA, South Africa helped put an end to the hostage crisis.³⁰ Certainly, these events suggested a vast improvement in relations between the two countries. The King and his

allies were unhappy with this improvement. They proposed an alternative position—one that was much more pragmatic—fully aware of the country's vulnerability and yet sensitive to international dispositions to apartheid.³¹

Another area of disagreement was on the regime's corruption. Allegations of corruption against leading members of the regime began to appear in the pages of the Maseru weekly, *The Mirror*. Correspondence between the King and Lekhanya suggests that the King was eager that these allegations be expunged and anti-corruption measures put in place. However, the distance or proximity between them on other controversial issues that plagued the military regime remains unclear. For example:

- The murder of two LDF colonels, Sehlabo and Ramots'ekhoane, in the immediate aftermath of the coup.³²
- The murder of two former BNP cabinet ministers and their wives in November 1986.³³
- The declaration of a State of Emergency in August 1988.³⁴
- The adoption of the IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment Programmes and the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry into the activities of the academic staff of the National University of Lesotho.³⁵
- The deportation of the editor of *The Mirror*.³⁶
- The regimes hostility towards organised labour, exemplified by the thirteen-week strike by the Lesotho Teachers' Trade Union.³⁷

Yet another area of disagreement centred on how precisely Lesotho was to be ruled in future. In 1986 the new military regime spoke constantly about its mission to promote peace, stability, national reconciliation, and democracy. Very little was said about the precise manner in which this was to be achieved. First there was talk of an advisory/national council that, though advisory, would form the apex of a structure with multiple levels, from the village level, to the ward level, up to the district level. The intention was to accomplish this without the participation of political parties whose activities had been suspended by the regime.³⁸ It was only due to disagreements within the regime that this plan was abandoned.³⁹

The end of the military-monarch alliance

Disagreements within the regime were brought to a head when, on 23 December 1988, Lekhanya fatally shot a young male student at the Lesotho Agricultural College. Attempts to persuade him to resign were unsuccessful.⁴⁰ Later, in October 1989, he was cleared by a Judicial Inquest that ruled that the murder was 'justifiable homicide'.

In February 1990, citing pressure from 'Captains in the RLDF', the Chairman of the Military Council terminated the services of three members of

the Military Council and one member of the Council of Ministers. All four were colonels in the RLDF and were known allies of the King. Attempts by the King to resist this move were unsuccessful.⁴¹ In a strident speech announcing the changes in government, Lekhanya painted a grim picture of a Palace faction comprised of the King and his relatives whose sole purpose was to find ways of delaying or even subverting the country's return to democratic rule.⁴² This was vociferously denied by the King who made a counter claim that Lekhanya and his allies were solely responsible for the delay in restoring constitutional rule since every time the matter was discussed he insisted that such issues first had to be discussed by the armed forces.⁴³

The second military administration

In February 1990, divisions within the regime culminated in the passage of the Lesotho (no. two) Order of 1990. The King lost executive and legislative powers and the vast majority of the members of the Council of Ministers who were associated with the King had their services terminated. This time, however, changes in government did not result in the euphoria that had welcomed the military coup in 1986. For the new regime, two main issues had to be resolved, the country's movement towards a constitutional order and the status of the King.

In pursuit of the objective of a return to the barracks in June 1992, the military regime established a constituent assembly, whose brief was to produce a new constitution using the 1966 constitution as a working document, in terms of Order No. four of 1990. The constituent assembly was made up of 109 members. These would include 20 members from development councils, 22 Principal and Ward chiefs, ten members from civil society organisations, ten representatives from urban centres, eight members of the armed forces and 17 members of the council of ministers and assistant ministers. Party political activities, however, remained suspended. Leaders of the BNP, BCP, MFP, UDP, and the Communist Party of Lesotho (CPL) were initially reluctant to join the constituent assembly because they objected to a number of issues. First, that the assembly was merely advisory. Second, that they wanted the ban on political activities lifted. Third, that the presence of members of the army and police in the assembly would deny them freedom of expression. Fourth, that they were uneasy serving as appointees and not as elected members of the assembly.⁴⁴ However, by the time the swearing-in ceremony was held in June, all but the interim leader of the BNP had joined the assembly. Southall advances a plausible explanation for the fact that political leaders joined the assembly without any of their demands being met, pointing to the central role played by the British High Commissioner in this regard.⁴⁵

On 10 March 1990, the King was exiled in the United Kingdom in a move spokespersons of the regime sarcastically termed a sabbatical. Citing the high

cost of maintaining the King in London, the regime later sought to persuade him to return to Lesotho as a constitutional monarch. Talks between the King and the representatives of the regime collapsed when the King insisted that he would not return under the Office of the King Order of 1970.⁴⁶

In a speech to the Constituent Assembly where the decision to dethrone the King was announced, the Chairman of the Military Council informed members of the assembly and the nation that the King had declined the offer to return by making impossible demands that the regime rejected. According to Lekhanya, the King demanded the dissolution of the military government and the format on of a government of national unity. He claimed the King also demanded the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the lifting of the suspension of the 1966 constitution, and the abrogation of the Lesotho (no. two) Order of 1990,⁴⁷ changes that the Military Council envisaged were embodied in the Office of the King (no. 14) Order of 1990. After a brief hesitation, Prince Mohato Bereng Seeiso (Letsie III) succeeded the deposed King on 12 November 1990.

The fall of the second military administration

The regime's success in convening the constituent assembly and in dethroning the King camouflaged an impending crisis. There was general discontent among civil society groups largely brought on by the effects of structural adjustment and the perceived corruption of the regime that was exemplified by the decision to increase the salaries of military councillors, ministers and deputy ministers in March 1991. The regime responded to public discontent by employing heavy-handed methods against what it termed civil unrest and a general refusal to be governed. But the society had decidedly turned against military rule in favour of a return to constitutional rule. The army, for its part, had become restless once more. Combined, these grievances posed a significant threat to the regime.⁴⁸ On 30 April 1991, junior officers in the RLDF forced the chairman of the military council to resign. Three of the chairman's trusted allies in the military council (Colonel Ts'otetsi) and the council of ministers (E.R. Sekhonyana and T. Thabane) were also dismissed.

The third military administration and the transition to democracy

Colonel P. Ramaema, who had served as military councilor since 1986, was named as the new leader of the military regime. Perhaps in recognition of the pressure the regime was under, its new leader was quick to reassure the population that the democratisation programme would continue. South Africa was assured that the new regime intended to honour the Highlands Water

Treaty and to continue a friendly foreign policy. The IMF and World Bank were assured that the regime intended to continue with the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Programme.

In September 1991, the constituent assembly finished its work and proceeded to solicit people's views on the new constitution. Preparations for elections were almost entirely in the hands of international organisations, notably the Commonwealth which provided Noel Lee from Jamaica and Jocelyn Lucas from Trinidad and Tobago, who served as Chief Electoral Officers. As a result of delayed preparations in the areas of voter registration and delimitation of constituencies, the mid-1992 date that was set earlier was postponed to November 1992 and, later, to March 1993.⁴⁹ Basotho went to the polls for the first time since 1970, on 27 March 1993. Local and international observer groups monitored the election closely. The elections were plagued by myriad administrative problems that included delays in opening polling stations because of a shortage of voting materials. Some of these problems caused the extension of voting to the next day so that people could get the chance to vote. These problems notwithstanding, observers unanimously declared the election to have been free and fair, and the BCP was declared victorious. The army duly handed power to the new civilian administration on 2 April 1993. The results of the 1993 election are illustrated in table 3 below.

Table 3: General Election for the National Assembly, 1993

Contestants	No. of Votes	% of votes	No. of seats
BCP	398,355	74.7	65
BNP	120,686	22.6	0
MFP	7,650	1.4	0
Other	6,287	1.2	0
Total	532,978	100	65

Besides the electoral system, which clearly disadvantaged losing parties as shown in Table 3, a number of issues were not satisfactorily dealt with as part of the transition. As such, they continue to threaten the new dispensation in fundamental ways. Although the military had managed to dethrone the King and to install a new King, and the last military administration was reluctant to tamper with the status quo established by its predecessor, the problem of the monarch remained and it was to cause all manner of problems for the country's civilian administration. Emerging national coalitions for democracy that were prominent in the late 1980s and the early 1990s were disbanded by the lifting of Order no. 4 and the return, under the guise of party political affilia-

tion, of old forms of bigotry that characterised Lesotho politics. As a result, the new democratic dispensation was robbed of meaningful civilian participation. Nowhere is the supremacy of party political concerns over national concerns (if these actually exist) more evident than in the cynicism of the bigger parties towards the idea of a national conference.⁵⁰ All in all, Lesotho's transition left the basic character of state institutions intact.

Civil-military relations since 1993

The relationship between the incoming civilian government and the military was one of mutual suspicion. In its 1993 election manifesto, the BCP had argued for (a) efficient and disciplined security forces to maintain law and order and to protect lives and property; (b) professional and non-partisan security forces under the command of the Head of State and the Defence Commission; and (c) a defence force based on quality, not quantity, in order to promote efficiency in the maintenance of law and order as well as the defence of territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country.⁵¹ Exactly how this was to be achieved the manifesto did not say. But judging by anti-army statements made by members of parliament and cabinet ministers, it is obvious that the new government did not have a vision—let alone policy—to deal with these matters.

The legal and constitutional reality also militated against government, even if vision and policy existed. In keeping with their attitude towards civilian rule, the military government had earlier passed the Lesotho Defence Force Order (17) of 1993. This order effectively removed military matters from the scrutiny of any civilian government by providing for the establishment of the Defence Commission—a body devoid of any civilian participation. This body had the power to appoint, discipline, and remove members of the defence force. The Constitution of Lesotho 1993, tampered slightly with the membership of the Defence Commission by extending membership to the Prime Minister and making him chairman without veto power. The purpose, as Mothibe points out, 'was to deprive any incoming civilian government of the control over the army'.⁵²

The military reform programme in context

Current efforts at restructuring the armed forces take place within international, regional, and local contexts. The fast changing global political order requires that states revisit their security and defence strategies. The end of the Cold War has removed the perception of most states that their major security threat was ideologically driven and based outside their borders. Today, ideologically propelled inter-state conflicts have subsided, whereas resource-driv-

en intra-state conflicts are on the ascendancy. Linked to the end of the Cold War is the fact that the world is also undergoing another sea change in the form of globalisation which, among other things, weakens the state, whittles state sovereignty, and renders political boundaries ineffective.

For Lesotho, the most critical factor, however, is the demise of apartheid in South Africa. Whereas in the past Lesotho perceived apartheid as its major security threat, since the advent of a democratically elected government in South Africa in 1994, the two countries maintain cordial relations. Both countries are active members of SADC, which is working towards a regional security co-operation scheme through the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security and its active arm, the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC). Furthermore, South Africa is one of the external guarantors of Lesotho's fragile democracy and has been actively involved along with Botswana in the current efforts at security sector reform.

Yet another challenge to security sector reform has to do with the resource endowment of a country and how scarce resources are allocated. The state of economic growth and development plays an important role in influencing civil-military relations. This is so because the economy determines the amount of resources that the executive authority is able to make available to the security forces. This is crucial for the defence budget that often competes with other demands for the country's scarce resources. In Lesotho thus far, the defence budget has always ranked among the traditional top three—education, health, and defence. Defence expenditure should not amount to a diversion of scarce resources away from socio-economic goals, especially where no serious military threat exists. The challenge is to strike a fine balance between state security and human security in the allocation of scarce resources.

Even where expansive institutional mechanisms (including a policy framework) to ensure civil supremacy over the armed forces exist, there has to be effective control and regulation of the armed forces by the executive and by parliamentary oversight. To this end, a parliamentary portfolio committee on security and defence would form an important institutional mechanism for civil control over the armed forces. The challenge lies in the reform of the parliamentary system in a way that provides room for the establishment of portfolio committees among which must be the parliamentary portfolio committee on defence and security.

Stable relations between the army and the executive must proceed in tandem with stable relations between the military and the civilian population premised upon mutual trust and interdependence. To this end, state security issues must be linked to and harmonised with human security concerns. A clear understanding of the state and its inner workings, together with its inter-relationship with government and the governance process, must inform the current process of reforming civil-military relations. Civil society also has to play an important

role in the process of building stable civil–military relations. A major aspect of this role could come through public dialogue forums held to provide public input into the ongoing restructuring of the armed forces. The effectiveness of this strategy, of course, will depend critically upon how well organised civil society organisations are and the extent of their capacity to engage in such complex issues as security sector reform. The type of relationship between the state and civil society will also be crucial in sustaining this dialogue process and maximising its positive impact on the security reform process. The myth of defence and security issues being secret and sacrosanct must be debunked without compromising the need to protect classified information. We now turn to an analysis of the nature of the challenge the military has posed for governance in Lesotho following the 1993 election up to the 1998 political turmoil.

Government under siege

Eight months into the tenure of the new civilian administration about five people died as factions of the LDF engaged in an armed confrontation that lasted for fifteen days. At issue was a 100% pay rise sought by the soldiers.⁵³ The faction fighting was also about disagreement within the armed forces as to whether to accept or undermine the authority of the BCP. This led to external intervention by the Commonwealth, OAU, and SADC countries, and resulted in the involvement of a task force made up of foreign ministers from Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Their brief was to ‘monitor closely, investigate and suggest possible solutions to Lesotho’s crisis’. Their main recommendation as regards the army, which was endorsed by the Presidents of Botswana and Zimbabwe during their visit to Lesotho on 11–12 February 1994, was that ‘there is a need for full restructuring and retraining of the LDF with a view to making it a single, united and, above all, disciplined force’.⁵⁴

Two months later, on 14 April 1994, a group of yet to be publicly identified soldiers assassinated the Deputy Prime Minister and minister of finance, Selometsi Baholo. A later Commission of Inquiry referred to the incident as ‘an “E” Company operation’. Hours later, four cabinet ministers were briefly abducted and released. In an attempt to diffuse the situation, government promised to address the soldiers’ demands that had to do with poor salaries and poor working conditions. Eventually, the army received a pay rise in excess of 66%, and their allowances were improved. Immediately thereafter, the Lesotho Mounted Police (LMP) went on strike for three weeks in May. They demanded a 60% pay increase and, in the process, they abducted the acting Minister of Finance. Eventually, the police received a pay rise in excess of 42%, and their allowances were also improved.⁵⁵

As early as November 1993, the leader of the main opposition BNP, E.R. Sekhonyana, together with leaders of other smaller parties, exacerbated the

situation by exhorting the army to do something about the rumours that government intended to disband and replace it with the LLA. Later, they also appealed to King Letsie III to dissolve government.

Government's response was to appoint commissions of inquiry into the events that led to confrontation between factions of the army in January 1994 and another on the dethronement of King Moshoeshoe II. By all accounts, government erred in its decision to set up these commissions of inquiry, because they worsened an already tense situation. The armed forces rejected the commission of inquiry on the grounds that it was merely a continuation of governments' anti-army manoeuvres. They also objected to the involvement of security personnel from Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe in the commission, which they said amounted to interference. The palace also rejected the commission of inquiry on the grounds that there had been inadequate consultation between King Letsie III and government on the appointment and terms of reference of the commission. As such it seemed that government was using the commission to conduct a vendetta against King Moshoeshoe II. The acrimony surrounding these two commissions of inquiry made possible a broad alliance between the military, the royalists, and the opposition BNP.

Commission of inquiry (Lesotho Defence Force)

The Commission's terms of Reference were to inquire into (a) the events that took place during the period between November 1993 and April 1994; (b) the role of the Lesotho Defence Force in those events, and (c) what future action was to be taken to prevent a repetition of these events. The Commission should also inquire, among other things, into the identity of persons whose activities caused or contributed to those events; the history of the Lesotho Defence Force since its creation; the redeployment of members of the LDF who may be found to be in excess of requirements; and the incorporation of former members of the LLA into the LDF.⁵⁶ The Commission was composed of 12 persons: from Lesotho, Bishop P. Khoarai, P. Chaolane (MP), J.M. Kena, S. Mafisa, and T. Hlaoli; from Botswana, Colonel D.N. Seretse and Lieutenant Colonel G. Peke; from South Africa, Brigadier P.C. Smith and Major O. Buskes; and from Zimbabwe, Brigadier P.W. Zimonte and Mr. P. Zhou.

The Commission was required to report on 1 October 1994, but could not do so because of the events of August 1994 (discussed hereafter). It was only able to report in January 1995. Among other things, the Commission recommended that:

- The defence force should be employed in civil works, and that this role should be emphasised more than the defence role.
- Lesotho must maintain a unified and effective defence force that will be professional and well equipped to effectively discharge its roles by empha-

- sising the recruitment of technical and professional personnel at the expense of the non-technical and non-professional personnel.
- The non-professional component of the defence force should be gradually downsized.
 - The LDF should be brought within [civilian] political control by amending the constitution to reflect civilian political and policy direction of the defence force and the National Security Service (NSS).
 - The appointment of the Commander of LDF will be done by the King on the advice of the Prime Minister, and the appointment of the Director NSS will be done by the Prime Minister.
 - The quality of command and leadership in the LDF will be improved by retraining the leadership of the LDF and creating a separate officer training programme from that of the other ranks.
 - The government should take disciplinary action against those members of the LDF found to be guilty of misconduct during the military disturbances.
 - Government should adopt a programme to resettle former members of the LLA in the society by offering them employment within the public service or the private sector, or in the military, or to assist them financially to develop income generating projects.⁵⁷

The August 1994 palace coup

In the midst of this tense situation, the BNP and the royalists embarked on a joint demonstration on 15 August 1994. During this event they submitted a petition to King Letsie III. They demanded the reinstatement of King Moshoeshe II; dissolution of government; establishment of an interim government of national unity; and preparations for fresh general elections based on proportional representation. On the morning of 17 August 1994, King Letsie III acceded to these demands by dissolving government and replacing it with a Provisional Council of State.⁵⁸

Thousands of Basotho took to the streets in condemnation of the King's action. As the King was the focus of their anger, they went to the palace gates and demanded the restoration of constitutional government. They were met by live ammunition fired by the armed guard. Five protestors lost their lives and many others were injured. Better organised protests were to continue under the leadership of the Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LCN), and these included a massive stay away on 21–23 August. Not only did the King's government fail to get the support of the general population, but it also had to deal with threats from donor countries such as Germany, the United States of America, Japan, the United Kingdom and the EEC, who threatened to suspend aid to Lesotho if constitutional government was not restored.

Regional initiatives to resolve this crisis came about as a result of invita-

tions by the protagonists as well as a history of involvement in Lesotho's tribulations that began earlier in 1994. Presidents Masire of Botswana, Mandela of South Africa, and Mugabe of Zimbabwe brokered an agreement after a series of meetings and consultations, coupled with threats of economic sanctions and military intervention. As a result, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 14 September 1994.⁵⁹ In the main, the memorandum provided for:

- the restoration of the duly elected government of Lesotho;
- cancellation of the commission of inquiry into the position of the monarchy;
- re-installation of King Moshoeshoe II;
- indemnity for King Letsie III, members of the Provisional Council of State, advisers, public servants, and security personnel from legal proceedings for actions taken in the period 17 August to 14 September 1994;
- Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe would henceforth maintain an ongoing interest in Lesotho's politics and henceforth they shall be the guarantors of Lesotho's democratic dispensation.⁶⁰ They were joined in this role by Mozambique following the 1995 SADC Summit in Mauritius.

These developments, in part, influenced and triggered reform initiatives within the security establishment, although the reform programme was punctuated by political strife and turmoil.

Military reform programme, 1994–1998

In August 1994, the Ministry of Defence was established bringing the military and the NSS together under one structure. Headed by a civilian minister, the new ministry was intended to fulfil the role of administrative headquarters for the LDF and the NSS, formulate and execute defence policy on behalf of the government of Lesotho, provide central control and co-ordination of defence matters and ensure propriety in the management of the defence budget. The establishment of the Ministry of Defence was a response, in part, to observations and recommendations contained in the *Report on the Presidential visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho by Presidents Mugabe and Masire on 11–12 February 1994*, which pointed out 'the lack of proper command structure in the army', and recommended the establishment of a fully fledged Ministry of Defence. Later, the Commission of Inquiry (Lesotho Defence Force) also observed that 'at present [dealings between government and the LDF, and the handling of military matters] is incoherent and haphazard'. Efforts to get the new ministry off the ground were enhanced by an official seconded from the British government, Mr. Phil Jones, whose brief was to provide advice to government and senior staff on the issues relating to the organisation and management of defence—in particular, the setting up and operation of the Ministry of Defence.⁶¹

In order to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry

(Lesotho Defence Force), a steering group was established. It comprised the Principal Secretary for Defence as Chairman; the Commander of the LDF; the Commissioner of Police; the Attorney General; the Prime Minister's Political Advisor and one representative each from South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. Among the areas that required attention were training, career development and promotion systems, financial management, procurement, logistics and administration.⁶² The steering group held its first meeting on 2 June. The work of the steering group included co-ordinating, directing, and overseeing the working groups established to implement the commission's recommendations. The steering group would also determine the areas where outside expertise was required and the nature of that expertise.

The Lesotho Defence Force Act (no. four) of 1996, which replaced the Lesotho Defence Order (no. 17) of 1993, gives meaning to this constitutional provision by elaborating the structural, administrative, and operational aspects of the LDF. The act stipulates that the LDF shall comprise (a) the regular force, (b) the reserve force and (c) the volunteer element. According to the act, the LDF shall be employed (a) in defence of Lesotho; (b) in the prevention or suppression of terrorism and internal disorder; and (c) in the maintenance of essential services including maintenance of law and order and prevention of crime. In terms of civil-military relations, a more serious impact of the Act was the establishment of the Defence Council in place of the Defence Commission. The Defence Council comprises the Minister of Defence—who shall be chairman, the Principal Secretary Defence—who would chair meetings in the absence of the minister, the Commander of the LDF, a secretary appointed by the minister and two members appointed by the Prime Minister.

The three main functions of the Defence Council are (a) to make recommendations to the cabinet on the formulation and implementation of defence policy; (b) to make recommendations to the cabinet on the terms and conditions of service of members of the defence force; and (c) to inquire into and deal with complaints relating to and grievances of any member of the defence force. The establishment of the Defence Council was a major improvement on Chapter II of the 1993 Lesotho Defence Force Order in terms of efforts towards establishing stable civil-military relations. Due to the efforts of the Defence Council, the MOD developed a defence policy that aims at transforming the LDF into an apolitical, accountable, capable, and affordable defence force.

Besides the legal framework, key institutions that play a part in regulating and controlling the army in Lesotho include the monarchy as the pinnacle of the state, the Prime Minister as the minister of defence, the Defence Council, and the MOD. With the advice of the Prime Minister, the King appoints the commander of the armed forces and orders the deployment of the forces in part or whole outside the borders of Lesotho. The Prime Minister as both the head of government and minister of defence plays a central role in civil-mili-

tary relations. He is the chairperson of the Defence Council and he liaises with the commander on a regular basis on defence and security issues.

Using technical assistance from Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Britain, the USA, and the UNDP among others, an education programme 'intended to promote respect for democracy, human rights, and the primacy of civilian rule' has been pursued. It includes seminars, workshops, and conferences on the role of the armed forces in a democracy. Members of the military also have been given the opportunity of furthering their academic studies at national and foreign tertiary institutions. In keeping with the Ministry of Defence intention to encourage participation of the armed forces in peacekeeping operations, members of the military have attended advanced peacekeeping courses abroad. Senior defence personnel and officials of the MOD undertook numerous study tours and fact finding missions where they familiarised themselves with the organisation of defence institutions. Education was not limited only to those in the defence force and the ministry. Members of the public were given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with defence matters, through the work of the public relations office of the ministry of defence.

Those involved in the military reform programme—both the civilian administration and the top echelons of the army—seem to have been satisfied with the progress they were making. For example, much of the frustration with the army experienced by ruling party MP's and cabinet ministers that we saw mainly through anti-army statements, ended. In fact, in a 1996 Christmas message, the Prime Minister congratulated the LDF on 'the direction you have achieved so far in moving towards greater professionalism and discipline'.⁶³ The Commander of the LDF, for his part, said:

"I wish to put on record my sincere appreciation for the valuable contribution our defence made in promoting democratic principles."⁶⁴

While they were congratulating themselves for a job well done, it remained in its essentials a job that took place largely away from the public eye and without any significant public involvement. Moreover, even independent analysts of these processes had no way of gauging the attitude of the lower ranks of the military towards the military reform programme. Two events in 1997 provided an early, concrete test of the success or failure of the military reform programme. These were the police mutiny of February and the parliamentary change of government in July. The outcome of both events gave further impetus to the view that the military reform programme was a success.

The police mutiny of February 1997

On 6 February 1997 eight junior police officers and some sympathizers took over control of the Maseru Central Charge Office and dismissed the Commissioner of

Police, the Deputy Commissioner and a number of senior officers. At issue was their refusal to be arrested after having been identified by a Commission of Inquiry that government had appointed in terms of Legal Notice No. 60 of 1996 in connection with the killing of three of their colleagues on 31 October 1995. The police force had become bitterly divided over the appropriate action to take towards the teacher's strike that took place from 15 August to 19 October 1995. This mutiny paralysed both routine and specialised police activities in Maseru and, in some districts and patrols, criminal investigations and crime prevention came to a halt. The stalemate was ended after 11 days by units of the LDF following a directive from government.⁶⁵

Power struggles in the ruling party

On Monday 9 June 1997, Lesotho experienced a constitutional change of government when the majority of members of parliament left the ruling BCP and joined the newly formed Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). The split in the ruling party was a result of a power struggle that had raged since the party's return from exile in 1988. Two main factions were involved in this struggle for power: one known as *Majelathoko* (translated: those who eat alone) led by the BCP leader and Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle, and another known as *Maporesha* (translated: the Pressure Group) led by the BCP deputy leader, Molapo Qhobela. At issue were succession of the ailing party leader, the conduct of armed struggle—especially historical alliances with apartheid South Africa and the use or misuse of party monies during the exile years, access to government positions and influencing public policy.

This development, which happened less than a year before the 1998 general election, invited a flurry of speculation regarding its constitutionality. The now opposition BCP, BNP, MFP, and a few of the smaller parties were unable to sway public opinion against the new government. Perhaps critically for the LCD, the armed forces also appeared unmoved by these events. Politically, however, the formation of the LCD and the manner in which it assumed power brought together for the first time the BNP and the BCP, and made possible an alliance that was to prove devastating the following year.⁶⁶

The general election of 1998 and its aftermath

The 1998 general elections were held against the background of opposition parties that claimed, unsuccessfully, that the IEC was biased in favour of the ruling party. The IEC, they said, failed to adhere to the law in that it failed to provide them with voters' lists. They claimed that voters' lists were in such disarray as to suggest foul play. They took the matter to court and, on 19 May 1998, the

court ruled that the elections would not be postponed; that the IEC erred in not making voters' list available for scrutiny by political parties; that irregularities alluded to in the voters' lists were nothing to worry about as this was a common problem in Lesotho where many people were unsure about their birth dates and that even after the election the courts would continue to hear petitions regarding the conduct of elections in the various constituencies. For their part the political parties maintained that they would not accept the election results.

The general election was held on 23 May 1998. The LCD won 79 of the 80 constituencies with 60.6% of the total vote (see table 5 below).

Table 4: General Election for the National Assembly, 1998

Contestants	No. of Votes	% of votes	No. of seats
LCD	355,049	60.7	79
BNP	143,073	24.5	1
BCP	61,793	10.6	0
MFP	7,460	1.3	0
Other	16,244	2.9	0
Total	584,740	100	80

As various local and foreign observers were declaring the election to have been free and fair, the opposition BNP, BCP, and Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP) stated unequivocally that they rejected the election results. Thus began four months of protest which first took the form of challenging election results in court and later changed to a more confrontational stance. On 5 August 1998, the protesting parties embarked on a legal march to the palace to present King Letsie III with a petition requesting him to dissolve government and parliament, and to form a government of national unity. Instead of complying with the terms of the permit that required that they end their protest by the end of the day, opposition supporters refused to leave and ended up staying at the palace gates for close to two months. From there, opposition supporters enforced stayaways, closed government offices, seized and impounded government vehicles within the palace grounds, closed state-owned Radio Lesotho and were involved in sporadic clashes with police who were attempting to remove them from the palace gates.

There were numerous local attempts to diffuse what had become a very explosive situation. On the diplomatic front, there were attempts at mediation by the South African Deputy President, which culminated in the appointment of a commission of inquiry into alleged irregularities. There were also further

attempts at mediation by South African Ministers of Defence and Safety and Security. Parallel events in the security forces saw armed clashes between the police and soldiers around the palace gates and the expulsion of the commander of the LDF and 28 officers of rank. Government had lost control and the Prime Minister accepted as much in his letters to SADC countries requesting military assistance.⁶⁷

In response to the Prime Minister's request to SADC, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) entered Lesotho on the morning of 22 September to restore law and order, to rescue the legitimate government of Lesotho and to discipline mutineers in the Lesotho Defence Force. Later, the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) joined the SANDF. Opposition protests that the combined SADC task force was an invading force did not stop talks between themselves, other non-protesting opposition parties and government under the mediation of the South African Minister of Safety and Security from continuing. As a result of those talks the following agreements were reached: First, that Lesotho would hold fresh elections within 15 to 18 months; second, that the LCD would remain as government during this period; third, that an interim structure would be formed and tasked with 'levelling the playing field'; and fourth, that the IEC would be reconstituted in order to enable it to discharge its duties more efficiently in future elections.

The executive arm of government had not fully established civil supremacy over the armed forces. Although the primary protagonists in 1998 were the ruling party and opposition parties—BCP, BNP and MFP—the secondary players with a vested interest in the conflict were the monarchy and the security forces. Clearly, therefore, the armed forces were directly and indirectly involved in the 1998 conflict. Evidence abounds that suggests that the armed forces were again sharply divided into those supporting the opposition protest against the election outcome and thus sympathetic to opposition calls for the dissolution of the LCD government and those supporting the outcome of the election and the authority of the LCD as a legally constituted government.

Botswana and South Africa undertook a military intervention at the request of the Lesotho government. Part of the mission for this external military intervention was to neutralise the military's involvement in this conflict and to seek a political solution. After the political settlement of the violent conflict, a major restructuring of the armed forces began and is still on going. This includes, inter alia, downsizing of the forces and training of the officer corps in order to ensure both efficiency and professionalism.

Conclusion

No other institution of state has been more beset by political controversy than the military in Lesotho. Only for a brief period during 1965–70 did the institu-

tion enjoy relative stability and comfort within the larger political system and governance processes. However, from the 1970s up to the late 1990s the military, and indeed the police force, have been directly and indirectly involved in the country's instability—much to the chagrin of some elements of the political elite—while serving the interests of those who control the state. In large measure, political instability in Lesotho is attributable to the politicisation of the security establishment. Local conflict management mechanisms have failed to resolve these and related problems. Instead, conflict management has been done through interventions by external actors, notably South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe with dire consequences for the Kingdom's already enfeebled national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Hopefully, the ongoing restructuring and security sector reform will assist to depoliticise and professionalise the security establishment for the benefit of democratic governance and political stability.

The current military reform programme aims at creating a situation that has never before existed in Lesotho politics—a military that freely accepts civil supremacy and a political society that is committed to not making the military a tool to be used in partisan political games. In the 1960s, debates about the efficacy of establishing an army in Lesotho showed clear ambivalence towards the countries institutions generally among the countries political leaders: if we win the upcoming elections, we would like to control the army; if our rivals win, then we would much prefer the army to be controlled by a third, neutral party. This, coupled with a general lack of information about the scope and conduct of the military reform programme, accounts for the existence at times of scepticism among the general population about its intention. Ironically, the SADC military intervention coupled with ongoing involvement in the military reform programme, which may not entirely rule out further armed intervention, may yet prove indispensable if the process is to be successfully completed to the benefit of all political players in the country.

Endnotes

1. B M Khaketla, *Lesotho 1970: An African Coup under the Microscope*, C Hurst & Co, London, 1971, p 70.
2. B Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania Vol 1*, University of Azania, London, 1985, p 128.
3. D T Sixishe, *But Give Him an Army Too: Leabua Jonathan, a Biography*, Mokorotlo Publications, Maseru, 1984, pp 42–53.
4. K Matlosa, Military Rule and Withdrawal from Power: the Case of Lesotho, in E Hutchful & A Bathily (eds), *The Military and Militarism in Africa*, Codesria Book Series, Dakar, 1998, p 476.
5. R Weisfelder, Power Struggle in Lesotho, *Africa Report* 12(1), 1967, p 6.
6. Lesotho's first post-independence elections were held on Tuesday, 27 January 1970. By all accounts those elections were free and fair. However,

on 30 January, as results from different constituencies were being announced and with the BNP and BCP tied at twenty-three constituencies each, state-run radio announced that the Prime Minister would be addressing the nation later on the same day. In the event, the Prime Minister announced that because of widespread intimidation during the election, and because of the need to maintain law and order, he was declaring a state of emergency and suspending the constitution.

7. B M Khaketla, *Lesotho 1970: An African Coup under the Microscope*, pp 280–281 and M Thabane, *The Story of Liphokojoje of Kao: Towards Explaining the Individual Diamond Diggers' Rebellion*, *National University of Lesotho Faculty of Humanities Seminar Paper*, 1995.
8. B Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania Vol 2*, University of Azania, London, 1985, pp 46–51. The 1974 uprising by the BCP and its supporters was a reaction to political events in the country since 1970. By the end of 1973, all-party talks to decide on the country's constitutional future had failed, government repression continued, and the BCP suspected that another round of repression was to follow given that government had successfully managed to prevent the holding of the BCP national conference. As such, the BCP evolved a plan to seize state power by means of attacking police stations around the country, seizing weapons, and using the to seize power. This plan failed dismally and it resulted in another round of repression, a treason trial for captured BCP members, the exile of the majority of the BCP leadership, the formation of the Lesotho Liberation Army, and the launching of armed struggle in the late 1970s. As a result, all chances of an orderly, constitutional solution to Lesotho's political problems disappeared.
9. J Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa*, James Currey Ltd, London, 1986, p 109.
10. R O K Ajulu, *South Africa's Strategy of Destabilization: The Case of Lesotho*, in M Sefali & J Bardill (eds), *Development and Destabilization in Southern Africa*, Institute of Southern African Studies, Roma, 1985, pp 126–127.
11. R O K Ajulu, *op cit*, p 128.
12. International Defence & Aid Fund, *Massacre at Maseru: South Aggression against Lesotho*, *Fact Paper on Southern Africa No 12*, 1985, pp 14–17.
13. K Matlosa, *op cit*, p 478.
14. For detailed accounts of the Human Rights situation in Lesotho during this period, see S Neff, *Human Rights in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland: Implications of Adherence to International Human Rights Treaties*, Institute of Southern African Studies, Roma, 1986 and K A Maope, *Human Rights in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland: a Survey of the BOLESWA Countries*, Institute of Southern African Studies, Roma, 1986 and W C M Maqutu, *Contemporary Constitutional History of Lesotho*, Mazenod Institute, Mazenod, 1990.
15. S Brown, *Justice in the Dock*, *New African*, June, 1984. See also, *Amnesty International Report*, 1973–77, 1979–80, 1982–83, 1988.
16. W Ananaba, *The Trade Union Movement in Africa: Promise and Performance*, C Hurst & Co, London, 1979, pp 89–101.
17. Destabilisation is a generic term used for myriad political, economic, military,

- and ideological strategies used by apartheid South Africa mainly in the 1980s against its neighbours. The overall objective of destabilisation was to secure the compliance of Southern African states in heading off the advance of local and international pressure to dismantle apartheid.
18. A Brief to Parliament by the Right Honourable Dr Leabua Jonathan, on South Africa's Activities against Lesotho since the last Sitting of Parliament, 11 April 1983.
 19. The BCP's Position, *Leselinyana la Lesotho* 119(12), 1985. New Lesotho election law is under fire, *Rand Daily Mail*, 16 June 1984. Suspicion grows that Leabua will fiddle election, *Sunday Star*, 11 August 1985.
 20. Stopping Lesotho in its tracks, *Sunday Times*, 19 January 1986.
 21. R Edgar, The Lesotho Coup of 1986, in G Moss & I Obery (eds), *South African Review* 4, Raven Press, Braamfontein, 1987, pp 376–377.
 22. *Africa Events*, February 1986.
 23. This view ran through many government pronouncements in the early days of the first military administration. See, for instance, Department of Information, *Encounter the New Lesotho: Many Voices, One People*, Government Printer, Maseru, 1986.
 24. Lesotho – After the Coup, *The Star*, 21 April 1986.
 25. The Lesotho military has always maintained security links with apartheid South Africa. At independence and for years afterwards, these security links proceeded with the blessing of the government because it too, had friendly relations with South Africa. As such, the PMU was a recipient of military aid from South Africa. Later, when the BNP's policy towards South Africa changed, the military continued with friendly relation albeit in a changed environment. See how, for instance, the military attempted to negotiate an end to the border blockade in 1985–6 on its own accord and without reference to the BNP government. How, after the coup, the military government received South African assistance in building a military hospital at Makoanyane Barracks. How, again after the coup, South African hit squads operated for a time on Lesotho soil while the military government looked the other way. And how, faced with an embarrassing hostage situation during the Pope's visit, the military government invited South African commandos to help.
 26. T Mothibe, The Rise and Fall of Military-Monarch Power Sharing, *Africa Insight* 20(4), 1990.
 27. F K Makoa, Lesotho's Military Kingdom: An Undemocratic Political Experiment, *Southern Africa Political and Economic Monthly* 4(3) and 4(4), 1990–91.
 28. N Pule, The Military and Political Institutions, *Southern Africa Political and Economic Monthly* 4(3) and 4(4), 1990–91.
 29. L B B J Machobane, for five years Minister of Education in the military government, holds a contrary view. "On paper, the military still had a visible sign of control over 'the King'. But in practice most of his wishes, at least during the first three years of military governance, were carried out as proposed by himself. 'The King and the military council' carried equal authority and responsibility over the successes and failures of governance." See L B B J Machobane,

- King's Knights: Military Governance in the Kingdom of Lesotho 1986-1993*, Institute of Southern African Studies, Roma, 2001, p 80.
30. R Edgar, After the Coup: South Africa's Relations with Lesotho, in G Moss & I Obery (eds), *South African Review* 5, Raven Press, Braamfontein, 1989, pp 244-246.
 31. Address of His Majesty King Moshoeshe II to the State President of the Republic of South Africa, 25 October 1988.
 32. Lesotho – After the Coup, *The Star*, 21 April 1986.
 33. Rex v S Letsie & Anor, *Lesotho Law Reports*, 1993-94.
 34. The military regime declared the state of emergency on 25 February 1988. According to a radio broadcast, emergency measures were declared because of a sudden increase in the crimes of armed robbery, house breaking, motor vehicle theft, and stock theft. Members of the Royal Lesotho Defence Force and the Royal Lesotho Mounted Police were responsible for enforcing the state of emergency. See, for instance, *The Law Society of Lesotho v the Minister of Defence and Internal Security and the Attorney General (CIV/APN/111/88)*.
 35. Report of Commission of Inquiry into the Instability at the National University of Lesotho, 15 December 1989.
 36. Johnny wa ka Maseko and Attorney General and Commissioner of Police (C of A (CIV) No 27 of 1988. *Mmegi wa Dikgang*, Lesotho editor's arrest another sign of ongoing power struggle, 19-25 November 1988.
 37. BBC World Service, *Focus on Africa*, 30 August 1990.
 38. Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee of Ministers for a Review of Certain Constitutional Issues, 6 April 1989. *Lesotho Order 1989*, Version according to Palace, 25 July 1989.
 39. M Sejanamane, The Politics of Intrigue, *Southern Africa Political and Economic Monthly* 4(3-4) and 4(6-9), 1990-91.
 40. King Moshoeshe II's letter to the Chairman of the Military Council, 21 February 1990.
 41. Ibid.
 42. Press Statement by His Excellency the Chairman of the Military Council and the Council of Ministers, 30 April 1990.
 43. King Moshoeshe II's letter to the Chairman of the Military Council, 22 February 1990.
 44. Joint Statement by Leaders of Political Parties, 30 May 1990.
 45. R Southall, Lesotho's transition and the 1993 election, in R Southall & T Petlane (eds), *Democratisation and Demilitarisation in Lesotho*, Africa Institute, Pretoria, 1995, p 25.
 46. King Moshoeshe II sought to play a 'meaningful' role in the politics of Lesotho—an ambition deemed by successive governments as unconstitutional and incompatible with his status as a constitutional monarch. As such, The Office of King Order (51) of 1970 was an attempt by the BNP government to curtail the Kings political activities.
 47. Puo ka Mohlomphehi Major General J M Lekhanya ka Lekhotleng la Sechaba la Popo ea Molao oa Motheo, 6 November 1990.

48. Authorities take the lion's share, *Moeletsi oa Basotho*, 28 April 1991. Transformation Resource Centre, *The Return to Democracy in Lesotho?*, 13 December 1990. Winds of change blowing in Lesotho, *The Star*, 31 August 1990.
49. J Daniel, You United Nations have delivered us: Monitoring the 1993 election in Lesotho, in R Southall & T Petlane (eds), *Democratisation and Demilitarisation in Lesotho*, pp 93–102.
50. N P Selinyane, Civil Society, Electoral Politics and the Retrieval of Democracy in Lesotho, *Lesotho Social Science Review* 3(2), 1997.
51. Basutoland Congress Party, *1993 Elections Manifesto*, 1992, p 8.
52. T Mothibe, The Military and The 1994 Constitutional Crisis: A Question of Trust?, *Review of Southern African Studies* 2(1) and 2(9), 1998.
53. For a detailed account of these and related events, see K T Matlosa, The Recent Political Crisis in Lesotho and the Role of External Forces, *Africa Insight* 24(4), 1994.
54. See Report on the Presidential Visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho Undertaken by Presidents R G Mugabe & Sir K Masire on 11–12 February 1994.
55. For a detailed account of these and related events, see F K Makoa, Explaining Government/Police relations in Post-Military Lesotho: The February 1997 Police Mutiny, *African Security Review* 7(1), 1998.
56. See Legal Notice No 61 of 1994, Commission of Inquiry–Lesotho Defence Force.
57. See The Report of the Commission of Inquiry, Lesotho Defence Force, 31 January 1995, pp 115–124.
58. See King Letsie III's letter to the Prime Minister, dated 16 August 1994, and Declaration by His Majesty King Letsie III, dated 17 August 1994.
59. For a discussion of the diplomatic initiatives that were taken to resolve the Lesotho crisis during this period, see M Sejamane, The Lesotho Crisis and Regional Intervention, *Southern Review* 9(5), SAPEM, 1996 and T C Nkiwane, My Brother's Keeper: The Lesotho Crisis in Perspective, *AAPS Occasional Paper Series* 1(3), 1997.
60. See Understanding of Measures and Procedures relating to the Restoration of Constitutional Order in Lesotho, 14 September 1994.
61. T Mothibe, The Military and the 1994 Constitutional Crisis, p 14.
62. See Defence News, June 1995.
63. T Mothibe, The Military and Democratisation in Lesotho, p 54.
64. T Mothibe, The Military and Democratisation in Lesotho, p 55.
65. See F K Makoa, Explaining Government-Police Relations in post-Military Lesotho: The February 1997 Police Mutiny, *African Security Review* 7(1), 1998. See also Report of the Commission of Inquiry, Royal Lesotho Mounted Police, 3 September 1996.
66. For one account of the scope and conduct of the power struggle, see N W Pule, Power Struggles in the Basutoland Congress Party 1991–1997, *Lesotho Social Science Review* 5(1), 1999.
67. See Address to the Nation By the Honourable P B Mosisili, 24 September 1998.