

in internal security goes back to the 1920s, was prominent in the 1940s and was also noticeable after the 1960 Sharpeville crisis. After 1996 it became routine.

Efforts have been made since 1990 to demilitarize the police (symbolized by the change of name from 'force' to 'service') but specialized public order units of a paramilitary nature remain and the service continues to be heavily armed. There is no sign of any significant reduction in the use of troop deployments for internal security tasks; typically, around 5,000 soldiers remain deployed in such tasks, and their numbers increase at times of crisis or during elections.⁹

This highlights one of the difficulties of linking aid to defence expenditure: in most development countries—especially in Africa—internal, socially and economically driven conflicts are more important than external ones. States may use either or both the defence or the police forces to counter these threats to the existing order (whether it is democratic or not). As the South African experience has shown, in a democratizing environment resources may be shifted from defence to policing or intelligence without any significant 'peace dividend'. Donor countries might better consider linking aid to the overall security budget (defence, policing, law and order and items from presidential expenditure) than to the defence budget per se.

In this context, it is difficult to decide what constitutes excessive military expenditure (or bearing in mind the above argument) excessive security expenditure. The target of 2 per cent of GDP on defence promoted by the IFIs is becoming increasingly accepted as a benchmark, although as noted above, if this is defined narrowly, countries might simply shift defence spending to other government departments.

In South Africa defence spending (measured most narrowly by the allocation to the department of defence) has declined from around 5 per cent of GDP to just over 2 per cent and within a few years, if current trends continue, will drop to below 2 per cent. This target would be achievable for most countries in Southern Africa in the medium term (some are already spending less than 2 per cent on defence). Nevertheless, some difficulties should be noted:

⁹South African National Defence Force, *SANDEF Yearbook 1995*.