



# Organised crime in Southern Africa: Problems and solutions

---

**Gail Wannenburg**  
**SALLA War and Organised**  
**Crime researcher**

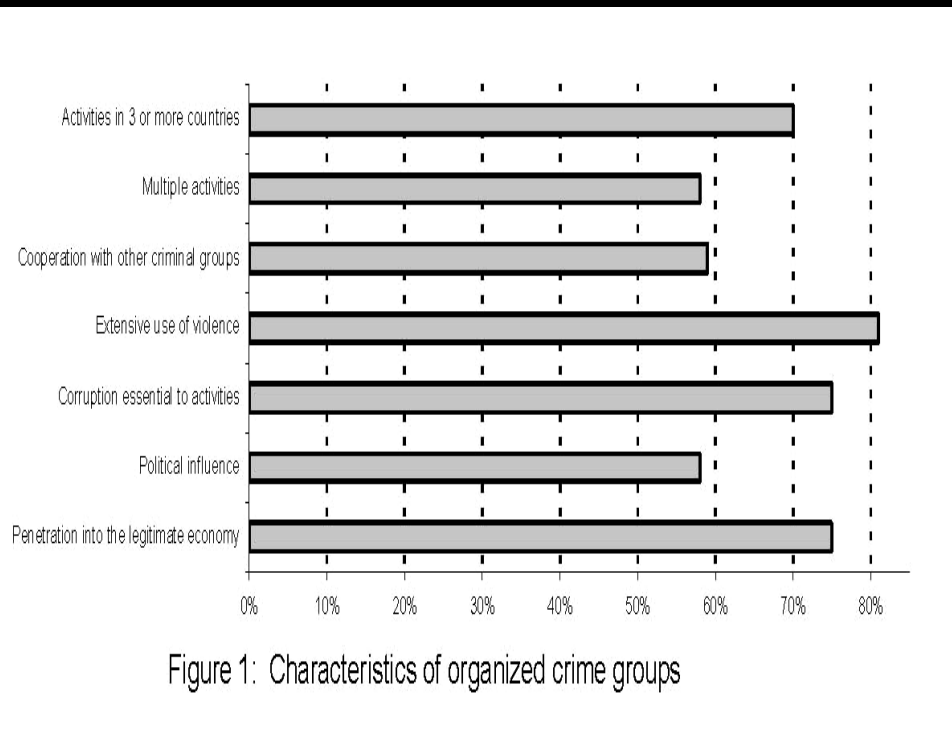
# Introduction

- **Is organised crime a threat to national and regional security? Is there a role for the military?**
- **Nature and extent of OC threat in SADC**
- **Problems encountered in addressing organised crime in SADC**
- **Solutions and role players**

# Organised crime and the Military

- **Two broad views:**
- **1. Military has no role.**
  - ◆ OC is not a threat to national security (core values, ordinary functioning of society, use of force and territorial integrity).
  - ◆ A “business” compatible with political status quo/non-violent.
- ◆ **2. The Military has a role**
  - ◆ OC is a threat to the state due to
  - ◆ Co-operation of criminal groups across borders
  - ◆ Long term impact on the economy-threatens market access & practices
  - ◆ Weakens political integrity of gvt.
  - ◆ Leads to alternative structures of governance/coercion in part or all of a states territory.

# Typology of OC groups



# Status of OC groups in SADC

- SA- 192 groups (17% regional in operation)

## UN surveys (1998-2000)

- **Drugs** -policing dependent

- **Car thefts**- SA, Tunisia, Zim, Zambia

- **Robberies** -SA, Zim, Seychelles, Zambia  
Tunisia (SA ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in world)

- **Fraud**-Seychelles, SA, Zim, Tunisia, Zambia (SA ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in world). Costs R40 billion p.a

- **Total crime** (per GDP) Zim, SA, Zambia  
(Zim at 3<sup>rd</sup> and SA at 5<sup>th</sup> in world)

# Impact of OC and corruption in SADC

- **Reduces GDP by 0.5-1% p.a**
  - ◆ SA- drug money distorts monetary policy
  - ◆ Moz- \$50 million drug money p.m - artificial inflation of SE
  - ◆ Angola- 5-10% of investment/ \$1 billion oil revenue lost
- **High levels of OC correlate with low levels of HDI**
- **WB findings: African conflicts due to economic rather than social problems**
- **Concentrate on impact -but note that OC can be beneficial to state making in short-term.**

# Structural problems in addressing OC in SADC

- **Weak/failed states**
- Not suitable for OC unless
  - ◆ logistical infrastructure (Bout),
  - ◆ financial systems or cash commodity/ enforceable IOUs e.g Angola
  - ◆ Corruption is centralised e.g DRC
  - ◆ Near to markets e.g East Africa
  - ◆ Risk of detection low
  - ◆ **Rudimentary legal system/alt. systems of governance**
  - ◆ No legal regime regulating trade e.g. DRC (1/6 revenue), Angola- no norms for illicit/licit
  - ◆ No consensus on legal system

# Continued

- ◆ **Weak state capacity**

- ◆ DDR and contraction of army- threatens coverage e.g DRC/Angola
- ◆ Few mechanisms for regulating disputes e.g DRC 2 courts
- ◆ Weak law enforcement e.g DRC 500 CID, no clarity on reporting, poor intelligence and information collection/coordination
- ◆ Border comm.- identity/political alignment related to kinship ties

- ◆ **Corrupt governments and weak civil society**

- ◆ Natural resources- corruption is rife
- ◆ Media and CSO frequently mirrors factions in government



# Problems in addressing OC

## ■ Strategic planning and coordination among government departments

- ◆ OC concern is not on agenda of key sectors (external focus) e.g DTI/Finance/Home Affairs
- ◆ Gaps in information gathering, collection and use in planning (falls between cracks)
- ◆ Mandates of agencies and reporting militate against better coordination
- ◆ Simplistic monolithic view of OC
  - ★ ML - 2/3 people- most countries cant regulate it (e.g DRC 0.02 % banked)
  - ★ Drugs - extensive supply/logistics chain-alliances with producers
  - ★ Vehicle related-alliances with areas with no systems.

# Regional/international problems in reducing OC

- ◆ **Regional organisations**

- ◆ Economic versus security integration factions e.g SIPO
- ◆ Awareness of link between economic integration and OC is low
- ◆ May not be in interests of some Governments to address OC

- **International organisations**

- ◆ Peacekeeping- civilian component frequently does not have expertise in OC
- ◆ Composition of PK contingent sometimes promotes future OC linkages e.g ECOWAS in Sierra Leone
- ◆ Emphasis on sophisticated systems rather than basics

# Pull factors for OC

- Increased demand for illicit commodities e.g drugs
- Geographical location
- Privatisation of state assets e.g borders/transport and indigenisation
- Trade liberalisation and free market reform e.g Mozambique, DRC
- Information technology and increasing ease of travel

# Possible solutions and role players

## ■ DOD/NIA

- ◆ Key driver in strategic planning and intelligence - placing issue on agenda of key sectors and plugging information gaps
- ◆ Fleshing out SIPO -increasing integration of economic and security plans
- ◆ More input on efficacy of UN PK operations in African context

## ■ Finance/DTI/SARB/SARS/Mineral

- ◆ Awareness of impact of trade strategies on OC and visa versa e.g Zimbabwe, Moz
- ◆ Strategic plans include explicit measures to reduce OC e.g DTI
- ◆ Information channeled to DoD and NIA
- ◆ Research on informal sector and its impact on economy and OC

# Possible solutions and role players

## ◆ Home Affairs

- ◆ Policies take into account research-distinction between informal trade and OC e.g easy trade visas/no tariffs-separate legal and illegal trade
- ◆ Special dispensation for border community

## ■ Police agencies

- ◆ Improve information collection and sharing ( increased liaison internally and externally)
- ◆ Build capacity in crime analysis in SA and region
- ◆ International efforts- more focus on disruption - involvement of local govt agencies e.g Metro, housing etc
- ◆ Don't get hung up on "Al Capone" approach- use other methods e.g SARS

# Solutions and roleplayers

## ■ Other departments:

- ◆ Criminal Justice cluster- capacity building in crime prevention, best practice
- ◆ Independent institutions- Anti-Corruption commissions etc- hunger for increased information and moral support across region
- ◆ **Civil society**
- ◆ Promote CSO networking and increase liaison in region
- ◆ Research by CSO is useful given constraints of diplomatic relations