

INAUGURAL LECTURE

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17:00

MS TEAMS

TOPIC: "The Private Security Industry in South Africa a Force to be Reckoned with: Reality or Rhetoric?"

Vice Chancellor of the University of South Africa – Professor Lenka-Bula,

Prof MM Sepota - Acting Registrar Unisa

Acting Executive Dean Prof OJ Kole and the Executive Management of the College of Law

Members of the Senate present, representatives of the Council and Management of the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA), stakeholders from the private security industry in South Africa and abroad, colleagues, students, alumni, family, and friends.

Good evening, ladies, and gentlemen, esteemed guests, fellow scholars, and students. Welcome to this momentous occasion as we gather here to explore the captivating world of the private security industry in South Africa. It is a pleasure to see such a distinguished gathering here today and your presence is truly valued and humbling. I stand before you with great excitement and anticipation as we embark on a journey to uncover the truth, the essence, and the undeniable impact of the private security industry as a formidable force in our nation's security landscape. This inaugural lecture represents a significant landmark in my academic journey, and the support and encouragement from all of you have made this moment possible. Your presence here not only demonstrates your support and interest in the topic but also signifies the vibrant intellectual community we are a part of.

With over [24] years of experience researching and teaching in the field of the private security sector, I have had the privilege of working in various capacities within the higher education sector and held various roles in the private security industry locally and abroad.

This evening, I have the opportunity of sharing my insights and research with you on the topic: *"The Private Security Industry in South Africa: A Force to Be Reckoned With — Reality or Rhetoric?"*. This topic is particularly dear to my heart, and I believe it holds great relevance in the field of security science, especially in a country where security concerns are never far from our collective consciousness. The remarkable growth and change that the private security sector has undergone in South Africa has permanently altered our society. Every aspect of our daily lives is affected by it, from protecting our homes to securing our businesses, from safeguarding our possessions to handling emergencies. But are we relying on a front that might be hiding the underlying problems or is this force effective in addressing the causes of our security challenges? As we delve into the heart of the matter, we must ask ourselves: is the Private Security Industry in South Africa truly a force to be reckoned with, or is it merely rhetoric that has captured our imagination?

As we begin this intellectual journey, I encourage all of you to actively challenge, and question what is commonly accepted. By working together, we can shed light on the way ahead and determine if the private security industry in South Africa is truly a powerful force or if it needs to be reevaluated. Sit back and let us embark on a transformative journey into the heart of South Africa's private security industry with open and curious minds.

Introduction

Why is the topic significant and what is its relevance to South Africa?

Private security has always existed in South Africa, as it does in many other countries around the world and it is likely to remain present for years to come. From my own observations, there is a need to address the gap in research on the structure and function of the private security industry in South Africa, as well as its relationship with other stakeholders such as the public police. Only a few academics, community-based organizations, and research institutes in this country perform scientific and empirical research on the PSI, some with funding from donor nations. As I began to prepare for this lecture, I realized that advances in current knowledge and understanding of the subject, as well as the corresponding regulatory frameworks and ever-changing technology, make it necessary to delve deeper into the topic. It, therefore, becomes essential to evaluate the true contribution of a private security company in South Africa and try to establish how it can increase its professionalism and the important part it can play in formulating policies that give priority to safety needs and respect the individual rights of its customers. Hence, it is important to have a clear understanding of how the industry responds to its mandate and what it is capable of. In recent years, in South Africa, we have seen how this industry has shown signs of change. According to Livingstone and Hart (2003), the security management industry has significantly expanded and diversified over the past ten years, leading to a rise in specialization and responsibility in both the public and private sectors. Private security is becoming a reliable profession because of being recognized as a crucial component of business operations (Livingstone and Hart; 2003).

However, despite the private security industry's significant growth and its contribution to the economies in which it operates, Prenzler (2017: 242) argues that there is still a dearth of literature and research to back up the sector's expansion globally. Following this observation, he added:

“While private security is certainly no longer a subject that languishes on the forgotten scholarly back burner, it remains surprisingly under-researched. Despite its obvious importance to the governance of security, scholars continue to focus far more attention

on the police than they do [on] the various other agents and agencies that provide for security” (Prenzler, 2017: 242).

In the seminal work titled, *The World of Crime: Breaking the Silence on Problems of Security, Justice, and Development across the World*, Prof Jan Van Dijk (2008:156) observed that although the private security services industry makes a significant contribution towards a dominant part of the security market in many countries, there has been much less research done in this area compared to issues on policing. In this lecture, I will try to dispel common myths by sharing insights, and perspectives, and engaging in critical discourse. The reason for this is that it is critical to have a solid understanding of the security concerns to be able to build successful solutions to protect persons, businesses, and communities in South Africa. As citizens, we are fully aware of South Africa's serious crime problem. It is therefore important to recognize the critical role of private security companies in meeting these challenges.

To truly evaluate the impact of this industry on crime prevention and public safety in South Africa, concrete evidence must be analyzed rather than vague theoretical ideas. Furthermore, it is important to showcase how this industry actively supports law enforcement in its day-to-day operations. Doing so, allows us to obtain a comprehensive picture of how the industry collaborates with government authorities, detects potential security threats, and eventually contributes to a comprehensive approach to crime prevention. A thorough examination of the industry's socioeconomic impact, its role in job creation, and its potential for further development will provide us with a more accurate perception of its true nature. The purpose of this lecture is to bridge the knowledge gap by providing participants with the tools necessary to properly appreciate this aspect of South African culture. It achieves this by providing them with a detailed understanding of the current state of the private security industry in South Africa.

Opening Remarks

Consider this: If you walk or drive through the suburban streets of South Africa's middle-class neighbourhoods is evident that the safety of its residents is a top priority. Many different precautions are taken by people to protect themselves, including building high

spiked walls, installing electric fences, gates, and keeping dogs. By using CCTV, mobile patrols, armed guards, and armoured vehicles, private security firms also play a significant part in maintaining the neighbourhood's security (Diphorn, 2016). So, in a country plagued by crime and rising security concerns, the private security industry has become a major player. Their services are specifically customized for those who have the financial means to afford to pay for them. Clano (2018) reached the conclusion that private security firms profit from the anxieties of the wealthy by encouraging the fortification of affluent neighbourhoods.

In the presentation of the 2021/2022 PSIRA Annual Report, the Minister of Police, Hon. Bheki Cele, commended the private security industry for its vital role in fostering job creation and enhancing safety in the country. The Minister expressed gratitude for their exceptional efforts and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between the public and private security sectors to ensure a safer South Africa. He highlighted a significant 7% rise in registered active security businesses and a 5% increase in employed registered security officers within the industry over the past fiscal year. Notably, the Minister noted a remarkable 33% growth in the number of registered active businesses, alongside a 20% boost in industry employment, suggesting a rising demand for private security services (PSIRA Annual Report, 2021/2022).

Highlighting the Prevalence of the Private Security Industry in South Africa

South Africa's burgeoning private security industry must be properly examined due to the major implications for public safety and security. Firstly, to fully understand the challenges and opportunities associated with this industry, it is essential to be able to tell reality from rhetoric. I hope to address these by highlighting the topic's significance and its relevance to the academic community and society at large in this inaugural lecture. Secondly, by outlining the importance of addressing the issues related to the private security industry, I also hope to encourage academic discussion, critical thinking, and further research and investigation of the topic among academics and students. These problems make the subject important and warrant further examination, critical analysis, and discussion. I am hoping that this lecture will make a major difference in society in shaping public perceptions, influencing political discourse, and perhaps even

helping create practical solutions to South Africa's security issues. Additionally, one of the objectives of this lecture is to increase our knowledge of and perhaps develop a deeper understanding of the subject at hand. In this way, this knowledge can be used to advance informed decision-making, help to shape future research agendas, and it can provide a foundation for evidence-based policy development. Furthermore, by looking critically at this issue, I hope to provide a platform to address ethical considerations and professionalism within the industry. Therefore, this discussion will help to identify areas for improvement, promote responsible behaviour, and advocate for accountability and adherence to legal and ethical standards in this industry. Finally, it is my sincere hope and desire that this lecture will advance knowledge sharing, intellectual discussion, and policy debates. In doing so, I hope to make a lasting impression on the direction the PSI will take in South Africa.

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

Considering some of the earliest forms of private security, there is a need to draw parallels with the industry as it exists today. What is private security? The immense global scale and intricacy of the private security field hinder the formulation of a universal definition that applies comprehensively. The sheer size and complexity of the private security industry on a global scale make it difficult to come up with a 'one size fits all' definition of the concept. Before I started to prepare for this lecture and before I got into the specifics, I needed to get some clarification on how to conceptualize and understand the various definitions and terminology used to describe the kinds of private security activities that would be covered. To set the scene for the discussion, I will share a few examples.

Meaning of Private security

In essence, the private security industry is heterogeneous in nature. The private security industry caters to a wider scope of activities and services offered to clients who pay for services covered under the broader rubric of private security. Up until the 1980s and 1990s, a widely used definition of security was private people protecting private property (McCrie, 2017: 287). This was a defensible and logical definition at the time since private security resources were devoted to safeguarding proprietary assets in many

ways. Gill (2014: 21) submits that private security is an all-encompassing field and because of its global footprint, it makes it equally more complex. The complexity arises since it covers everything from corporate security to private security companies offering military-type services and this makes it difficult to produce a precise definition (Berg & Howell; 2017:273).

Other definitions emphasize the fact that the PSI is profit-driven as opposed to the role of the public police, which is to serve the public interest (Bannister, 2015: np). Hence, a clear distinction needs to be established for the mandate and services provided by the PSI. So, private security may include security-related services provided by individual businesses and organizations to clients and they are charged a fee for these services. These services typically include the protection of persons, assets, and property and information from different threats, including that of crime. A private security company is a business corporation, which provides armed and unarmed security services and expertise to private and public clients. (Button & Stiernstedt, 2017: 249).

Fischer et al. (2008: 22) advocate that persons who provide private security should pay special attention to following a company's policies and procedures when providing such services and, in this way, they offer protection, safety, and security needs of their paying clients. This means that the primary focus of private security is to protect and safeguard the assets of commerce and industry with the sole aim of generating profit (Strom, Berzofsky, Shook-Sa, Barrick, Daye, Horstmann & Kinsey, 2010: 2). Therefore, it becomes economically prudent to implement proactive private security measures to prevent such losses before they occur.

Prenzler (2017: 241) concurs and even expanded on this definition by including the following plethora of services and products offered by the PSI. These may include manned guarding (both 'in-house' and 'contract'); alarm monitoring; security equipment production and installation; transportation of cash; investigation of white-collar crime; and the provision of advice on risk management. However, as early as the 1980s, Shearing and Stenning (1981) cautioned that because of the growth of new technologies enveloping the PSI, this narrow approach toward defining security, makes

certain that it may never remain static for long, and it may constantly change as new dynamics and challenges confront the industry (Shearing & Stenning; 1981: 1950).

In South Africa, the public consciousness of the private security sector is well defined; it includes the security officer manning the access control points at shopping malls, and airports, patrolling residential areas, bouncers outside a nightclub, the security guards patrolling a local warehouse or factory, or the in-store security guards at the supermarket. These elements of the industry can perhaps be described as having public-facing private security roles. The whole industry is so much broader, more global, and more complex, which encompasses everything from corporate security to private military companies which makes it difficult to create a concrete definition.

Thus, private security is an all-encompassing and complex term making it difficult to arrive at a uniformly acceptable definition. For this lecture, I summarise a working definition of private security, which is: private security involves the provision of specific services to paying clients. Such services may include guarding, protecting, and safeguarding persons, property, assets, and information. These services may include specific products catering to the needs of the different sectors of the PSI, for example, security surveillance and application of security technologies, alarm installation and monitoring, cash-in-transit services, and private investigations. This definition can be broadened to include the development and implementation of new security technologies designed to address the challenges posed by the 4th industrial revolution (4IR), which can lead to new challenges and opportunities for private security, including invasion of privacy, information security, and cybercrime and Artificial Intelligence.

Private security services

In its basic sense, the term 'private security services may include at least one of the following functions, inter alia; observing and reporting any illegal behaviour or activity; the prevention of exposure of theft of goods, cash, or other items of value. It can include the provision of security technologies, private alarm response, private patrol, and guarding services (McCarthy, 2017: np: 12). It involves the protection of individuals and property, which may include copyrighted information, from damage and harm, the controlling access and egress to premises being secured. It may entail the protection of

computer-related assets – proprietary communications, records, and databases – all of which remain vulnerable to loss, theft, and other types of criminal misuse (McCrie, 2017:288). Private security services include the provision of dogs for detecting unlawful devices, explosives, and drugs, and are used for anti-poaching operations (Safety and Security Sector Education Training Authority (2016: 7)).

In this lecture, the provision of private security services can be extended to those legal entities (companies) which provide services for the safeguarding of people, property, and information, through the application of various security aids and technologies.

Security Officer/Security Guard

In its general sense, a security officer is also referred to as a security guard, and they are usually employed to patrol, guard, and protect homes, businesses, and property from theft, trespassing or vandalism. Section 1 of the PSIRA Act 56 of 2001 of South Africa defines a security officer as any person who is employed by another person (including the State) to render security services and who is paid for such services according to (2001: 6-7). It is an inarguable fact that security guards are the sentinels in private security companies since they are the enforcers of policies and laws on the client's premises (Gooptu, 2013). They are the key elements of peacekeeping inside company and client premises as they prevent theft and other crimes from happening. For them to execute these duties well, security guards need proper training (Mbona et. al. 2021). Therefore, a security officer (also referred to as a security guard), is a person who is registered with the Regulatory Authority and has been contracted and deployed to patrol, guard and protect homes, businesses, and property from theft or vandalism.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT - EVOLUTION OF THE PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY

In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, humans first require physiological needs, and this is followed by the need to feel safe. Safety needs include protection from violence and theft, emotional stability and well-being, health security, and financial security (Maslow, 1943). When citizens feel secure, they can focus on their individual and collective health, pursue their aspirations, and engage in meaningful activities without fear or anxiety. Security by its own definition is the state of being free from danger or threat.

Private security has been around for centuries. We can go back in time to see early examples of the Ancient Egyptian Pharaohs who hired private security guards for personal protection. Or to Ancient Rome where emperors had security guards for personal, family and property security. In ancient Rome, it was observed that some of the earliest written records of protectors refer to the Roman Praetorian Guards who were responsible for protecting the ruling emperor. These 'Protectors' were chosen for their physical strength, skills, proficiency in the handling of weapons, and personal protection for the king (King, 2014: 67).

In China, private security was an ancient provision, dating back to the Song Dynasty of China (960-1279), and its establishment is considered the oldest in the world (Zhong & Grabosky, 2011: 438). During imperial times, the wealthy class saw security guards as an economic necessity and their tasks usually involved escorting high-value goods belonging to royalty. These needs stem from the desire to protect people, their belongings, and property, and private security was provided in the form of a king's guardsmen and his soldiers. Zhong & Grabosky (2011) observed early forms of private security in ancient China were a guard who kept duty to protect royalty on a long journey, a guard posted outside a royal chamber at night, and a guard who kept watch in the palace tower to look for incoming threats (Zhong & Grabosky, 2011: 439).

In India, the private security industry can be traced back to the pre-independence era, when private guards were employed by princely states, maharajahs, and wealthy individuals to protect their properties and assets (Gooptu, 2013). During this period, private security arrangements were largely unregulated and informal. The private security sector has grown since these early days as the need for citizens' need for security and protection increased due to globalization and modernization. (Zhong & Grabosky, 2011: 439). Therefore, the idea of private security has been around for much longer, whether it be through the development of locks, the architecture of ancient forts and battlements, or the offering of various services pertaining to the protection of people (Moore, 2009).

THE HISTORY OF PRIVATE SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Private security during Apartheid Era (1948-1994):

The use of private security in Africa is not a new practice. Kasali (2005) observed that in traditional African civilization, many wealthy people in various communities frequently employed private guards to protect their lives and property. He also asserts that since the end of colonial rule, there has been a continued demand for private security guards because many local elites still hire local security guards to meet their security requirements (Kasali, 2005). However, the evolution and growth of the private security industry in South Africa has a long and complex history, that is closely intertwined with the country's political and social developments (Gumedze, 2008a). A study by Phillips found the early beginnings of the PSI in SA started with the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand (Phillips, 2013). During this time the term 'Amatshengelane' (a derogatory term) was used colloquially to refer to a security guard (Potgieter, Ras & Naser 2008:39). These guards had no training, no ability to read or write, and only a "knobkerrie" to defend themselves and the establishment they were guarding. (Potgieter, Ras & Naser 2008:39). They only needed to be strong and able to use the "knobkerrie" as a deterrent for would-be criminals. They were easily identifiable during the chilly winter nights, dressed in an overcoat and balaclava, and hovering around a fire-lit container to keep warm. (Potgieter, et al., 2008:39).

In the 1950s and 1960s, taxis were frequently used by banks to transport cash to and from the Reserve Bank of South Africa. As the number of robberies increased, this careless method of carrying cash proved too dangerous. (Kole, 2015). The banking sector was compelled to devise a strategy to enhance the security of transporting cash to minimize prevailing crime risks during that period. (Kole, 2015). Diphorn (2017). After the end of the Rhodesian war in the 1970s, trained ex-policemen and ex-army officers from Zimbabwe joined the South African PSI. (Pillay, 2007). These ex-officers with military training provided security guard services for the protection of key strategic national government sites. In the 1970s and after receiving state approval, private security firms started offering security services in urban areas (Minnaar, 2008). Simultaneously, there was an increase in the number of South African Defense Force

(SADF) and South African Police (SAP) members who had expressed a covert and tacit interest in the PSI's profitability, and some former military personnel with security expertise found lucrative opportunities and reverted to PSI to offer their services. (Pillay, 2007).

During the apartheid era, the Nationalist government imposed strict racial segregation and employed private security companies to carry out its oppressive policies. (Berg,2017). As anti-apartheid campaigners became more active, private security firms were used increasingly to suppress dissent and maintain order (Asomah, 2017). So, the beginnings of the private security industry in South Africa, cannot be seen in isolation from the country's political and racialized past. In pre-democratic South Africa, the PSI played a supportive role to the government in cases where the South African Police Service was not able to provide security to the public (Berg, 2001: 179; Botha, 2015:140; Gumedze, 2008c: 110; Taljaard, 2008:12). The industry grew and gained prominence in the 1980s, during a period of political upheaval caused by perceptions and fears held by the White minority regarding the African National Congress's armed struggle against the Nationalist government's apartheid policies (Botha, 2015: 139).

To deal with political antagonists, police resources were diverted from their primary role of protecting the citizens of the country to enforcing racist laws (Berg, 2017). As a result of more police being assigned to deal with political conflicts, the government of the day "outsourced" to private security firms to guard strategic installations (National Key Points), resulting in a significant shift in legislation. (Botha, 2015). The government was forced to rely on the use of additional security resources, and the private security industry was employed for this purpose. This was attributed to the rising security risks, and subversive tactics used by the outlawed ANC to overthrow the apartheid regime, as well as the lack of personnel in the official security forces (Botha, 2015: 146). Therefore, tasks that had previously been delegated to the state were now under the control of private security firms (Berg, 2017). The apartheid government responded by enacting legislation to oversee the operations of private security firms. The National Key Points Act (NKPA) 102 of 1980, for example, required private security company owners or

managers to be responsible for the protection of these critical installations. (Diphoorn, 2017, 92).

Notwithstanding the above, the NKP Act of 1980 was amended several times because of the apartheid government's need to use and deploy more private security officers to guard these national key points (Gumedze, 2008a: np). When the Act was amended in 1984, it gave the Minister of Defense much more authority to co-opt the PSI, which encouraged and promoted the expansion of private security guards' use in guarding important national key points. Prior to the 1994 administration, when police resources were diverted to stop State-related violence, the ongoing political unrest exposed the average citizen to a variety of potential risks. This led to a convoluted history of interaction between the government and the private security sector in South Africa, both during and after Apartheid. (Berg & Howell, 2017).

Transition to Democracy (1994-2000):

In South Africa, as early as the 1990s, Irish (1999) reported that the private security industry in South Africa was one of the largest industries and this sector had demonstrated significant growth (Irish, 1999: 4). During the same time, De Waard (1999) already regarded South Africa as the absolute 'champion' in the security industry. According to Asomah (2017), the PSI filled the void left by the military restructuring of apartheid and former homeland security forces in the post-1994 era, including the integration of forces, which led to downsizing and created a conducive environment for crime. After the end of apartheid in 1994, the private security industry in South Africa began to shift its focus from political to commercial, residential, and industrial security (Van Riet, 2020). Private security firms were employed to safeguard mainly white communities, businesses, and government facilities. Additionally, they participated in quelling anti-apartheid movements and monitoring black residential areas (Diphoorn, 2016). It is in this context that private security companies specializing in guarding and armed response have become a key security infrastructure working for those who can afford it (Van Riet, 2020).

Notwithstanding these fertile opportunities for starting a security business, for most black men in post-apartheid South Africa, obtaining work in the underpaid private

security industry is the only viable option other than resorting to crime. (Asomah, 2017). As a primary source of entry-level work for African men, private security is one of the few options for poor South Africans in search of steady employment. Notwithstanding these challenges, security guards generally earn the very lowest wages in the industry and often work in unsafe working conditions and for this reason, Clano (2018) and Bremner (2004, p. 466) argue that for black men this private security employment is a new form of colonization. However, the fact that private security companies continued to hire black South Africans to guard affluent suburbs at exploitation-like wages even after apartheid was abolished shows that little has transformed society (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006). So, the procurement of private security, particularly armed response services, has subsequently become a service regarded as vital by the middle class which initially was still predominantly the white population (Van Riet, 2020). However, the new emerging black middle class, including, for example, the new political elite are themselves customers of private security companies (Van Riet, 2020).

LEGISLATING the PSI in SOUTH AFRICA

Notwithstanding this dichotomy, the rampant growth of the PSI in South Africa had set in motion an obligation for the State to introduce legislation to formally regulate the industry. The Security Officer Act (SOA) of 1987, which paved the way for the establishment of the Security Officers Board (SOB), was the first legislation aimed at regulating the PSI in South Africa (Asomah, 2017: 68; Diphoorn, 2016: 168). The SOA aimed to professionalise the PSI through regulation (Berg and Howell, 2017)) and to become an “oversight of the SOB” (Diphoorn, 2016: 168). However, the makeup of the Security Officer’s Board became problematic, and very soon after its inception, it was viewed as a ‘referee and player’ in the same game. The so-called "old boys" network, consisting of security experts who had retired from the military, police, and PSCs, was viewed as a threat to the state (Van Riet, 2020). Since the SOB was inclusive of representatives of the police, and owners of private security, it was logical to remove police representatives from the SOB and in this way, the SOB created a sense of independence of the PSI (Berg, 2003: 181-184).

As the demand for private security services grew, new challenges emerged which required further amendments to the Security Officer Amendment Act 64 of 1996 to align it with the direction of the new democratic dispensation. The enactment of the Security Officer Amendment Act 104 of 1997 replaced the previous Act 64 of 1996. This amended law led to the establishment of an Interim Board, known as the Security Officers Interim Board (SOIB), which replaced the previous Security Officers Board. The Act also required the Minister of Safety and Security to draft a new Bill within 18 months, which resulted in the promulgation of the Private Security Industry Regulation Act 56 of 2001 (Gumedze, 2008a), and the establishment of the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) to oversee and regulate private security companies. The Act brought major changes to the regulation of the industry. The salient objectives included the promotion of stability within the industry and trustworthiness and striving to promote professionalism (Berg, 2003: 181-184). Following the end of apartheid and the transition to democracy in 1994, the private security industry underwent significant changes and challenges. By establishing a new regulatory body to oversee private security companies and bring them into compliance with human rights and equality ideals, the new democratic administration sought to reform the security industry.. (Berg, 2007).

CURRENT SIZE AND SCOPE OF THE PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Private security companies (PSCs) have become increasingly significant actors in post-apartheid South Africa, and they contribute a significant part to the South African economy (Van Riet, 2020) and the industry is valued at 2% of the country's GDP (Diphorn, 2017, 91). Using data available at the time of writing this lecture, South Africa hosts the largest (known) numbers of private security companies and employees on the continent – both per capita and in terms of raw numbers (Gichanga, 2016). Between the years 2014 to 2022, PSIRA reported a staggering 42% increase in the number of registered security businesses in the country, and this was complemented by a 20% rise in the number of registered and active security officers working in the industry (PSIRA Annual Report 2022). As of the end of 2022, there were close to 2.7

million registered security guards in the country, with 586,042 currently employed (active). These active security officers provide guarding services to mines, shopping malls, residential estates, banks, neighbourhoods, and private houses. Despite having a complex regulatory framework and data collection mechanisms, according to some studies, PSIRA has struggled to keep track of the roughly 2.5 million security officials listed in its database, of which only about 580,000 are active in the industry (Gichanga, 2015). However, it is unclear why inactive guards are not deregistered from the PSIRA database and this may be attributed to the high turnover and attrition rate of guards entering and leaving the industry. (Van Riet, 2020).

Number of Security Service Providers and Security Officers in South Africa

Industry size	APRIL 2023	MAY 2023	JUNE 2023
Total registered security officers (active and inactive)	2 824 390	2 913 008	2 929 280
Number of registered active security officers	578 732	581 199	583 201
Number of registered active security businesses	15 141	15 394	15 571
Total number of inactive security officers			2 346 079

Source: PSIRA Annual Report, 2021/2022

Despite these staggering figures, the remarks of the report of EXPERT PANEL into the JULY 2021 CIVIL UNREST 29 NOVEMBER 2021 are worth examining. During their interaction with PSIRA, the Panel found, while official estimates put the number of active private security officers at well over 500,000, PSIRA indicated that the true figure is substantially higher, and if allowed unchecked, this may be considered as a possible risk to stability. Given South Africa's high unemployment rate, it is enticing to believe that there might be a chance that these skilled security guards could be used to assist SAPS in preventing crime. It is enticing however to think that these qualified security guards might be able to help SAPS deter crime given South Africa's high unemployment

rate. Considering the complexity and inequality of South African society, further research on the viability of such a temptation is required if it is to take hold. However, there is no denying that such initiatives must be guided by the state and carried out in accordance with recognized security guidelines. (REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL INTO JULY 2021 CIVIL UNREST 29 NOVEMBER 2021).

The powers and influence of private security officers in South Africa

Generally, depending on the context, private security personnel have the same powers as ordinary citizens, drawing most of their powers from Section 42 of the Criminal Procedure Act. This allows security officers to arrest anyone without warrant who commits a Schedule 1 offence in the presence of security officers (where security officers are deployed). They are 'authorised', for instance, to make citizen's arrests, banish trespassers and deny entry, and search personal property by their status as agents of property owners, employers, and confiscate the person's belongings (provided they are turned over to the police as soon as possible) (Diphorn and Berg, 2014). Minnaar, 2008, Kole, 2017).

Role of the South African Police Service

Constitutionally, the role of the South African police as a custodian responsible for the safety and security of all citizens, has always been contentious. It has gone from the enforcer of a racist government to a service perceived by many citizens as corrupt and incompetent (Francois and Webster, 2019). When contrasting the South African Police figures with figures from the private security industry in South Africa, it was found that the number of SAPS personnel has steadily decreased over the past decade (SAPS Annual Report 2022/23) and the police are permanently incapacitated and lack resources (Van Riet, 2020). The same report confirms that "while communities call for more 'boots on the ground,' the number of police officers on duty is trending in the opposite direction as the population increases." In 2022 the SAPS membership was just 140,048 this was flagged in the SAPS ANNUAL Performance Plan 2021/2022 as an important component that should be factored into any assessment of the police department's operation (SAPS ANNUAL Performance Plan 2021/2022).

Evans (2017: 1) asserts that the police are not winning the war against crime where the police resources are stretched, and budgets are limited in South Africa. Furthermore, where society and the citizens feel that the State is failing in the provision of ensuring adequate protection, safety, and security, for themselves, those who can afford it turn to private security and make use of sophisticated security technologies among others to beef up security (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2009).

Internationally, the number of private security officers (PSOs) exceeds the number of public police officers (PPOs) and the reasons postulated for this pattern vary (Bannister, 2015 np.; McCarthy, 2017: np; UNODC, 2014: 42). As early as 2005, the ratio of PSOs to police officers in South Africa was 3:1. Since then, the industry in South Africa has progressed to become three times larger than the police and there is little doubt that the industry is filling significant gaps, because of the Police's inability to manage the extremely high levels of crime and violence. (Staff Writer, 2021).

Fast forward to 2023 and the ratio has grown to around 4:1. Data released by the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) shows that the country's private security sector now dwarfs South Africa's Official Police Service (SAPS) and in some cases, perform official police duties, even without permission to do so. In its most recent annual performance plan, the regulator confirmed that the SAPS's resource limitations and increased demand for private security have influenced private security service providers to enter functional areas of policing that are traditionally the sole preserve of the SAPS (PSIRA Annual Performance Plan 2022-2023). However, despite having different objectives, legal obligations, and justifications for the ordering they engage in, both the police and the private security sector carry out similar duties to maintain social control and order. The reality is that the development and growth of the private security industry is a response to the real needs and concerns of those individuals paying for such services. (Shearing and Stenning, 1991).

Economic Value of the PSI in South Africa

The violent and criminal nature prevalent in many societies around the world has fuelled public mistrust of public police, and this exacerbates the continuing increase in demand for private security services. South Africa has the largest number of private security

companies (PSCs) in the African continent in terms of numbers and per capita (Asomah, 2017) and since the early 1990s, the estimated value of the industry has been increasing incrementally (Berg & Howell, 2017:275). In 1990, the private security industry in South Africa was valued at ZAR1.2 billion (Irish, 1999: np). By 1997, this figure increased to ZAR6 billion, and by 1999, including vehicle security, tracking, and in-house security (at large mining houses, banks, and insurance companies), the value of the private security industry was estimated to be ZAR9 billion (Minnaar, 2009: 79).

By 2004, this value increased to more than ZAR14 billion with estimates as high as ZAR30 billion also being mentioned (Maritz, 2015: np). By 2015, the private security industry in South Africa reached an annual turnover of ZAR50 billion with the guarding sector contributing approximately ZAR18 billion to this amount (Badenhorst (2019: np). Some observers (Van Rooyen: 2017) estimate that private security consumers spend over R45 billion annually in South Africa to protect lives, property, and businesses. This translates into a “third of what the government spent for the public police force, making South Africa the fourth largest private security consumer per capita in the world” (Botha, 2015).

Differentiated sectors of the PSI in South Africa

In its traditional form, many people still believe that private security companies mainly provide night watchmen and guards for access control. Today, the industry is prolific and diverse, with national and international companies involving a range of players from all walks of life and conducting several activities. For security companies to operate lawfully in South Africa, these businesses need to register as private security service providers with the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) and have a license to operate as a security service provider (Gumedze, 2008b). These private security companies are entrusted with large amounts of money, information, and personnel, so regulating these companies is essential (Botha, 2015).

Over the years, PSI has evolved beyond the guarding sector and private security companies now provide a far wider range of services. As demands for security increase in an ever-fearful society, the industry continues to grow and become more and more adaptable, offering a broad array of services. In terms of categories of security service

providers, the sectors include commercial/industrial/residential guarding or patrolling as well as assets in transit, car watch activities, reaction or response services, and safety promotion during special events (such as sports events). There is also in-house security, the monitoring of signals from control rooms, consultancy, and advisory activities, close protection services, installation and repair of security and monitoring equipment, security training activities, labour brokers, locksmiths, and private investigators (PSIRA Act 56 of 2001).

They also conduct various forms of confidential investigations, including undercover or covert investigations, complex fraud investigations, and security risk management consulting services (Provost, 2017: np). In addition to the above, private security services in South Africa include security trainers, labour brokers operating in the PSI, locksmiths, dog handlers, control room operators, security advisors, consultants, persons managing, controlling, or supervising security services, anti-poaching and close protection officers have been listed (Section 1: Private Security Industry Regulation Act 56 of 2001: np). Additional services offered by private security companies include the provision of bodyguards and close protection officers, assistance with crowd control, armed guards for secure transportation of valuable assets, conducting surveillance (including the use of CCTV and covert systems), installing, and responding to various forms of alarms (Evans, 2017). The private security sector has expanded significantly around the world, and the issues brought up in the previous discussion demonstrate that PSI South Africa's expansion is likely to follow this trend given the large number of people employed in the sector.

Discussing Societal Impact - Factors contributing to the growth of the private security industry in South Africa

Although academic inquiry into the PSI in South Africa is still fairly limited, there is general agreement that private security is a sizable and expanding industry that uses significant and frequently cutting-edge resources to deter crime and minimize losses. (Prenzler, 2017: 241; Vergese, 2014: np). Therefore, any attempt to explain and ascertain the growth of the private security industry (PSI) across the globe, needs to consider the size, complexity, the lucrative nature of the industry, and in addition, make

allowances for the multiplicity and diversity of factors impacting on it. Some researchers argue, if such a resource is properly regulated and managed, it can play a major role in contributing to reducing the levels of crime and increasing community safety (Berg & Howell, 2017: 274; Davis, 2019: np; Provost, 2017: np; Woods, 2018). Notwithstanding the widespread growth of the PSI in many parts of the world, less is known about these issues in many transitional and emerging democracies (Nalla & Gurinskaya, 2017a: 305), including South Africa. Despite the dynamic and evolving nature of the industry, further examination indicates that scientific inquiry has not kept pace with the industry's shifting role in crime prevention, the industry's increasing complexity, and the rising calls for professionalism (Nalla & Prenzler; 2018: 5). Therefore, the broad scope of PSI activities and its concurrent growth prompted deeper insights into this phenomenon.

Rising crime rates

South Africa is often viewed as a post-conflict society (Van Riet, 2020). While the growth of criminality in the society began in the early 1980s it peaked, and as Shaw (2007) aptly refers "to an occurrence that is common with other societies attempting to move from authoritarian rule to democratic governance during the years of political transition". However, over time we have seen that South Africa's criminal justice system is ill-prepared to face the challenges of growing crime. (Shaw, 2007) Therefore, since crime rates in South Africa are among the highest in the world, no South African is immune to its effects. Such high levels of crime and violence expose South Africans constantly to crime and violence, both through direct victimisation and through extensive and detailed daily media reports (Hinsberger, 2016). According to crime statistics for the previous quarter of the year (2023) released by the SAPS, the data revealed the overall murder rate may be down, but more women have been killed over the last quarter than over the same period last year. (SAPS CrimeStats, 2023). All other categories of serious violent crime also increased (Faull, 2023). According to the SAPS, with 6,228 people killed, the latest murder statistics make the Eastern Cape the most dangerous province per capita, followed by KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape. 6,289 people were murdered over the period, equating to 70 fatalities every day. Contact crimes, including sexual offences and robbery, comprised the biggest crime category, with 164,206 cases reported between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2023. (SAPS

CrimeStats, 2023). Put into a different context, there is one contact crime committed every 50 seconds of every day.

Therefore, as crime continues to escalate, most South Africans no longer feel safe in public spaces, during their commute, or even in their homes. This is according to the Automobile Association of South Africa (AA)'s latest quarterly State of Security (SoS) report, evaluating South Africans' sentiments towards personal safety in the country. The latest report conducted a wide-ranging survey of 1,438 respondents between March and April 2023 revealing the bleak reality of citizens' perceptions of safety (Mitchley, 2023). According to the data, only 31% of South Africans feel either 'mostly safe' or 'completely safe' in the country – meaning 69% of the remaining respondents do not feel safe in South Africa. The report showed that, of this 69%, 37% of citizens feel either 'barely safe' (22%) or 'not safe at all' (15%), while the rest (32%) only feel 'somewhat safe' living in the country (SAPS CrimeStats, 2023).

Outlining what South Africans believe to be the locations at which they are most vulnerable, the report noted that South Africans feel most unsafe in outdoor public spaces (45%) and during their daily commute (25%). Even in their own homes, the findings showed that 36% of people indicated that they either feel only 'somewhat safe' (29%) or 'not safe at all' (7%). In contrast, 30% of respondents said they feel 'safe', 20% feel 'very safe', and only 14% feel 'extremely safe' in their homes (SAPS CrimeStats, 2023). Disturbingly, despite some feeling safe, the report further noted that 76% of all respondents indicated being victims of a crime over their lifetime in South Africa. According to the Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey in South Africa (GPSJS) 2020/201 (previously known as the Victims of Crime Survey), there were about 1,3 million incidences of housebreaking affecting 5.8 per cent of households in South Africa. The most likely victims of housebreaking were male-headed households, households in metros, Indian/Asian households, white-owned households, and very low and very high-income households. 'Whites' or 'Indians/Asians' were more likely to have taken security measures than were 'Coloureds' or 'Black/Africans'. This disparity may

reflect how middle and affluent classes can opt out of public spaces and transport more easily than poorer South Africans (Faull, 2022).

Given this response, the proliferation of crime, especially in the South African context, has placed considerable emphasis on the private security industry. On the ground, citizens are responding in their own way. This means the wealthy (and middle class) are making greater use of private security services, and in this context, private security companies specialising in patrolling, guarding, and armed response have become a key security necessity for those who can afford it (Diphorn and Berg, 2014). However, for less fortunate communities it increasingly raises the possibility of taking the law into community hands through vigilante action (Shaw, 2007). Therefore, when individuals and businesses feel unsafe or lack confidence in the ability of the police to effectively address crime, they often turn to private security services. High crime rates in South Africa create a demand for additional security measures beyond what public law enforcement agencies can provide (Van Riet, 2020). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that more and more people are spending money on personal security such as installing burglar bars, alarm systems, security cameras, and infrared security beams at their homes. These alarm systems are linked to alarm response teams, 24-hour vehicle patrols, and closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras both at private residences and business sites (Diphorn, 2015a: 45; Taljaard, 2008: np).

Therefore, the rise in crime rates coupled with people's fear of crime has made many South Africans feel that the levels of violent and property crimes are increasing, and this makes it unsafe for them to walk in parks, or even allow their children to play freely in their communities. In addition, many households reported that housebreaking/burglary and home robbery were the most common and most feared [crimes] and more households employed private security services. (Statistics SA, 2016: np). For this reason, many people who can contract and pay for such services, do so.

Income Inequality

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2023) reported that rising inequality among emerging and developing countries has increased considerably, and South Africa is no exception and inequality affects all citizens, irrespective of ideology, culture, or religion (IMF, 2023). A study by the World Bank conducted in 2018 confirms that South Africa is one of the most unequal in the world (World Bank, 2018). On the one hand, the country has one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, with a Charter of Fundamental Rights that emphasizes expanded socioeconomic rights. (Francois and Webster, 2019), whilst, on the other hand, half of South Africa still lives in poverty, economic growth has stalled, inflation remains high, and unemployment continues to climb toward 30% (World Bank, 2018). On the contrary, in South Africa, private security services customers are wealthy middle-class households, for whom they install security technology such as alarm systems, surveillance cameras, and electric fencing in their homes. When there is an alarm activation or the customer presses the panic button, the PSC will dispatch an armed/alarm security officer to respond (Van Reit, 2022).

However, with private security being a luxury only wealthy citizens can afford, there is a concern that this industry will widen the inequality gap that South Africa struggles with, namely, leaving those who are most directly affected by crime, especially the poor and unemployed, more vulnerable (Asomah, 2017). The reality is South Africa has one of the highest levels of income inequality globally, with a stark divide between the affluent and the poor (StatsSA, 2023) and such levels of inequality can lead to social exclusion and marginalization of disadvantaged people in South Africa (Van Reit, 2018). The Institute of Risk Management South Africa (IRMSA) reported that economic challenges like stagnant growth, high unemployment, and persistent inequality have consistently ranked among the major risk facing the country for many years to come (BusinessTech, 2023).

High unemployment

Coupled with the serious inequalities in South Africa, is the rising unemployment rate, especially among the younger population. (Mabena, 2017: np; Muller, 2016: np). In June 2023, Statistics South Africa reported South Africa's unemployment rate in the first

quarter of 2023 was recorded at 32,9 % and is among the highest in the world. South Africa now has the joint fourth-highest unemployment rate out of 182 countries tracked by Trading Economics. (Statistics South Africa, 2023 np). High unemployment often leads to higher crime rates, as individuals who are unable to find legitimate employment may turn to illegal activities as a means of survival. This heightened crime risk creates a greater demand for security services, including private security companies that offer protection for individuals, businesses, and properties. Due to the lack of employment opportunities and other social issues, disadvantaged communities frequently have higher crime rates. (Adams, Klinsky, and Chhetri, 2019). Paradoxically, the growth of the private security industry in response to high unemployment can create new job opportunities. This rapid pace is seen to be providing an entry-level job market for unemployed citizens, and while these jobs may not directly address the root causes of unemployment, they can provide employment options for individuals to enter an industry with varying levels of education and training.

Lack of confidence/trust in public police

Many studies attribute the remarkable rise in the number of private security companies especially in developing countries to ineffective and untrustworthy public security institutions (Berg & Howell, 2017: 275; Nalla & Prenzler, 2018:23). In South Africa, the fear of crime and the inability to access the services of the South African Police Service, due to under-resourced police stations and poor service delivery of policing activities, leave the door open for the PSI to thrive. For example, Shaw (2008), attributes this to the government's inability to act swiftly to protect the public and to the failure of the police to provide sufficient security. This translates into a lack of resources for crime prevention activities and further drives the demand for private security services (Pillay, 2020). Despite an increase in demand for police services, the South African Police Service (SAPS) employed fewer officers in 2022, according to the Annual Performance Plan 2021-2022. On the other hand, there were about 2.7 million security guards registered in the country as of the end of 2022, with 586,042 of them employed (active)(SAPS Annual Performance Plan 2021/2022). The SAPS reported that demand for policing services is increasing on an annual basis as the population grows; yet, the SAPS's manpower strength has dropped. In addition to the impact of the population

growth on the policing demand, the existing SAPS infrastructure and the allocation of resources are also affected by changes in the demographic profile of the country, as people migrate from rural to urban areas and from certain provinces to others (Mdodi, 2021).

Thus, we see, in South Africa, the state's role in providing for the safety and security of its citizenry has gradually dissipated because of an over-stretched and over-burdened public police service (Mabena, 2017: np). In addition, the lack of proper resource allocation, leadership crises, the lack of implementation of relevant training standards and skills deficiencies, corruption, and police incompetence in fighting crime, compromised the way the police protect the citizens (Seldon, 2018: np). This inevitably affected the morale of police officers and created mistrust of the police by the citizens (Botha, 2015:33). The results of the 2017/2018 Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS) in South Africa showed that the visibility of the police declined between 2016/17 and 2017/18. The Survey estimated that the proportion of South Africans who never saw a police officer in uniform during the past twelve months increased by twenty per cent. 34.4 per cent of citizens who participated in the survey mentioned poor police response as the most common reason for dissatisfaction (Statistics South Africa: 2017/2018: np). The Survey confirmed South Africans were less likely to report property-related crimes such as housebreaking, burglary and theft of personal property to the police and the main reason was that victims felt the police will not be able to solve their cases (Statistics South Africa, 2015: np). So, instead of turning to the police, the public can use private security firms if they believe there is an inadequate police presence, a slow response time, or a high level of corruption within the force. Thus the belief that private security can offer a more dependable and quick security solution aids in the industry's expansion.

Perceived Disparities in Safety:

As intimated previously, low feelings of safety and willingness to pay for private security are usually associated with declining 'public confidence in the government's control over crime' (Louw 2000: 197). Many commentators have expressed concern over the privatisation of security, arguing that 'in most cases the employment of private security was designed to protect the rich from the poor, perpetuating old divisions or extending

divisions within societies along class lines' (Shearing and Kempa 2000: 207). The affluent segments of society, including high-net-worth individuals, businesses, and gated communities, seek enhanced security measures to protect their wealth, properties, and assets (Demombynes and Ozler, 2005). Private security services are perceived to bridge the gap in safety and provide a sense of protection to those who can afford them, further widening the disparities between the haves and have-nots (Emmert, 2008).

In communities with low social capital and low-income areas, the provision of protection from crime through collective action becomes more prevalent (Emmert, 2008). Some less wealthy South Africans have turned to vigilante organizations to replace seemingly absent policing (Baker 2004; Abrahamson & Williams 2008). The net result of these trends is a highly uneven distribution of policing resources and physical security, as rich and poor alike, turn away from the police. (Bradford, 2014). Notwithstanding the socio-economic disparities in these areas, Spocor (2017) observed that the prevalence of alternative modes of private security is starting to prevail, albeit in other forms and structures (Spocor, 2017). However, this can pose a risk as more and more community-based 'protection groups' are filling gaps where the police have left. As a result, these communities are beginning to build their private security that is unregulated and largely unprotected. The danger is that these groups can quickly morph into law-breaking extortion and protection racketeering. (Baker, 2002). So, we must be careful how we regulate and look and think about what we can realistically offer. This applies not only to those who can pay but also to those who cannot.

Increase in 'mass private property' - shopping malls, sports stadia, entertainment venues, and leisure facilities.

Another factor contributing to the PSI's growth is the rapid expansion of all forms of property ownership in urban areas, as well as the concurrent demand for security (especially in the absence of any visible protection offered by the public police)(Adam, 2015: np, 2019: np; George & Kimber 2014: 112; Silverman, 2019: np). Due to the growth and development of one-stop centres like shopping malls, sports stadiums, vacation resorts, leisure facilities, office parks, and airports as well as the public's fear of

crime, the management of these facilities and organizations has been compelled to improve the security services offered for these locations. (Grant Thornton, 2013: 6). Shopping malls, for example, are privately owned but are used by the public and owners of such property must ensure the security of such commercial property, and not the state (Wakefield, 2003: 76). These are often areas of private space, but freely open to the public. A similar scenario could present difficulties for the public police in South Africa, especially if they are required to assume the primary responsibility for providing security at all these commercial, industrial, and recreational locations. Such a situation creates a condition where the absence of visible public police necessitated the need to deploy private security officers to secure 'public-private property' (Botha, 2015:51).

Commodification of security

Commodification refers to the increasing tendency for security to be viewed as a 'private good' (Wakefield & Fleming, 2009: 2). It is now common practice for private companies to offer a range of security services and products, aimed at filling gaps in the provision of security by the state police. Security is being sold as a commodity like any other service (Wakefield & Fleming, 2009: 2). The commodification of security relates to its 'packaging and promotion of a thing (in this case security service) that can be traded' (Ayling, 2014:932). In South Africa, the commodification of security came about because of the State's inability to guarantee the security of citizens who acquire property (fixed and movable assets) (Maritz, 2012: np). This resulted in private citizens resorting to purchasing their security and start installing additional physical security measures (Loader, 2018: 1406). In addition, more companies and businesses started acquiring security services such as security guards and surveillance technologies including armed response reaction services for the client's protection (Claasen, 2015: 123).

Increasing demand for CCTV surveillance technology

Information technology is used to offer security solutions for both home and business users in the current digital and information age. In comparison to the use of security guards, the PSI's use of the most recent security technologies is proving to be more cost-effective and, when properly implemented, can be used to effectively prevent crimes from occurring. (Donald, 2018: np). Surveillance is changing from being static,

fixed, and reactive, to being flexible and proactive (Goldsworthy, 2019: np). The CCTV market is gaining huge popularity across the world due to rising concerns for security and safety. This resulted in an increased demand for technically advanced surveillance systems, thereby, creating huge growth opportunities for CCTV manufacturers (Donald, 2018: np). Likewise in South Africa, the security surveillance and CCTV market continues to thrive, albeit for similar reasons mentioned in other countries. According to some South African researchers (Minnaar, 2009), the primary goal of installing domestic CCTV systems was to prevent, deter, and reduce crime in the context of social crime prevention. Many of these systems are also supported and run by contract security firms. (Minnaar, 2009). These companies are using smarter video surveillance, better alarm systems, remote surveillance, and other new systems implying that customers, particularly businesses can protect their assets better without having to invest in manned guarding only or relying on complicated solutions (Maritz, 2015: np). This results in a rising demand for intelligent and mobile video surveillance solutions, rising demand for cloud-based surveillance solutions, and growing adoption of Internet Protocol (IP) cameras. These are the driving factors for the mobile video surveillance market growth (Donald, 2018: np; Goldsworthy, 2018: np).

Increase in secure 'gated' or 'enclaved' communities.

South Africa has seen several profound structural, social, and political changes since the end of apartheid. One of the most profound changes to the urban landscape has been the proliferation of different forms of housing, including the rise of gated communities (Johannes, 2012: iii). Approximately half of all South Africa's gated communities are situated in Gauteng, where homes in residential estates remain a popular option. This has contributed to the need for more security leading to an escalating number of security businesses registered to render services in such areas (Melane, 2013: np). Gated communities are residential areas with restricted access in which normally public spaces are privatized (Landman, 2002: 34). They are security developments with designated perimeters, usually walls or fences, and controlled entrances that are intended to prevent penetration by non-residents (Johannes, 2012: iv). Gated communities provide a lot more security than regular standalone properties due to their host of patrolling security officers, 24/7 surveillance, electric fencing,

intercoms and controlled access, resulting in a much lower crime rate. In gated communities, residential areas are usually separated from their surroundings by perimeter fencing and boom gates, and private security, which undertakes access control and patrol functions (Johannes, 2012). Gated communities with security staff also restrict access to pedestrians, which may be able to reduce the chance of vandalism, theft, and other crimes. This has sometimes proven to be controversial because of the divisive nature and the inequalities exposed in terms of security between those able to afford to live in such areas and those who cannot (UNODC, 2014: 10).

The contributions and effectiveness of the private security industry in addressing crime and maintaining security in South Africa

The PSI's role and function in maintaining some form of social control in South Africa has grown significantly over the last two decades. In South Africa, the PSI is a sizable industry that generates a sizable amount of revenue for the government and, in addition to producing jobs, gives paying citizens confidence in their security by putting preventative measures in place to ensure their safety. We have seen that the private security sector has contributed significantly to combating crime and preserving safety and security in South Africa given the vast resources at its disposal. However, with crime rates showing no signs of abating and the SAPS lacking resources, private security firms have emerged as an important supplement to the country's security infrastructure and to protect those who pay for such protection.

As crime rates and security concerns continue to strain traditional law enforcement resources, the private security sector has stepped in with innovative solutions and a renewed emphasis on protecting communities, businesses, and individuals. Hence the PSI offers practical effects that have solidified the industry's position as a crucial partner in ensuring the safety and well-being of South Africans. This has been achieved in the following ways

Visible Presence, Deterrence, and Rapid Response

Private security officers and vehicles have a more visible presence and can frequently be seen patrolling residential neighbourhoods, commercial districts, and public places. In this way, potential criminals are deterred by this noticeable presence because they

know they will certainly run into security personnel. Likewise, many private security firms have specialized armed response teams that can quickly respond to security alarms or distress calls. These teams can stop crimes in progress and lessen the effects of incidents on people and property. They are usually well-equipped and trained to handle various situations, providing a faster response time compared to public law enforcement agencies. They invest heavily in technology-based solutions: advanced surveillance technology, access control systems, and monitoring tools (Lyon,2001). In some cases, private security companies work in partnership with local communities and neighbourhood watch groups. This partnership and collaboration foster a sense of community ownership in security matters and improves the flow of information to address emerging threats (Van Graan, 2016).

One such initiative is the SafeCity Initiative. This was developed because of the requirement to provide a denser CCTV solution throughout the City of Johannesburg. In support of this, one of the largest guarding firms in South Africa and a fibre network company recently partnered to increase the capacity of smart technology to anticipate and reduce crime in Gauteng using cutting-edge cameras. (Fidelity ADT, 2020). This company developed its camera network as a crime-fighting tool and allows private security companies to pay them a monthly fee to view video feeds from cameras in their patrol areas. This partnership currently has over 5,000 cameras that have sprung up throughout the suburbs of Johannesburg since 2019. These cameras are fibre-connected and live feeds are streamed in real-time to the security companies' command and control centres.

The initiative allows private security operators the option to access the entire regional camera network, enabling them to have full city-wide situational awareness with the ability to intercept wanted vehicles and apprehend suspects before they strike again. Control room operators first verify alerts and escalate those that need further investigation or response (Fidelity ADT, 2020). These escalated alerts are also automatically channelled into Business Against Crime South Africa's (Bacsa) E2 Fusion Centre, where SAPS are either deployed to intercept the vehicles of Interest (VOI) that have been flagged or to assist private security teams who have successfully

apprehended suspects by formally making arrests or impounding vehicles. (Fidelity ADT, 2020).

In addition to thousands of street cameras, the fibre network company plans to connect its surveillance system to privately owned cameras in shopping centres, and security estates. The SafeCity network has proved its effectiveness with significant arrests and interceptions of suspects and vehicles involved in previous crimes including money laundering, theft, hit-and-run, fraud, hijacking, house robbery, armed robbery, kidnapping, and murder (Fidelity ADT, 2020). Other advantages of the Safer City project include the safeguarding of crucial and strategic public infrastructure, such as traffic lights and cell towers. Any vandalism, illegal dumping, or theft in public places can be reported in real time to the control room operator, who can then contact the appropriate authorities to make sure the offenders are dealt with as soon as possible. Additionally, it would aid in securing recreational spaces, such as various green belts that are kept under observation in cooperation with City Parks. (Fidelity ADT, 2023).

Another service offered by a private security company to its customers is access to a paid-for Telegram channel that will keep them abreast of all criminal activities in their areas. Through this initiative, more eyes are deployed across public spaces and this invariably provides an extra layer of protection to the many private spaces that exist within a city - such as shopping centres, residential properties, offices, retail centres, schools, hospitals, and recreational spaces. This can be seen as a force multiplier because it has made it possible for the company to develop a thorough understanding of the city's circumstances in order to better understand criminal trends and support both crime prevention and investigation efforts. (Fidelity ADT, 2023).

Guarding Critical Infrastructure

Private security firms are frequently contracted to guard critical infrastructure, such as power stations, pipelines, mines, and commercial centres. Their presence helps protect these vital assets from theft, vandalism, and sabotage (Thoka, 2021). The PSIRA Act 56 of 2001 as amended specifies and limits security service providers to carry out the tasks outlined in the contracts they have with their clients (PSIRA Act 56 of 2001). During the investigation into the July 2021 unrest in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, the EXPERT

PANEL INTO THE JULY 2021 CIVIL UNREST were informed that PSIRA received countless calls from private security companies asking them to contact police management and Ministers to request them to allow the PSCs to assist in defending critical infrastructure under attack, and they were prepared to play a bigger role beyond just fulfilling the mandates of their direct client. Notwithstanding this, during the unrest, there were incidents where security guards have been involved in acts of violence, including assault and even fatal shootings, and often in situations where the level of force used may be deemed excessive or disproportionate. They also pointed out that, apart from State security services, a significant role has been assumed by the Private Security Sector in protecting the intended economic infrastructure for both Provinces. They found the private security sector is a force multiplier, and there is a need for increased information sharing and collaboration between State Security Forces, PSiRA, and the private security sector. To ensure proper collaboration among the Parties, they recommended that a strengthened relationship with the SAPS and communities is vital and practical cooperation of the private security industry in conjunction with state security authorities under established and current partnership frameworks is essential. (REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL INTO JULY 2021 CIVIL UNREST, 2022).

Eyes and Ears Initiative (E2)

Another successful example of a collaborative initiative between the South African Police Service, Business Against Crime South Africa, PSiRA and legitimate members of the private security industry is The Eyes and Ears Initiative (E2). This initiative come about because of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the South African Police Service (SAPS), Business Against Crime SA (BACSA), Security Industry Alliance (SIA), and willing participants of the Private Security Industry (PSI)(Geldenhuys, 2020). The signatories have established a sector relationship in which they agree to cooperate with each other for the purpose of raising the situational awareness of the SAPS. This was achieved by using the Private Security Industry's geographical deployment footprint for the sharing of information called the "Eyes and Ears" ("E2) Initiative.

One of the objectives of the E2 partnership was to allow for the PSI to assist each other (and SAPS) where needed, in a non-commercial and non-competitive capacity

(Geldenhuys, 2020). This partnership formally cooperates with the SAPS by relaying information directly to the Provincial Operational Command Centre (POCC) and in some instances, receiving such relevant information directly from it. (PSIRA Annual Report, 2021/2022). During the July 2021 unrest, media reports confirmed that Private security companies mainly in Gauteng have been the eyes and ears of the police and first responders to many incidents of public violence and looting.

For example, helicopters from at least six of these companies provided information to the police in Gauteng on emerging hotspots (Gibson, 2021). However, when there are protests and instances of public violence, private security service providers must be cautious because one of the biggest problems is that violence frequently breaks out when people feel threatened. As demonstrated, the police frequently rely on private security to manage and secure crowds because they are not doing a good enough job themselves. (Bruce, 2019:19-21).

As a result, it is critical to consider the Marikana Commission's recommendations regarding the role of private security in managing civil disobedience as well as what can be learned from other modalities when talking about how to manage civil disobedience. In its report, the Marikana Commission suggests that the actions of Lonmin security were primarily to protect other workers against intimidation and it was found that the heavy-handed actions by Lonmin security might have contributed to the escalation of tension (Bruce, 2019:19-21). The Commissioners found the lack of implementation of the security plan on and before the event played a crucial role that led to the death of the two private security officers and in addition, mine security management at the mine undermined and underestimated the volatility of the situation of the day.

Current realities and challenges facing the private security industry in South Africa

So far, it has become clear that the demand for private security services is what is driving the growth in the number of private security firms in South Africa. Because of the PSI's immense size, there is a space for noncompliance, and some PSCs operate without registering with the regulatory body or with licenses that have expired. These are known as “fly-by-night” in the industry (Kole, 2017: 54). These unregistered

operators overburden the regulatory authority, which is poorly capacitated to deal with the ever-growing PSI. To this effect, concern was expressed in the Panel of Experts' Report into the Unrest in Gauteng and KZN in July 2021 regarding PSIRA's failure to address the behaviour of security service providers that were not registered with them. Further investigations revealed some of the security personnel in their databases were working for unregistered companies or companies that were not registered but were still offering services. The existence of such unregistered entities is a serious problem that should not be left unchecked, especially by the state security structures (Gumedze, 2008), and if the industry is not monitored and controlled, it could endanger not only its clientele but also the security of the country.

There is consensus in South Africa that there are many private security officers who are viewed negatively (Sefalala and Webster, 2013). Security officers are the front line of contact with the public and, if not properly trained, may misuse their mandate and violate the human rights of members of the public (Berg and Gabi, 2011).

In a recent study, I explored how the Covid-19 pandemic impacted the occupational roles of Private Security Officers in South Africa. The findings of the study affirmed how the role of a security private security officer has changed, highlighting the criticality of their services during the lockdown. The results of the study confirmed that private security services and their workforce in addition to protecting people and property, have also become a critical resource during the pandemic to ensure the smooth functioning of the economy in South Africa and many countries across the world (Pillay, 2023). Security officers had to take on additional roles such as temperature checking, enforcing social distancing protocols, and hand sanitizing citizens. Some of them were not trained in the first place to take on the enforcement of health and safety protocols as the situation warranted it. Therefore, the inclusion of private security officers as an 'essential' or 'critical' service according to the Lockdown Regulations in South Africa, demonstrates the key role the private security sector performs as part of an effective and comprehensive pandemic response. The pandemic created an increased demand for their services, it manifested in changes in job descriptions, intensified risk of infection, and challenges of enforcement. Private security companies need to prioritize

the safety of their employees and ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills and resources to adapt to changing circumstances. Overall, the public reaction to private security guards enforcing lockdown regulations during the Covid-19 pandemic has been complex, with different individuals and communities responding in various ways depending on their experiences and perceptions.

The study recommended that security officers must receive specific training to effectively manage the Covid-19 pandemic that helps them to better understand the principles of infection control, such as hand washing, the correct methods to use personal protective equipment (PPE), and cleaning and disinfection procedures. The training may involve taking temperature checks, occupancy management, or advising on best practices during the pandemic. Training in crowd management requires additional considerations, such as enforcing social distancing and monitoring the number of people allowed in a particular area. It must include ways to communicate effectively, especially when enforcing pandemic-related rules and regulations. Security officers should be trained in de-escalation techniques to handle difficult situations calmly and professionally.

Despite their critical role during the pandemic, some people see security officers as one lacking professionalism and high moral values (Mbana, 2021). There has also been a negative side to securitization, where we have seen an increase in the number of people who have been harassed, abused, and had their privacy invaded. Prenzler and Sarre (2008, pp. 266) summarized eleven ethical risk profile categories for the PSI. These include fraud, incompetence, poor standards, exploitation of security staff, corrupt practices, information corruption, violence, and associated malpractice, false arrest and detention, trespassing, invasions of privacy, discrimination and harassment, insider crime, and misuse of weapons (Prenzler, Sarre and Kim, 2017). Other studies affirmed this tainted image of PSOs for example, (Nalla and Cobbina, 2017) confirmed that private security officers in many societies are viewed as unprofessional and lacking high moral standards and may be subjected to and vulnerable to malpractice.

A South African study by Mbana et. al. (2021) alluded to this contaminated image that include, among others, the excessive use of force; poor training standards, non-

compliance with statutory training standards, unqualified safety training instructors and outdated safety ratings, misuse of safety equipment resulting in serious injury and death, corruption in the industry, by PSiRA inspectors (Mbona et. al. 2021). (Schneider and Minnaar, 2015). This has been attributed to the inadequate training of security officers in South Africa (Mbona, 2021) which can seriously impede the industry. Issues related to the use of monitoring technology and the processing of personal data are also controversial. (Business Day, 2021). Some private security companies have faced criticism for engaging in discriminatory practices and racial profiling (Van Riet, 2020). It is reported that security personnel disproportionately target individuals based on their race or socioeconomic status, leading to feelings of social exclusion and social division. (Mbona, Mofokeng, Maluleke, and Khosa, 2021). We can learn more about the reality and practical effects that have solidified the industry's position as a crucial partner in ensuring the safety and well-being of South Africans.

Although many private security firms provide training to their employees, the quality and consistency of training programs can vary (Maritz, 2015). The variability in training standards in the private security industry has been criticized as some companies may not provide adequate training for their employees, resulting in low knowledge and skills gaps. This can affect the efficiency and professionalism of private security personnel. Limited training and resources also hinder some companies' ability to provide comprehensive training to their staff. This challenge is particularly evident in smaller security companies that may struggle to allocate sufficient resources for training programs. However, efforts are being made to improve training standards and ensure that security guards receive the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively (Asomah, 2021).

Some PSI actors are frequently portrayed as "criminals in uniform" suspected of participating in numerous crimes or "the inside job" (Diphooorn, 2015: 11). Moreover, they are not only seen as unprofessional and unskilled but also underpaid. Corruption is a significant concern within the private security industry in South Africa. There have been allegations of bribery, collusion with criminal elements, and involvement in organized crime (Diphooorn, 2016). Corrupt practices can undermine the trust and

legitimacy of private security companies and their ability to provide reliable services. This criminal element within the security industry contributes to the problem of undertrained security officers by issuing training certificates to people who have not received any security training in exchange for financial gain. Instances of bribery, collusion, and fraud have been reported, tarnishing the reputation of the private security sector. Combatting corruption requires collaborative efforts between the government, regulatory authorities, and private security companies to enforce strict ethical standards and enhance transparency.

Nalla and Cobbina (2017) offer a different perspective when they argue that private security guards have one of the toughest jobs. They feel "bored with what they are doing, have to endure a long wait for something to happen, and their work is also associated with" fear and anxiety. (Nalla and Cobbina, 2017). According to Gooptu (2013), security guards are not satisfied because they have to work in the harshest or worst working conditions. They have poor working conditions, frequent layoffs, and low salaries for their positions. In addition, they must reduce risk, improve safety, report incidents, and be ready for emergencies.

Thumala, et al (2011: 283) further delineate a gloomier picture of the PSI. They mention that private security is a "tainted trade", and it suffers a reputational problem, characterized by high employee turnover. Sefalala and Webster, (2017) examined the views of 1 205 security guards about their working conditions in the industry in South Africa. Their research shows that the industry is characterized by insecure unemployment, low wages, and long working hours, while few people enjoy access to social benefits. Above all, it is a profession that depreciates when security guards feel stigmatised and lack social recognition. (Sefalala and Webster, 2017). This poor image, coupled with low standards, negatively impacts the professionalism of the PSI in South Africa as well as accountability. These aspects call for a review of the industry's professionalism.

Furthermore, the lack of standardized training and professionalism within the private security industry (Nemeth, 2012) has raised concerns over the growing militarization of

private security in South Africa (Diphooon, 2015). This includes the use of military-style equipment, weapons, and tactics, which can create a confrontational and aggressive and this corroborates with the findings of the Marikana Commission (Stachowitsch, 2015). The militarization of private security can exacerbate tensions and escalate conflicts in certain situations. Inadequate training can lead to unskilled security personnel who are ill-equipped to handle difficult situations effectively. Inconsistent training can lead to gaps in knowledge and skills, impacting the effectiveness of private security personnel (Diphooon, 2015).

Absence of Accountability and Lack of Oversight

The lack of comprehensive accountability mechanisms is one of the criticisms levelled at South Africa's private security sector. Concerns are raised about the lack of adequate oversight and consequences for security personnel when instances of misconduct, abuse of authority, and violations of ethical standards by private security personnel are reported (Diphooon, 2015b). Currently, there is no oversight or watchdog body to keep an eye on the Regulator especially when there are allegations of PSIRA enforcing the standards and regulations inconsistently. It was found that there have been complaints about ineffective oversight and insufficient penalties for wrongdoing based on race or socioeconomic status, leading to feelings of marginalization and social division (PANEL OF EXPERT REPORT into July 2021 unrest, 2022). Some private security companies have faced criticism for engaging in discriminatory practices and racial profiling (Seeking, 2008).

These problems fuel concerns that government authorities are not sufficiently overseeing and controlling the industry. This lack of oversight can lead to abuse and misconduct by security personnel. Currently, PSIRA is not efficiently capacitated to carry out adequate oversight and monitoring and this weakness of the regulatory authority to enforce compliance can lead to further exploitation of security officers. It could also put a private security company at risk of incurring sanctions that could potentially lead to penalties which may include closing the business. Most importantly, it could place consumers at risk of relying on the protection of poorly trained and ill-capacitated security officers (Kole, 2017). According to Gumedze (2020: 39), unregulated,

inadequately regulated, and underfunded regulatory agencies may cause the PSI to become a "force unto itself, beset by misconduct, characterised by employee exploitation, and low-level of officer's training." This begs the question of whether PSIRA is doing enough to control the PSI and enforce the law as required by its mandate.

Addressing the reality and rhetoric, public perception, and the private security industry's actual contributions.

While there may be differences in public perception, the gap between public perception (reality versus rhetoric) and the actual contributions of the private security industry in South Africa can be complex and multifaceted. I will attempt to summarize some recurring themes discussed in the lecture in an attempt to eliminate discrepancies between perception and reality. They are as follows:

Crime Perception vs. Crime Prevention

South Africa has a high crime rate, and the public frequently believes that private security firms play an important role in crime prevention. These companies have a visible security presence and protect businesses, residences, and individuals. However, the actual contribution of the private security industry to crime reduction remains debatable. Some argue that private security firms are primarily concerned with protecting their paying clients' interests rather than addressing the root causes of crime or contributing to societal security in general.

Trust and Confidence

The general public's opinion of the private security industry is subject to change depending on the level of confidence and trust. On the one hand, private security companies frequently receive compliments for their capacity to react swiftly to security incidents like burglaries or armed robberies. Thus, their clients might experience an increase in security and confidence. However, given recent controversies involving corruption and power abuse, there may be questions and concerns about the industry's motivations, ethics, and potential for abuse.

Perceptions of Inequality

In South African society, the private security industry can be seen as exacerbating social inequality. By catering primarily to those that can afford to pay for private security services, this industry widens the wealth gap. Such a perception may contribute to negative feelings toward the industry, as it may be perceived as perpetuating social divisions rather than working toward inclusive and equitable security solutions.

Public-Police Relationship

Concerns exist in South Africa about the police's ability and efficiency in combating crime. As a result, as people seek alternative forms of safety, they may become more reliant on private security. This reliance on private security, however, raises concerns about the state's ability to provide adequate public security and privatize security functions performed by the police. Closing the gap between public perception and the private security industry's actual contribution, on the other hand, necessitates more stringent regulations, oversight, and regulation of the private security sector, as well as efforts to address the root causes of crime and social inequality. This necessitates improved engagement and communication between the private security sector, and in this way, the

Future directions, developments, challenges, and opportunities for the private security industry in South Africa

The growing demand for security services puts the industry in a good position to meet the growing demand. The high and persistent crime rate in the country, coupled with the desire to protect people and property, ensures the continued demand for professional security services. The industry will contribute more to public safety and crime prevention as it grows and faces fewer challenges. Private security companies can use their knowledge, experience, and technological advancements to support proactive crime prevention strategies.

Integration of technologies presents numerous opportunities.

South Africa, like many other countries, faces a unique set of security challenges, ranging from property crime to violent incidents. Leveraging technological advancements can significantly enhance the capabilities of the private security industry in addressing these challenges. The private security industry is likely to continue integrating advanced technologies such as AI-powered surveillance systems, drones, biometric identification, and real-time monitoring to enhance its capabilities in crime prevention and response. Modern technologies such as CCTV cameras, drones, and advanced sensor systems allow for real-time monitoring of large areas. This helps private security companies detect suspicious activities, respond faster to incidents, and prevent potential threats (AL-Dosari, et.al, 2023).

Technological disruptions and the rise of artificial intelligence and automation will add to the complexity of keeping abreast with developing security technologies (Korinek and Stiglitz, 2021). For example, AI-powered systems can analyze vast amounts of data to detect anomalies and identify potential threats. This can help security personnel make informed decisions and respond more effectively. However, there is room for improvement in the technological revolution, by developing a compliance culture through awareness and regulatory enforcement, and regular engagement with role players within the PSI. PSIRA is improving its efficiency, and this bodes well for the industry in the future. These technologies can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of private security services, allowing for more proactive crime prevention and response.

Cybersecurity and cyber vulnerabilities will continue to plague the industry.

Cybersecurity is no longer just viewed as an IT issue. All individuals in an organization must be mindful of always staying secure. Therefore, with the increasing reliance on digital systems and the rise of cybercrime, there is a growing need for private security companies to offer robust cybersecurity services (Nobles, 2022). Protecting individuals, businesses, and organizations from cyber threats will be a significant opportunity for the industry to expand its service offerings. More education is essential in this field in the coming years.

Data Analytics and Predictive Policing

In the context of the private security industry, data analytics can be used to analyze historical crime data, incident reports, and other relevant information to gain a better understanding of crime patterns, hotspot areas, and potential risk factors (Gaddis, 2022). By analyzing data from various sources, including security cameras, social media, and historical crime data, security companies can identify patterns and trends. This enables them to predict potential crime hotspots and allocate resources more effectively. This information can then be used to allocate resources more effectively, develop targeted crime prevention strategies, and enhance overall security measures (Caluza, 2022). Private security firms could leverage data analytics and predictive policing models to anticipate and prevent crime, enabling more efficient resource allocation and improved incident response (Gaddis, 2022). In the context of private security, predictive policing can also be applied by private security firms to anticipate potential security threats and allocate resources accordingly. For example, if historical data shows that certain types of crimes tend to occur more frequently during specific times or in certain areas, private security firms can strategically position their personnel and resources to deter or address those crimes.

Remote Monitoring Services

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, security has become a paramount concern for businesses of all sizes. While traditional security measures such as on-site guards and physical security systems play a crucial role, they often fall short in providing comprehensive protection. Remote Off-Site Monitoring (ROM) offers innovative and effective solutions to modern security challenges. Remote Off-Site Monitoring is a sophisticated security solution that leverages advanced technology to monitor your premises remotely. It involves the use of CCTV cameras, sensors, and alarms that are connected to a central monitoring station. This station is manned by trained security professionals who can respond to any security breaches or suspicious activities in real time. As remote work and surveillance gain prominence, there could be opportunities to offer remote monitoring and security solutions for both residential and commercial clients. The advent of the Internet of Things (IoT) and advancements in sensor

technology have expanded the possibilities for remote monitoring, enabling real-time data collection, analysis, and decision-making from virtually anywhere (Sivanathan, et. al., 2016). Mobile applications and panic buttons can connect individuals directly to security providers in case of emergencies.

Training and Simulation

Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies can be used for real training scenarios. This improves the skills of security personnel and helps them prepare for different situations. These technologies allow for faster response times and immediate support when needed (De Armas, et.al., 2020). As technology becomes more pervasive, the industry will face challenges related to data protection and privacy. Private security companies will need to navigate the ethical and legal complexities surrounding the collection, storage, and use of personal data to ensure compliance with privacy regulations (Zissis and Lekkas, 2012).

Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships

Several critical issues remain to be addressed by the government and the private security industry. The role of the public police in the private security industry must be defined, and guidelines and mechanisms must be developed to enable the police and security industry to cooperate. Mechanisms must also be created to enable the state and the security industry to counter elements in the industry that are involved in illegal activities. This requires criminal justice intervention. Also, the public must be protected on those occasions when they interact with private security personnel. This can be done through effective regulation. Collaborations between private security firms and public law enforcement agencies can create opportunities for more coordinated and effective crime prevention and response strategies. These partnerships can lead to information sharing, joint operations, and improved communication channels, resulting in enhanced security for communities. These matters can be addressed through clear policy guidelines. In this way, collaboration between private security firms, law enforcement agencies, and local communities could become essential in tackling crime and improving overall security.

Specialized Services

Private security companies may diversify their services to cater to specific sectors, such as maritime security, executive protection, event security, or specialized risk assessments. Targeting niche markets can provide opportunities for growth and differentiation in a competitive landscape to promote global events and tourism. For example, South Africa's hosting of major global events, such as sporting tournaments (Netball World Cup 2023) or conferences (BRICS), presents opportunities for private security companies to provide event security and support services. Additionally, the country's vibrant tourism industry requires robust security measures to ensure the safety of visitors, creating potential avenues for growth. This can be done by investing in education and skills development to enhance and upskill the PSI workforce quality, promote innovation, and by creating a supportive environment for entrepreneurship. PSIRA Act needs to keep pace with the fast-changing environment.

Need for collaboration between industry stakeholders, policymakers, and the public to ensure effective and responsible security practices.

South Africa is still a very unequal and deeply divided society and daily, citizens fall victim to criminal elements. Therefore, the need for collaboration and cooperation between private security industry players, public police, policymakers, and the public stems from several pressing reasons that are critical to ensuring effective and responsible security operations. Addressing these multifaceted issues requires a collective effort that combines the expertise and resources of various stakeholders, including private security firms, policymakers, and the public. Collaboration allows for the pooling of resources, knowledge, and expertise from different sectors. Policymakers can draw on the experiences and insights of private security industry stakeholders who possess on-the-ground knowledge, while the private sector can benefit from policy guidance and support from policymakers. By collaborating with stakeholders, private security firms can align their efforts with broader national security strategies, creating a seamless and integrated approach to tackling security challenges. It promotes greater accountability and oversight of the private security industry by establishing regulatory frameworks that ensure responsible conduct and adherence to legal standards. By

involving the public, there is increased transparency, leading to better oversight of security practices. Public perception of the private security industry is vital. Collaborative efforts can lead to increased trust between public and private security firms, thereby enhancing cooperation and information sharing. This trust is essential for the successful implementation of security measures. A coordinated approach helps prevent duplication of efforts and fragmentation of security initiatives. By aligning strategies, resources can be used more efficiently and effectively, maximizing the impact of security measures.

Call to Action:

Research data has a certain shelf life and becomes redundant in a short space of time, especially in an industry that is dynamic and diverse. Longitudinal studies that examine private security consistently over time would provide a significant advantage (South, 1988). It is therefore necessary to encourage further research, dialogue, and engagement on the topic. Apart from the records kept by PSIRA, there is very little national data on the number of private security officers, the demographic characteristics of these officers, the ratios of contract to in-house or armed to unarmed officers, the clients served, duties performed, or the wages, training, registration status, selection criteria and, attrition rates of these officers.

To cover a broad range of topics, a targeted, national longitudinal study of the private security industry is required, and it should cover a range of topics to minimize any potential measurement error caused by combining data from multiple sources that use different definitions of private security. The aim of such a study is not only to fill in the recognized information gaps on private security (e.g., private security powers and security operations) but also to obtain reliable and updated statistics, such as employee demographics, that are not sufficiently covered by other surveys. Given the diversity, magnitude, and inequalities in this country, conducting such a national survey on the PSI in SA will provide an opportunity to harvest home-grown information and use such information to craft and create our own indigenous and succinct definition of how we understand private security in South Africa. Such a survey will provide accurate and up-to-date information which will assist policymakers to make informed decisions when reviewing and making proposals to amend the current gaps in the legislation. Such a

targeted, national study of the private security industry in SA should cover a broad range of topics to minimize any potential measurement error caused by combining data from multiple sources that use smaller samples of private security. These studies should also seek to address methodological and response rate challenges that affected past data collection efforts. This survey should be conducted periodically since studies that examine private security consistently over time would provide a significant advantage.

The study of security science requires interdisciplinary perspectives. They often transcend traditional boundaries and cannot be fully understood or effectively addressed through the lens of a single discipline. Therefore it becomes essential to adopt interdisciplinary approaches when examining the private security industry. An interdisciplinary approach allows researchers to explore the connections between scholars from various fields, such as criminology, sociology, economics, and political science, to gain a holistic understanding of the industry and these factors and may assist to understand how they influence the private security industry and vice versa. Collaboration must be encouraged since security issues in South Africa are intertwined with social, economic, and political factors. It is envisaged that future studies should also seek to consider the methodological and response rate challenges that affected past data collection efforts, especially when conducting national studies and surveys. It is important to note that while the growth of the private security industry can address immediate security concerns, it also highlights the need for comprehensive research on crime prevention strategies, improved public law enforcement, and efforts to address the root causes of crime and social inequalities.

One needs to be cautious and avoid adopting an extreme view to categorize the private security industry in South Africa as a national threat to the country and while there may be certain concerns or issues associated with the industry, it is important to consider a balanced perspective. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a balanced approach that considers both public and private security measures, along with effective government policies, can contribute to a safer and more secure environment for all.

Conclusion

As I conclude, throughout this lecture, we have delved into the reality and rhetoric surrounding this growing industry, acknowledging its complexities and the influence of public perception on its practices. However, as we navigate the intricacies of this field, we must recognize that there is much more to explore and understand. In view of these considerations, in my opinion, it is possible to regard the SA Private Security Sector as a force to be reckoned with, especially when you consider its comparative strength against SAPS. The private security industry is significant in terms of its size and the number of personnel employed and we have seen evidence that confirms this position where the PSI industry employs more individuals than the SAPS, thus making it a substantial force multiplier in terms of human capital. Due to the accessibility and availability of human capacity, technology and equipment, they have a wider presence and provide extensive coverage across South Africa, offering security services to residential areas, businesses, shopping centres, and other establishments. Their reach and coverage extend to areas where the SAPS may face resource constraints, thus filling the gaps in security provision. In this way, security service providers are in a better position to provide rapid response and provide proactive measures. They often have quick response teams, patrol vehicles, and advanced surveillance systems in place, enabling them to respond swiftly to incidents and provide a visible security presence. Private security companies offer a range of specialized security services tailored to meet the specific needs of clients. Such specialization allows them to address security concerns in a focused and efficient manner.

I have pointed out that the public does not have much faith in the SAPS due to various factors, including historical issues of trust. Those who can afford to pay for private security may have greater confidence in the private security industry than in the SAPS. In this way, private security companies may be perceived as more responsive, accountable, and customer-oriented, which can lead to increased utilization of their services.

Unlike the SAPS, whose equipment is not always reliable, private security companies often invest in advanced technologies, such as surveillance cameras, biometric

systems, and monitoring software. These technological advancements enable them to provide cutting-edge security solutions and stay ahead in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. It is important to note that while the private security industry has strengths and advantages, it should not be seen as a complete substitute for the SAPS. Both the private security industry and the SAPS play distinct and complementary roles in maintaining public safety and security in South Africa. Collaboration, coordination, and effective partnerships between the two entities are crucial for ensuring comprehensive security provision across the country.

Thus, to pave the way for a safer and more just society, I call upon all scholars, students, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to take up the mantle of further research, dialogue, and engagement in the private security sector. By conducting rigorous interdisciplinary research will obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how this industry intersects with crime rates, community dynamics, socioeconomic inequalities, and public policies. By identifying and addressing the root causes of security challenges, we can develop more effective and sustainable security solutions and strategies. Let us open the floor for meaningful dialogue and collaboration. By encouraging scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to come together and share their knowledge, experiences, and expertise. So, engaging in constructive discussions will help bridge gaps in knowledge and promote a collective effort toward a safer and more secure South Africa.

We need to foster a culture of accountability and responsible practices within the private security industry, and this can be done by critically examining its operations, training standards, and adherence to human rights principles, we can ensure that the industry operates ethically and in line with the needs of the communities it serves. Lastly, let us not forget the power of the public's voice. Engaging with communities and involving them in security discussions is vital for creating solutions that resonate with their needs and aspirations. Encourage civil society organizations, community leaders, and citizens to actively participate in shaping the future of security in South Africa.

As we embark on this journey, let us remember that the road ahead may be challenging, but our collective efforts can pave the way for a brighter and safer future. Together, let

us strive to create a private security industry that not only lives up to its potential as a force to be reckoned with but also as a force for positive change and transformation in South Africa. The responsibility lies with all of us to make a lasting impact on the security landscape of this great nation. Even though private security company's are 'here to stay' and are complexly intertwined in local security infrastructures, and while there may be challenges and areas of improvement, it would be an overgeneralization to label the private security industry in South Africa as a national threat. The industry's contributions to public safety, job creation, and collaboration with law enforcement should be acknowledged, while simultaneously addressing concerns and ensuring appropriate regulations and oversight.

Finally, in closing, I wish to extend my gratitude to the Deanery in the College of Law, the Chair of the Department of Criminology and Security Science, and my colleagues for their continuous and unwavering support. I want to express my gratitude to the organising committee for setting up this webcast as well as to my colleagues, friends, and family members who have helped me along the way. Special thanks and appreciation go out to my mother and my late father, who instilled in me the value of reading, a sense of curiosity, and the ability to see the best in other people, from a very young age. Your encouragement and guidance have been invaluable. To my wife Malini, you have been a constant source of support throughout my journey and transition across the academic divide.

To my children Semona and Kailen, I'm sure I've made you proud and you can trust that I will continue to provide unwavering support for you to succeed in all that you do.

Thank you for your attention and commitment. Let us heed this call to action to heart and work together towards a more secure and prosperous future for all.

Nkosi sikelele! Afrika!

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