

DECONSTRUCTING NATIONAL SECURITY: THE CASE OF BOTSWANA

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ABSTRACT

The formation of Botswana's Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS) in 2008 has led to perceptions that it will be used to spy on law abiding citizens and political opponents of President Khama's regime. The purpose of this article is to put the DIS in perspective. The key argument is that the notion of national security is a contested terrain and in a one party dominant system like that of Botswana, the DIS can easily degenerate into a regime security agency, typical of most African states. The main finding is that Botswana does not have proper and effective oversight mechanisms that can insulate the DIS from political interference. The conclusion is that for DIS to maintain political neutrality, the Central Intelligence Committee (CIC) must be depopulated of ruling party apparatchiks, that the Intelligence and Security Committee must report to Parliament and not the President and that the DIS Tribunal must be chaired by a retired judge. The research method used for this article was the documentary research method, or the use of documents sources in social research.

Keywords: Nation-State, National Security, National Interest, Botswana.