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Consistent with the editorial of the last issue of 2013, the Editorial Committee of *Politeia* is pleased to announce its reviewed Editorial Advisory Board. The review, as one of the activities that are aimed at keeping up the standard of the journal, was not a mere name-picking process, but a robustly debated activity through which the contribution of selected individuals in the disciplines – political science and public administration, were highly considered. On behalf of the Committee, I congratulate new members of the Board and hope that they will find the responsibility exciting. I also congratulate those that have been retained and wish that, as in the past, they will contribute meaningfully to the success of the journal. This issue presents four articles that, due to their original and meaningful contribution, were selected for publication.

The first article, which has been co-authored by Francois de Wet and Ian Liebenberg, is entitled *Ideologies, (new) economics, defence and people: Five decades in the state of South Africa*. In this article, the authors conceive that the economy of politics and the politics of economy converge in interesting ways, sometimes with long-term consequences for a state. In a crucial and dynamic interface economy, community, (non-)diplomacy, defence posture, balance sheets, the hapless ‘citizen’ and ‘leaders’ are all precariously intertwined. Without any omission, the article contributes new insights in, for example, conscription and militarisation through which the authors reflect on South Africa’s historical military system’s events, South Africa’s economy under the burden of boycotts, politics and economics after South Africa’s transition in 1994 and South Africa’s economy after sanctions. With the use of diagrammatic representations of data, the authors make use of empirical data, which they use coherently to arrive at the findings and actions that need to be undertaken.

Lere Amusan and Samuel Oyewole’s article contributes to a highly debated topic, which is receiving international media coverage. Despite the media critics of the so-called ‘delays’ by the Nigerian government, and especially its military to rescue the girls kidnapped as part of the terrorist activities, there has been a growing interest to know how terrorism activities will impact on Nigeria’s economic relations, and in general the rule of law. In this article, which is entitled *Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria: A reflection on the failure of democratic containment*, Lere Amusan and Samuel Oyewole examine how a democratic government failed Nigeria and how

the system could not contain unfolding terrorism inflicted on the state, together with other Islamist movements. Some elements of democracy as practised in Nigeria are observed in the article, alongside their contribution to the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism. It is submitted in this article that, even when it does not equate to a counter-terrorism strategy, democracy can still contain terrorism before and after its emergence.

Mark Ingle's article, which is entitled *The rise of the informal sector in international development discourse*, tracks the steady ascent to prominence of the informal sector in developmental discourse. As deliberated in his article, whereas the informal sector was once viewed with almost universal disdain, it has matured to a point where it is now accorded grudging respect, if not outright admiration. But much depends on the perspective from which informality is viewed. The concerns of officialdom, and of the formal business sector, for example, are often at variance with those of an activist civil society. This tends to find expression in markedly divergent attitudes towards informality, and whether it should be tolerated or not. This article unpacks some of the major paradigms and themes, which have featured in the discourse about economic informality. Not the least of these is the World Bank's exit/exclusion philosophy, which is informed by the dynamic interplay of voluntary 'exit', and involuntary 'exclusion', from the world of the formal. The burning question suggested by these diverse approaches and understandings is what should be done about the informal sector? Whatever the answer may be, the article argues that the informal sector has developed to the point where it needs to be taken seriously in policy deliberations.

A focus on China's relations with other countries, in particular Africa, where its dominance appears to be increasing steadily as a trade partner, is essential. The insights that are revealed by research on China's neighbourly policy are necessary to understand its international roles, especially to predict its strength in the partnership with the other BRICS countries. Although none of the articles contributed in this issue focus specifically on that unit of analysis, the fourth article, which is authored by Farhana Paruk and which is about China's use of 'soft power' as a rising power, may be helpful in understanding China's interests and its international policy-stance. Paruk's article is about China's use of 'soft power' to conscientiously and strategically enhance its global appeal and to assist its emergence as a rising power. The conception of 'soft power' in this article is used to distinguish it from 'hard power' – China's coercive use of economic and military power. China's diplomatic strategy to enhance its soft power utilises multilateralism in the UN, economic diplomacy such as FOCAC in Africa and a good neighbourly policy as the means to be attractive to other states and to promote its emergence as a major power.