



ADVANCED CORPORATE SOLUTIONS

ELECTRONIC COUNTER-MEASURES INVESTIGATION (ECMI) SERVICES

"Debugging" Specialists

-ESTABLISHED 1995-



• WWW.ACSOLUTIONS.CO.ZA •

SOUTH AFRICA UNDER SIEGE BY CORPORATE SPIES:

South Africa's success story of becoming one of the leading commercial giants in Africa has its dark side as corporate gangsters and *Intellectual Property (IP)* robbers converge on the country to sell this valuable knowledge to the highest bidder.

"The country is currently a prime target in the murky world of international espionage", warned a top intelligence expert.

According to this well placed intelligence source, South Africa is currently one of the top five (5) countries in the world being targeted by industrial spies gathering valuable intelligence from Corporate companies and Mining Houses.

South Africa is regarded as a prime target because of its excellent financial infrastructure and a well-established and secure banking industry offering a perfect hub for money laundering.

South Africa is very enticing because of the country's strong stock exchange and a Reserve Bank run in a well-disciplined way on the level required by international banking standards. The sound and stable banking system and good financial infrastructure makes South Africa a safe and secure haven for international syndicates to wash their dirty money.

International spying institutions uses any possible method to get hold of information regarding insider trading.

To achieve these goals, intelligence gatherers make use of underhand methods such as:

- ➔ Sophisticated Eavesdropping Devices (Bugging Devices) are clandestinely deployed to gather intelligence on key companies and business institutions.
- ➔ Disgruntled employees are identified and groomed with bribe money and lucrative deals in order to extract as much information on such companies' business deals, financial affairs and expansion plans.

"Companies dare not reveal any information of threats or breach of security. This is dealt internally," said the intelligence expert. "Revealing such threats to the outside world suggests weaknesses in their midst, flaws in the security system, and reflects badly in the corporate world severely damaging ones reputation with clients."

Corporate spies' focuses are now on the following targets:

- ➔ Acquisitions and mergers of companies in South Africa,
- ➔ New BEE companies where astronomical figures are involved,
- ➔ Emerging black investment companies,
- ➔ Insider trading in Blue Chip companies.

A leading South African risk management company, **Advanced Corporate Solutions (ACS)**, was approached for comment regarding the threats local companies are facing.

ACS described a real life scenario when a disgruntled Security Manager of a large company in Sandton recently bugged all his company directors' offices as well as their vehicles. ACS was called in to investigate and discovered that the employee sold the information he had gathered to a competitor.

Together with this new global society of openness and cross-border migration surfaced the shady world of intelligence gathering. The spies from the Cold War were still in demand, but their expertise and tools of their trade were merely exploited by corporate gangsters and IP robbers to sell this extremely valuable knowledge to the highest bidder on the black market.

Trade secrets, another commodity under threat by spies, encompass protected information, which is not generally known among or readily accessible to persons and has commercial value because it is a trade secret. Without the protection of these trade secrets a businesses would be paralysed and lose its edge in competing with its rivals in the market place.

"Trade secrets are normally not protected by law as in the case of patent rights and therefore this have to be protected by the company or institution itself," a senior partner in ACS said.

"This is only one of many incidents of white-collar crime being committed in today's environment where businessmen have to cope keeping their companies afloat and competitive," ACS said.

ACS provides **Intelligence Care Management Solutions** which encompass the full spectrum electronic counter-measure investigation services- better known as debugging.

"The *debugging and sweeps* involves both Technical and Physical searchers to detect and locate these electronic eavesdropping devices," said ACS.

Established in 1995, ACS had established itself in the past 17 years as a global player in *Corporate Intelligence (CI)* and countermeasures investigation with clients ranging from business to industry and government agencies.

Therefore ACS is duty bound by its mission and vision in life to protect its clients taking all possible pro-active measures that could be enforced to ensure and guarantee client safety and confidentiality.

De Wet Potgieter is a freelance investigative journalist and the author of *Contraband, South Africa and the International Trade in Ivory and Rhino Horn (1995)*, *Total Onslaught (2007)* and *The Eleventh Hour (2013)*.