

CHIEF OF AIR STAFF OPERATIONS CHANGE OF COMMAND PARADE SPEECH 01 FEBRUARY 2017

SALUTATIONS

CHIEF OF STAFF SANDF LT GENERAL V.R. MASONDO

**CHIEF OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE LT GENERAL
MSIMANG AND MRS MSIMANG,**

**CHIEF SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY V ADM HLONGWANE AND MRS
HLONGWANE**

MEMBERS OF THE PLENARY DEFENCE STAFF COUNCIL,

MEMBERS OF THE AIR FORCE COMMAND COUNCIL,

CEOs AND CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY PRESENT

GENERALS AND FLAG OFFICERS OF OUR DEFENCE FORCE,

HONORARY COLONELS

OFFICERS/NON COMMISSIONED OFFICERS/ WARRANT

OFFICERS/OTHER RANKS/

MEMBERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA

FRATERNITY

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

**A HEARTY WELCOME TO THIS IMPORTANT OCCASION IN THE
SAAF AS I FORMALLY HAND OVER COMMAND AUTHORITY AS
CHIEF OF AIR STAFF OPERATIONS TO MAJOR GENERAL
MCETYWA.**

APPRECIATION

IT IS IMPORTANT FROM THE OUTSET TO GIVE A WELL DESERVED RECOGNITION TO ALL THE MEMBERS THAT WERE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF SUCH A SPECTACULAR CHANGE OF COMMAND PARADE.

INDEED THE INVISIBLE ACTIVITIES BEHIND THE SCENES HAVE GIVEN BIRTH TO THE SPLENDID VISIBLE DISPLAY OF EXCELLENCE THAT WE HAVE JUST WITNESSED IN THIS PARADE TODAY. MY PROFOUND APPRECIATION TO YOU ALL, THE PILOTS AND GROUND CREW WHO WORKED AS A TEAM TO ENSURE THAT THE FLY PAST AND STATIC DISPLAY MEET THE REQUIRED SAAF STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE,

THE PARADE COMMANDER MAJOR C.A. MINNE , THE WARRANT OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE SAAF COLOURS MWO ANTON NEL, THE MEMBERS ON PARADE WHO HAVE DISPLAYED THE TRUE SAAF SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM, THE SAAF BAND UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF LT COL PIENAAR WHO AS USUAL ADDED A SPARKLE TO THIS PARADE. THE CORP COMMS ENVIRONMENT WHO WORKED ON THE INVITATIONS AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PARADE, ALL THE SPECTATORS WHO HAVE PUT ASIDE OTHER COMMITMENTS TO COME AND GRACE THIS CHANGE OF COMMAND PARADE,

THE CATERING PERSONNEL WHO HAVE PREPARED THE DELICIOUS REFRESHMENTS FOR ENJOYMENT POST THIS PARADE, THE STAFF OF CAS OPS AND CWO JANUARY WHO HAVE ENSURED THAT ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS GIVEN WRT GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THIS PARADE. IT IS BEFITTING THEREFORE THAT IN APPRECIATION OF ALL THESE EFFORTS I REQUEST THE AUDIENCE TO JOIN ME IN GIVING EVERYONE A DESERVED ROUND OF APPLAUSE...

IN CONTEXT

THE DEFENCE IS NOT OPERATING IN ISOLATION. TODAY'S CHANGE OF COMMAND PARADE IS TAKING PLACE UNDER A DIFFERENT SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE DOD, THE COUNTRY, THE REGION, THE CONTINENT AND THE REST OF THE WORLD. WE ARE PART OF THE GLOBAL VILLAGE AND AS DEVELOPMENTS CONTINUE TO SHAPE UP WITHIN, NEARBY AND EXTERNAL TO OUR DEFENCE ENVIRONMENT – IT IS CRUCIAL THAT WE OBSERVE AND PROACTIVELY TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES OR GIVE ADVISE WHERE REQUIRED AS PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EXPERTS.

WE REMAIN CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT IN THE COURSE OF DISCHARGING OUR DEFENCE MANDATE WE SHALL BE IMPACTED UPON BY SEVERAL REALITIES.

THE SA ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE BASED ON YEAR-ON-YEAR GDP GROWTH IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2016 WAS 0,7%. FUTURE PROJECTION INDICATES THAT BY END OF FY 2017 (4TH QUARTER) WE SHALL HAVE:

- GDP GROWTH OF 1,2%
- INFLATION RATE OF 5,9%
- UNEMPLOYMENT OF 24,5%
- RAND DOLLAR EXCHANGE RATE OF R14,57/\$

THE BORDER MANAGEMENT AGENCY CONCEPT WAS DEVELOPED AND APPROVED IN PARLIAMENT 2016 WHICH REQUIRES DEFENCE PARTICIPATION.

THIS CHANGE OF COMMAND PARADE HAPPENS AT HE TIME WHEN THE ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIO-POLITICAL AND MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION AND THE CONTINENT AT LARGE STILL CONFIRMS THE NEED FOR CONTINUOUS ALERTNESS AND READINESS TO RENDER ASSISTANCE WITHIN A MULTILATERAL ARRANGEMENT.

A QUICK SNAPSHOT WITH REGARDS TO THE CONFLICTS AND DISPLACED PEOPLE IN THE AFRICAN CONTINENT OVER THE PERIOD 1997 TO 2007 REVEALS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN OVER 9 MILLION REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE.

FURTHER, ACCORDING TO THE ARMED CONFLICT LOCATION AND EVENT DATA PROJECT STATISTICS FROM 2010 TO 2014 THE NUMBER OF DEATHS FROM POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN AFRICA INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. THE ESTIMATED COMBINED FIGURES OVER THIS PERIOD WAS 115,664. WHAT IS DISSAPOINTING IS THAT LITTLE COVERAGE IS MADE ABOUT THE PLIGHT AND THE DEGREE OF SUFFERING OF THE POOR AND DEFENCELESS COMMUNITIES THAT ARE THE VICTIMS DUE TO VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT IN THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

OUR COMMANDER IN CHIEF CONFIRMED IN PARLIAMENT THAT SOUTH AFRICA UTILISING THE SANDF AS ONE OF THE INSTRUMENTS SHALL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL PROCESSES TO RESPOND TO AND RESOLVE CRISES, PROMOTE PEACE AND SECURITY AND TO STRENGTHEN REGIONAL INTEGRATION.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE WILL CONTINUE TO PREPARE ITS FORCES BEARING IN MIND THAT AS SOLDIERS WE MUST BE READY AT ALL TIMES TO RESPOND TO THE CALL OF DUTY AT ANYTIME DAY OR NIGHT. GIVEN THE ENORMITY OF OUR MANDATE – WE CONCUR WITH THE MOD&MV ASSERTION THAT THE SANDF MUST BE ADEQUATELY RESOURCED TO EXECUTE ITS CONSTITUTIONAL MNDATE.

THIS IS THE ENVIRONMENT UNDERWHICH THIS CHANGE OF COMMAND PARADE OCCURS AND EQUALLY IT IS THE SCENARIO WHERE THE SANDF WILL CONTINUE TO EXECUTE ITS CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE.

DEFENCE NECESSITY

WITHIN THE SCENARIO OF DWINDLING BUDGET ALLOCATION, AS EXPECTED, THE DEBATE OF "GUNS OR BUTTER PRIORITY" TAKES THE CENTRE STAGE IN THE MINDS OF THE ORDINARY CITIZENS AND THOSE APPOINTED AS THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE IN PARLIAMENT AND AT THE EXECUTIVE ARM OF GOVERNMENT.

THE DISCUSSION AROUND SUCH MATTERS ALWAYS DRAWS KEEN INTEREST AND VIBRANT ENERGY FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS AND NEVER HAS A DULL MOMENT. WITHOUT INITIATING SUCH A DISCOURSE, THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS ARE WORTH NOTICING:

- ACCORDING TO SECTION 227 (1) OF THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION AND SECTION 200 OF THE ADOPTED CONSTITUTION OF REPUBLIC OF SA,
- THE SANDF DERIVES ITS MANDATE FROM THE CONSTITUTION WITH THE PRIMARY MANDATE TO DEFEND AND PROTECT THE REPUBLIC, ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, ITS SOVEREIGNTY AND ITS PEOPLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH BOTH THE CONSTITUTION AND THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW REGULATING THE USE OF FORCE.

- SOUTH AFRICA IS A MEMBER STATE OF SEVERAL REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ORGANISATIONS NAMELY THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE AFRICAN UNION. IT IS COMMON PRACTISE THAT FROM TIME TO TIME THE SANDF IS CALLED UPON TO ASSIST WITH THEIR MILITARY CAPABILITIES IN THE REGION AND THE REST OF THE CONTINENT. OUR PRESENCE IN THE DRC TODAY SERVES AS AN EXAMPLE.
- THE GEO-STRATEGIC POSITION THE RSA OCCUPIES AS A COUNTRY, IS THE PRIMARY FACTOR AND IS FOLLOWED IN IMPORTANCE BY ITS MARITIME ZONES, MARINE RESOURCES, MARINE ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION - AS WELL AS ITS MARITIME TRADE. ALL OF THESE FACTORS CARRY WITH THEM IMMEDIATE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS. THESE ZONES FALL WITHIN THE REPUBLIC'S JURISDICTION FOR MONITORING, CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT OF STATE AUTHORITY WHICH, IN TOTAL, COMPRISES SOME 1,26 MILLION SQ NM (4,34 MILLION SQ KM) OF ASSETS.
- WE REGARD THE SANDF AS AN IMPORTANT AND INDISPENSABLE SAFETY INSURANCE FOR OUR COUNTRY AND OUR PEOPLE.
- HEALTHY, RESPONSIBLE AND WISE PEOPLE DO NOT HESITATE TO TAKE THE BEST INSURANCE FOR THEMSELVES IN A WORLD GOVERNED BY A CLOUD OF UNPREDICTABILITIES.

SAAF UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENTS

THE MAIN INHERENT CHARACTERISTICS OF AIR POWER SHALL ALWAYS REMAIN AS SPEED, HEIGHT AND REACH. ANY AIR FORCE THAT IS UNABLE TO DEVELOP ITS SYSTEMS AND PERSONNEL TO CONFORM WITH THESE ATTRIBUTES LOSES ITS TRUE NATURE AND CANNOT BE REFERRED TO AS THE AIR FORCE. THE SAAF HAS OVER THE YEARS ALBEIT UNDER LIMITED RESOURCES STRIVED TO KEEP AND SAFEGUARD ITS KEY ATTRIBUTES OF AIR POWER.

I CONCUR WITH PHILLIP MEILINGER'S OBSERVATION THAT WHOEVER CONTROLS THE AIR GENERALLY CONTROLS THE SURFACE. FIELD MARSHALL BERNARD MONTGOMERY FURTHER HIGHLIGHTED: "IF WE LOSE THE WAR IN THE AIR, WE LOSE THE WAR, AND WE LOSE IT QUICKLY..." THESE GUIDELINES ARE TIMELESS AND MUST BE ENGRAVED FIRMLY IN THE SUBCONSCIOUS OF SAAF AIRCREWS OF TODAY AND THOSE OF THE FUTURE GENERATION.

IN THE CONTEXT OF A SMALL SIZE AIR FORCE WITH DIVERSE DEMANDS PLACED ON IT, THE FOCUS ON CERTAIN UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS BECOMES IMPORTANT. IN THE CASE OF THE SAAF **AGILITY** (I.E. *THE ABILITY TO RESPOND RAPIDLY AND EFFICIENTLY AND CONDUCT AIR OPERATIONS THROUGHOUT THE SPECTRUM OF OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.*)

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AND **ADAPTABILITY** (I.E. *THE CAPACITY TO REACT TIMEOUSLY AND IN AN APPROPRIATE MANNER TO NEW CHALLENGES, WHILE RECOGNIZING NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND SEIZING THEM WHERE THEY CAN PRODUCE AN ADVANTAGE*) CURRENTLY ARE ATTRIBUTES THAT ARE PRONOUNCED AS CRITICAL ELEMENTS. I CAN PRONOUNCE WITH CONFIDENCE THAT THE SAAF HAS DEMONSTRATED WITHOUT DOUBT ITS AGILITY AND ADAPTABILTY IN THE CONDUCT OF ITS OPERATIONS INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY.

WE PRIDE OUR SELVES IN THE DEDICATION TO COMBAT READINESS OF OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN BLUE IRRESPECTIVE OF ALL THE CHALLENGES WE FACE.

IT WILL BE IMPORTANT FOR THE SAAF TO CONTINUE IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND PREPARATION OF AN AGILE, EFFICIENT SUPPORT CAPABILITY THAT IS ABLE TO SUSTAIN DEPLOYED AIR CAPABILITIES OVER LONGER PERIODS AWAY FROM HOME BASE. OUR FORCE PREPARATION TRAINING SHOULD PROCEED WITH VIGOUR TO DEVELOP AN AIR FORCE INTO AN ADEQUATELY AGILE AIR CAPABILITY THAT CAN ANTICIPATE EVENTUALITIES AND REACT SWIFTLY TO CONTIGENCIES.

OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE CURRENT AND PAST DEVELOPMENTS IN BURUNDI, DRC, CAR, SOMALI, SUDAN,

MOZAMBIQUE, ETC. HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT THE SAAF IS THE AIR FORCE THAT INSPIRES CONFIDENCE.

“WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO THE SAAF AND THE MOD&MV FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE, THE ORYX HELICOPTERS ARE LARGER AND CAN DELIVER A BIGGER PAYLOAD, COMPARED TO THE HELICOPTERS WE USUALLY RELY ON.

WE KNOW THE SAAF ASSISTANCE WILL MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE” COMMENTED THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE MR ANTON BREDELL RECENTLY DURING THE VELD FIRES THAT DEVASTED SOME PARTS OF THE CAPE PENINSULA AND CAPE WINELANDS. THE SAAF IS INDEED HERE TO SERVE THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE.

COMBAT READINESS IS FUNDAMENTAL

COMMENT BY RICHARD J. DUNN, III ON COMBAT READINESS FROM USA

“READINESS IS LIKE A THREE-LEGGED STOOL. THE PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT, AND TRAINING “LEGS” NEED TO BE BALANCED AND IN SYNC TO SUPPORT THE LOAD. THE MOST MODERN EQUIPMENT IS USELESS WITHOUT HIGHLY TRAINED PERSONNEL TO OPERATE AND EMPLOY IT.

CONVERSELY, OUTMODED OR UNRELIABLE EQUIPMENT CAN HAMPER THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MOST HIGHLY MOTIVATED AND SKILLED PERSONNEL. TO FIGHT EFFECTIVELY, PERSONNEL MUST TRAIN WITH THEIR COMBAT EQUIPMENT, PRACTICING THEIR COMBAT MISSIONS UNDER REALISTIC, DEMANDING CONDITIONS. QUALITY PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT, AND TRAINING ARE THE ESSENTIAL DIMENSIONS OF COMBAT READINESS.”

I CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING THIS CRITICAL BALANCE IN THE ENTIRE SANDF. THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TOWARDS THE DEFENCE TO ENABLE IT TO DISCHARGE ITS CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE SHOULD BE GUIDED BY THIS PRINCIPLE OF COMBAT READINESS.

DUTY COUNTRY HONOR

“GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS” JOHN 15V13 (KJV). AS MEMBERS OF THE SAAF AND EQUALLY THE SANDF OURS IS TO SERVE OUR PEOPLE OUR COUNTRY AND IF NEEDS BE TO LAY DOWN OUR LIVES IN DEFENCE OF OUR MOTHERLAND...THIS IS OUR EXTRA ORDINARY CALLING TO SERVE OUR PEOPLE. THE RECENT PASSING AWAY OF RIFLEMAN ALBERT MOKHOTHU AGED 27 (MAY HIS SOUL RIP) ON 19 DECEMBER 2016 IN EAST DRC AND MANY OTHERS WHO HAVE PASSED ON IN THE PAST IS EVIDENCE OF THE NATURE OF OUR CALL TO SERVE.

THIS SOLEMN PLEDGE CANNOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY AND AS SUCH OUR BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS SHOULD ALWAYS DEMONSTRATE THAT WE HAVE A DIFFERENT CALLING – DIFFERENT FROM THE REST. FOR OURS IS TO SERVE WITH DISCIPLINE, DIGNITY, PATRIOTISM AND PROFESSIONALISM.

APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY & SUPPORT

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK GOD ALMIGHTY AND MY LORD WHO HAS JOURNEYED AND STRENGTHENED ME AT EVERY STEP OF THE WAY IN MY TENURE AS CHIEF OF AIR STAFF OPERATIONS. HIS FAITHFULNESS HAS NEVER FAILED ME. FOR THE NEXT JOURNEY AND PHASE IN MY CAREER I AM CONFIDENT THAT MY LORD YOU'LL CONTINUE TO JOURNEY WITH ME - FOR WITHOUT YOU I CAN DO NOTHING.

I WOULD LIKE TO SINCERELY THANK THE SANDF LEADERSHIP FOR ENTRUSTING ME WITH THE AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY TO BE IN COMMAND OF AIR OPERATIONS IN THE SAAF SINCE 1ST OF JANUARY 2013. I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO GROW AND I HAVE TREASURED EVERY MOMENT OF THIS JOURNEY.

TO THE CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE LT GENERAL MSIMANG THANK YOU SIR FOR YOUR CALLS OF DUTY THAT ALWAYS REMIND ME AND MY COLLEUGES THAT WE ARE CALLED TO SERVE. TO THE SAAF LEADERSHIP I SINCERELY APPRECIATED THE BOARDROOM MEETINGS WHERE WE EXCHANGED IDEAS AT TIMES ROBUST BUT WITH THE PUORPOSE OF SHAPING AND MOULDING THE SAAF TO HIGHER LEVELS.

TO MY OFFICE STAFF I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND LOYAL SUPPORT TO ME. YOU WERE ALWAYS AT THE OFFICE EARLY AND STAYED BEHIND TILL LATE WITHOUT COMPLAINING - YOU BECAME A SYMBOL OF DEDICATION TO ME.

TO THE COMMANDERS OF BASES AND UNITS – I WILL ALWAYS TREASURE YOUR COOPERATION EVEN UNDER VERY HARD SITUATIONS – COMMANDING, MOTIVATING AND LEADING OUR MEMBERS UNDER CONDITIONS OF INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES...

TO THE CAPABILITY AREAS AT THE OPERATIONS ENVIRONMENT YOU ARE TRUE MIRACLE MAKERS! YOU ALWAYS PUZZLED ME HOW YOU MANAGED TO STRETCH YOUR LIMITED BUDGETS. HOW YOU ALWAYS MANAGED TO GET THINGS DONE EVEN WITHIN SHORT TIMELINES – THANK YOU FOR ENLARGING MY EXPERIENCE HORIZONS.

TO THE REST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SAAF ITS BEEN A PLEASURE AND HONOR TO BE YOUR LEADER IN MY CAPACITY AS CHIEF OF AIR STAFF OPERATIONS. YOU HAVE IN MANY WAYS CONTRIBUTED TO MY PERSONAL GROWTH AS A LEADER. WITHOUT YOUR COMMITMENT AND LOYALTY THE SAAF CANNOT SURVIVE. I THANK YOU ALL.

TO MAJOR GENERAL MCETYWA – I CONGRATULATE YOU FOR THE APPOINTMENT AS THE NEXT CAS OPS. I HAVE NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT YOUR LEADERSHIP QUALITIES WILL BENEFIT THE OPS ENVIRONMENT AND THE SAAF AS A WHOLE.

TO YOU MRS JACKIE NEL AND HUSBAND FSGT LOUIS NEL – YOUR LOYAL SUPPORT AS MY SECRETARY FOR TWELVE YEARS TILL YOUR RETIREMENT CANNOT BE MEASURED IN WORDS. YOU HONESTLY SUPPORTED ME AND MY FAMILY WITH YOUR UNSHAKEABLE COMMITMENT. THANK YOU.

TO MY DEAR WIFE THOKOZANI AND MY FAMILY – YOU HAVE BEEN SUCH A REMARKABLE PILLAR OF STRENGTH TO ME, SOMETIMES DURING VERY LONG AND LONELY NIGHTS IN THE OFFICE COMPLETING PAPERWORK.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION ARE INSUFFICIENT TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE. FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD IN MY CAREER I KNOW THAT I CAN STILL DEPEND ON YOUR UNFAILING LOVE SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING. THANK YOU SO MUCH...

PER AS PERA AD ASTRA – FROM ADVERSITY TO THE STARS IS OUR MOTTO!!!

I THANK YOU