



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS
Republic of South Africa

MEDIA STATEMENT

“The years of qualified audit statements are over in the Department of Defence”

The Minister of Defence & Military Veterans, Ms Lindiwe Sisulu appeared before the Portfolio Committee of Defence & Military Veterans yesterday. The meeting, initiated by the Minister, followed a dismal performance by the Secretary of Defence before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa). In calling for the meeting, the Minister indicated that “she was baffled

After listening to submissions by members of the Portfolio Committee, the Minister provided shared with members of the portfolio committee the progress made to address audit queries and steps being taken to address financial management challenges within the DOD. She took the members through each qualification, pointing out the root cause of the qualifications and measures undertaken by DOD to date. She committed herself to removing the qualifications. She pointed out that under her leadership she will not tolerate qualified reports. To this end, she has been working with the Acting Secretary of Defence and a team of specialists to not only understand the cause of nine years of audit qualifications but also build new information and financial management systems that will take the DOD to greater heights.

The Minister also reported that the inspector general has submitted an inconclusive report to her on the allegations related to the Chief of Procurement, Mr Mthobisi Zondi. She stated that the outcome was inconclusive. The preliminary report suggests that there is no prima facie case against Mr. Zondi. She however, will only make a definitive statement once she receives the final report. Only then will she be able share it with members of the committee.

She also announced that a new Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Defence would be appointed in the next 30 days. When asked whether she still has confidence in the Secretary of Defence, the Minister reiterated her full support for the Acting Secretary of Defence and commended him for having steered the Department under difficult conditions. The Acting Secretary of Defence was appointed following a leadership vacuum occasioned by the abrupt resignation of the previous Minister and Deputy Minister of Defence and the untimely death of the former secretary of Defence, Mr January Masilela.

The Minister used the occasion to express her dismay that some members of parliament have been taken it upon themselves to issue false statements to the

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media. She referred to a media statement from the DA that suggests that she was asked to investigate allegations against Mr Zondi, which was not true. The same members have been telling media that the Minister has failed to appear before the parliamentary committees.

The Minister want to put it on record that she takes parliament very serious and at all time she continue to make herself available to account and report back to parliament. Since her appointment at her own request she has appeared before parliament more than five times. The Minister will continue to work with the Committee to find lasting solutions to challenges within the DOD.

Issued by Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans.

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