



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS
Republic of South Africa

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS MS NN MAPISA-NQAKULA ON THE AIR FORCE BASE WATERKLOOF (AFB) MATTER

During the period of my visit to Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, I was informed of media reports on the clearance given to an aircraft carrying international guests coming to attend a wedding in South Africa, to land at the Air Force Base Waterkloof. I had upon my return this afternoon, requested for an urgent briefing from the South African National Defence Force on the matter, and established the following:

1. That the Waterkloof Air Command Post to received information from the State Protocol Section of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), regarding an aircraft carrying state Ministers from India and they should assist with clearance for them to land.
2. That it is an established protocol that given its responsibilities, the office of the Chief State Protocol informs the Air Force Base when they have a request for foreign dignitaries to use the Air Force Base
3. Documentation from the DIRCO indicated that they have agreed to the request from the Indian High Commission in this regard.
4. The South African Air Force (SAAF) therefore dealt with the request as a normal process that has always applied when DIRCO makes such a determination and direction.

The following is also important to note:

1. A representative of Sahara approached us for assistance in approving a request that was to be sent by Indian High Commissioner for the use of the Air Force base. This request for assistance was rejected, and since it was not even formalized, the Ministry considered the matter closed. It had been our advice that the Airports Company SA was best placed to assist.
2. It had never been our expectation therefore that attempts would then be made to find other avenues to try and secure the use of the Air Force base through the diplomatic channel at DIRCO.
3. The Office of the Chief of the State Protocol dealt with the request from the Indian High Commissioner directly to the Air Force Base without consultation with the Chief of South Africa National Defence Force, the Chief Air Force and the Ministry.

4. The Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans would never have approved such a request, and that our expectation would be that for a matter involving such a large foreign delegation, consultation should have been made with Defence Headquarters or at the least Air Force Headquarters

I have therefore directed the following:

1. The clearance should be rescinded and that aircraft should immediately be removed from the Air Force Waterkloof base.
2. An investigation on why the Air Force was approached with such a request, including all matters relating to the events of the 30th April 2013.

Thank you

2 May 2013

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