



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS

Republic of South Africa

MEDIA ADVISORY

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EMBARGO: None

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS, HON N. N. MAPISA-NQAKULA, SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE RAND SHOW, 30TH MARCH 2018, NASREC EXHIBITION CENTRE

**The Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube,
Chief of the SANDF, General Solly Shoke,
Chiefs of Services and Divisions,
Generals, Senior Officers, Officers,
Warrant Officers,
Non-Commissioned Officers, Soldiers,
The Nasrec Show authorities,
All Visitors and Guests to the 2018 Rand Show,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It gives me great pleasure to officially open yet another Rand Show that promises to excite and enthral over 400 000 visitors who normally grace this Easter entertainment and shopping destination. The Rand Show, as Southern Africa's largest consumer shows, provides a perfect opportunity for the country's military to reach out and touch base with its vital stakeholder – ordinary citizens - on whose behalf our soldiers are constitutionally mandated to bear arms. The Department of Defence and the South African National Defence Force are excited to be part of this 124-year-old crowd-pulling consumer carnival.

For generations the Rand Show has been entertaining people, connecting them with brands, introducing them to the latest market releases and hooking them up with great show bargains. It has also served as an educative experience for our people, especially

since we started our collaboration in 2011...thus providing an opportunity for our people to be exposed to their South African National Defence Force, the pride of the nation with the best of South Africa's men and women.

The South African National Defence Force welcomes the opportunity provided by the Rand Show to showcase its capabilities and educate fellow South Africans about our military's *raison d'être*, reason for existence, and its importance in safeguarding the constitutional dispensation that our forebears shed blood to help realise. The participation of the SANDF at the Rand Show contributes towards our drive to build a solid consensus on defence with the people of South Africa.

We recognise every opportunity for our forces to participate here as a step closer to the hearts and minds of our peace-loving citizens, with the SANDF as *the* guarantor of that peace.

The 2018 Rand Show promises fun-filled entertainment, first class shopping experience, state-of-the-art military exhibition and capability demonstrations that covers hardware from both land, air and sea elements of the South African National Defence Force. Visitors can rest assured that the ante has been upped and the event will be more riveting than previous ones.

This year being 2018 - the centenary year of former President Nelson Mandela, the first Commander in Chief of democratic South Africa, the SANDF will reach out to the little ones who will be visiting the Rand Show and respond to the wise words of the former President Mandela when he declared that: "Our children are the rock on which our future will be built, our greatest asset as a nation. They will be the leaders of our country, the creators of our national wealth who care for and protect our people."

The people's national defence force will continue its popular Hero's Quest adventure activity where kids will team up with their families in an experiential life in the military fun-event that involves navigation from various points of the Nasrec showgrounds and educate children about leadership and the role the military fulfils in a democracy.

This we will do with a clear understanding that the children of South Africa are the greatest assets that our country can ever have and as they enter the gates of Nasrec, we recognise that they are the future leaders of our country and thus require the necessary guidance and attention, to not only be entertained but also educated about the place of the military within a constitutional framework.

Our soldiers are tasked with the unenviable task to spring to action in humanitarian missions in aid of our fellow South Africans in times of distress, as well as in peacekeeping, peace-enforcement and peace building operations across the African continent. The Rand Easter Show affords us the opportunity to share our stories of success with our people, while also sharing personal anecdotes of the challenges they face during operations.

The 2018 Rand Show also affords the people of South Africa an opportunity to have the look and feel of their country's wide-ranging inventory of battle equipment proudly paraded in our military hardware exhibition stands.

The SANDF's participation here stems from the partnership we entered into with the Nasrec Show organisers after having identified an ideal public relations management platform from which the constitutionally mandated armed forces of our democratic republic reaches out to the people of South Africa and educate them about our role in safeguarding the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the land of our forefathers.

The Rand Show, like other public engagement platforms that the SANDF uses across the country, provides the selfless men and women in uniform, an opportunity to interact with all South Africans of diverse backgrounds. It is our duty to educate them about the huge responsibility that soldiers carry on their shoulders to defend and protect our citizens.

This partnership with Nasrec started in 2011 as I indicated earlier, and has since grown in leaps and bounds, on a large part because of the appreciation the people of South Africa show to our armed forces at this well-attended kaleidoscope of fun and learning. The SANDF also uses the Rand Show as a platform to also showcase the vast career opportunities abound in the military. I can say without any fear of contradiction that there is no career you will not find in the SANDF.

These careers range from and are not limited to pilots; engineers; health professionals across the spectrum (doctors, nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists, dentists, etc.); sea divers; navigators; intelligence personnel; chefs; scientists; accountants; administrators; communicators; ICT specialists; to mention just a sample. I therefore enjoin all South Africans, black and white, to make the SANDF a career of choice. Make no mistake...ALL the aforementioned professions are by soldiers and carried out by men and women in uniform!

Our hardworking soldiers have perfected their offerings for the event and are revved up to thrill the crowds with their military prowess, skill and precision; be it as part of aerobatic teams, precision drill squads, deep-sea diving and land-power capability demonstrations and exhibitions.

The SANDF - the non-partisan defence force of the people that our Commander-in-Chief, President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa sees as "a manifestation of the South Africa that belongs to all of us, black and white, which our constitution directs us to build" - values the great opportunity to engage a diverse audience that includes the senior citizens, the middle-aged, the youth as well as the inquisitive young ones who are the future of our country. The Rand Show affords us that invaluable platform to connect with all these stakeholders.

The SANDF understands that it exists for a purpose clearly defined in our constitution and that behoves it to engage the public and let them in on the life of service that they have signed up to live, and the Rand Show platform provides such an opportunity.

Allow me to conclude by urging all those who will grace this spectacular event to always cooperate with the law enforcement and event authorities, to enable a memorable and safe Rand Show for all in attendance.

It is my wish that all the visitors to this year's event fully experience the wide-ranging infotainment, shopping experience, state-of-the-art military hardware exhibitions, military capability demonstration and all the exhilarating activities that the 2018 Rand Show promises to offer. I have no doubt that you are as excited about the commencement of the Rand Show as we are.

It is now my distinguished honour and privilege to declare the 2018 Rand Show officially opened. I thank you.

ENDS.

Issued by: Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans

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