Contributing to peace and stability in Africa
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FRONT COVER: Capt Dawie Swan (Delta Coy Commander) with Cpl Oreditse Lekgatshane (section leader) at IDP Camp Fata Burno. Read about the SANDF contribution to peace and stability on pages 16 to 18. (Photo by Captain Vincent Kgaditse, Public Information Officer, RSA BATT OP CORDITE 13 2013/2014, (KUTUM, NORTH SUDAN/ DARFUR)
Peace be upon you… this words are often taken for granted by many. The SANDF undeniably plays a significant role in bringing and maintaining peace in our country and indeed on our continent. In pursuit of the elusive peace on our continent the SANDF has since the advent of democracy in 1994 been involved in various peace and humanitarian missions. These missions were executed as South Africa can enjoy peace, stability and economic growth only if the rest of Africa is peaceful and stable. We (SA Soldier magazine’s editorial team) as part of the broader communications team of the Department of Defence and Military Veterans and the SANDF are obligated to inform you of exactly what the SANDF has done and continues doing to bring about peace in our land and beyond.

Thus on regular pages 10 to 11, there is news from abroad, in which SA Soldier extends its eyes and ears to bring you news of what is happening in our deployment areas.

On pages 14 and 15, the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, the honourable Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, urges all communications personnel to publicize the good deeds of the department so that the public gets to know what the SANDF does in peacetime to fulfil its constitutional mandate.

Read on pages 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the role the SANDF has played to bring about peace, stability and economic growth.

The Department and the SANDF’s continuously reinvent and rejuvenate themselves in an attempt to enhance the SANDF expansion capabilities as they embrace the contemporary approach to force structure. Read all about this on 24 and 25.

International Women’s Day (IWD) is commemorated annually on March 8th. On page 47 we bring you a highly enlightening article on the IWD.

The public deserves and indeed has the right to know of the important role this Department and the SANDF play in our peaceful democratic era.

Enjoy this edition.

Lufuno Netshirembe
Deputy Editor SA Soldier

* Translation into IsiNdebele by Ms Lindiwe Masanabo, Directorate Budget Control, Secretary.
Chief SANDF hosts the Chief of the Italian Defence Force

Article and Photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

The Chief of the Italian Defence Force, Admiral Luigi Birelli Mantelli, and his delegation paid a working visit to the SA National Defence Force over the period 5 to 8 February 2014. The visit took place in the context of consolidating the African Agenda through deepening of bilateral relations in a move designed to enhance collective efforts to improve maritime security, and to combat piracy and other criminal activities.

On 5 February 2014, Admiral Luigi Birelli Mantelli paid a courtesy call on the Chief of the SANDF, General Solly Shoke, with the aim of further strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation that existed between the two Armed Forces. The two Chiefs held substantive and fruitful discussions on a wide range of issues of common interest across the bilateral, regional and international spectrum.

The meeting provided the two Chiefs with an opportunity to look at the world situation, particularly maritime safety and security, anti-piracy, peace and stability on the continent and the region, the possibility of expanding knowledge, exchanging training, technical skills, joint military cooperation and joint exercises, as well as maritime research, development, education and training.

Speaking at the meeting, the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, emphasized the importance of the overall strategic partnership between South Africa and Italy. He said the SANDF was indeed honoured to be associated with the Italian Defence Force and was taking ownership of future economic growth and social development.

He added that these and several other multilaterals enabled them to share common values and approaches to the continuous challenges of dynamic global security and the economic environments we live in.

The two Chiefs emphasized that the renewal of the terms of reference of the defence relations would pave the way for cooperation in defence related matters, military diplomacy and in dealing with a number of significant areas beneficial to both parties.
S A S O L D I E R

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MILITARY WEDDINGS

Serving in the SANDF is a most noble thing which most people dream of but never achieve. Serving in the SANDF also comes with other added benefits. As we all know this department is a community on its own. Not only can the organisation conduct funerals or provide medical care or participate in sport, but it can also conduct weddings.

A wedding is a ceremony where two people are united in marriage; the Bible encourages marriage and two people becoming one flesh (a woman and a man). Therefore, it would be nice if the tradition of military weddings could be revived or if members of the SANDF could get the opportunity to attend and honour such an event. A military wedding can take place in a chapel or a military base. The Chaplain Services can be utilised for this. Indeed a military wedding is a privilege for those in the armed forces, also those that have retired. Commanding Officers are seated according to rank, but the most memorable thing about military weddings is the guard of honour (who with sabres/swords, form an arch or steel bridge). I wish military personnel would utilise such opportunities. To those who are already married, may God make your marriages stronger every day and keep the love burning.
Pte David Tshivhula, 1 Parachute Battalion

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The captivating story of Lt Col Azwighangwisi Mukweho, SO1 Occupational Health and Safety Manager at Tertiary Medical Health Formation HQ, which was published in the September 2013 edition of SA Soldier on page 11, has now come full circle.

Thank you for your nice article in the SA Soldier. I will also email the September 2013 edition of SA Soldier to the Editor of the Austrian Peacekeeper magazine. I also emailed the article that was published in the Austrian Peacekeeper to Lt Col Mukweho. Have a nice day and all the best. Col (Ret) Horst Schobesberger, email

RIGHT: Lt Col Azwighangwisi Mukweho that was published in the Austrian Peacekeeper magazine.

SOLDIERS DONATING BLOOD

2014 is a year of good luck that is full of hope. We are glad everybody is back in the unit alive and healthy. 14 SA Infantry Battalion (14 SAI Bn) started this year on a high note with several members being promoted while others are to go on courses. There are those lucky ones who have been transferred to other units where they are to accept promotional posts.

Some are privileged as they are going to work close to their homes and families. This year is 2014 for 14 SAI Bn.

On Friday 24 January 2014 at 08:30 the South African National Blood Service visited the unit. Unit members came in large numbers, from the Officer Commanding up until to the last troop. We all know that lot of blood has been lost through road accidents in the festive season. However, 14 SAI Bn members are prepared to help those in need by donating their blood early in the year. Namhlanje ndim ngomso nguwe (today it is me, tomorrow it is you). May God bless them.
Lt Vumeka Damoyi, 14 SAI Bn

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Let us hear from you

SA SOLDIER welcomes letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited for reasons of style, accuracy or space limitations. Letters should preferably be typewritten. All letters must include the writer’s full name, address and home telephone number. The volume of letters we receive makes individual acknowledgement impossible. Please send your letters to: The Editor, SA SOLDIER Letters, Private Bag X158, Pretoria, 0001. Letters may also be faxed to (012) 355-6399 or sent via email to sasoldier@mil.za We would like to hear your comments or ideas, particularly about matters concerning the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be published - Editor.

UNSHAKEABLE SOLDIERS

In pace they march, pride carved on their faces like tattoos of birth, so unique and original.

Squeaky clean they shine so close to diamonds and pearls, sincere to the pledge we are sworn to, unshakeable soldiers, they stand through severe weather, war scarred, fight on soldier gunpowder to the flesh of enemies that divide us, one Anthem, one pledge, one uniform that unifies us as a community of troops, march soldiers, we salute your dedication, your pride and your sincere spirit, we salute you.

L Cpl Ntando Cheryl Maphumulo, email

U N S A N D I G O L D B R O O K
WHAT IS A BEST FRIEND

A best friend is someone who is always behind you through good times and bad. A best friend is someone who does not hesitate to correct you when you go wrong. A best friend is someone who does not care where you come from. Someone who does not care about your salary. Someone who does not care what car you drive. Someone who does not care about your marital status. Someone who does not count how many times you have sinned against. Someone who is ready to sacrifice for you. Someone who does not judge you. Someone who is always behind you through good times and bad. Someone who does not care where you come from. Someone who does not care about your salary. Someone who does not care what car you drive. Someone who does not care about your marital status. Someone who does not count how many times you have sinned against. Someone who is ready to sacrifice for you. Someone who does not judge you. Someone who is a true best friend. Cpl M. Guduza, Potchefstroom.

GOLF THANKS

Just a short email to say a VERY BIG THANK YOU to you and your staff for publishing the article on the Army Support Base Western Cape Golf Day. You cannot begin to believe how far this goes when one tries to secure sponsorship for days like these. One question: How big are your print numbers for SA Soldier magazine and do you send any out of South Africa? It seems that the timing was just right with the SANDF Veterans Golf Championships and the SANDF Golf visit to Botswana. All three articles featured golfers from Army Support Base Western Cape. Thanks so much again. All the very best for 2014. S Sgt Colin Fitch, email.

*Thank you for your interest in SA Soldier. The circulation figures per edition are 50 000 copies. Yes indeed, SA Soldier reaches readers beyond our borders, such as our military attachés and deployed soldiers in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region – Ed.*

I SALUTE YOU

Lt Gen Michael Nkabinde, you are a significant part of our history, and you leave a strong legacy. We will always remember your patience in turbulent times, your lifelong courage, your inspiring modesty and your selfless devotion to the men and women in uniform and to the nation that you served so well. I admire and thank you. I have been fortunate to work in the same environment with you; every time we met in the passage you displayed a loving spirit and you were a caring father figure to me …

It has been an inspiration to know you and I wish to thank you for your kindness. May you enjoy your retirement and find fulfilment in your new endeavours. (Lt Gen Nkabinde was the former Chief of Human Resources who retired on 30 November 2013.) Sgt Ernest Nkuna, Admin Clerk Command Bodies, Defence Headquarters.

A SOLDIER’S DREAM

Every soldier has a dream. While going off to war, he dreams of coming home. And what’s he’s fighting for is the promise he made to his mother. Whispered in a farewell embrace. Or the tears he wipes away. From his little sister’s face.

He shakes the hand of his father. Then hugs him ever so tight. He’s holding back the tears. With all of his might.

His wife kisses him so tenderly. While his son is at his knee. He scoops him up into his arms. The tears flow for all to see.

His little boy wipes his tears. And says’s “Daddy don’t cry.” I will look after mum for you. If you were to die.

He puts his son down. And turns to walk away. Dreaming, that he will. Make it home one day.

Pte S.D. Mothapo, email.

AIRMAN’S CREED

How I wished to be an Airman, to serve with loyalty, honour and pride. To be a warrior on the ground, and a guardian of the sky. To adapt to a new culture of self-discipline, diligence and service above all else. Not to be one of many, but rather one with many, through uniformity and comradeship. An Airman shows respect and is respected; he obeys and gives orders.

How I wished to be an Airman when he marches on parade; With pride on his head, service at his feet, and responsibility on his shoulders. He flies far above reproach because he is a soldier above all else. “Per aspera ad astra” he rises from adversity to the skies; With integrity as his armour and justice as his helmet, he only cheats death.

Oh, how I wished to be an Airman as he fights at the speed of sound. Or on the battle field advancing on his enemies, while my country sleeps in peace. Or in the trenches, assisting his comrades-in-arms putting their lives above all else. He bleeds during training to save blood in battle; He bleeds in battle to prepare the ground for peacetime.

CO Heathcliffe Jacobs.

I am a South African Airman; I soar on golden wings of honour and valour. This land of my birth I will defend until I am no more. I have cried and pained, bled and wept; more than anything I have carried you Africa. And when my body turn to ashes and this flag lays proudly in my memory, You will know that I went where others feared to tread; And did that which others could not.

Ezase moyeni. Singama qhawe namaphavekazi. (Air Force, We Are Pioneers) CO Heathcliffe Jacobs and CO Noluvuyo Tambekile, email.
PUMA AIRFRAME AS A TRAINING AID

I would like to comment on the article “Helicopter frame will serve as a training aid” that was published in the July 2013 edition (pages 28 to 29) of SA Soldier, which is read nationally and even internationally. As such it concerns me that in the photos we are shown tactical mistakes that might be construed by people reading this magazine as our Army being trained by incompetent members and that our training and doctrine are tactically flawed.

If we look at the two photos of the members debussing from the “Oryx”, it is not true to say that they are taking up all-round defence, because all-round defence implies that the members should all be facing outwards as they guard and protect the aircraft and its cargo. The second mistake is that we train soldiers never to point a weapon at someone even if it’s unloaded, as in these photos it can be clearly seen that weapons are pointed at one another - two basic doctrinal mistakes portrayed to the public out there.

I can understand that for the sake of taking these photos the grouping or “all-round defence” should be close together, but I cannot accept that our editorial staff could publish this, which makes a mockery of what we are trying to achieve in training, i.e. train as we fight and be a professional Army. Lt Col B.B. le Roux, Second in Command 2 Signal Regiment

The letter by Lt Col B.B. le Roux was referred to Brig Gen N. Mpaxa, General Officer Commanding SA Army Intelligence Formation, for comment. Here follows her comment: - Ed

“The SA Army Intelligence Formation takes note of the comments made by Lt Col B.B. le Roux and appreciates his input.

The SA Army Intelligence Corps received the task in 1996 to create a unit dedicated to “battlefield surveillance” in the “close area” as there were very limited sources of information to be collected in this area. This resulted in the creation of 1 Tactical Intelligence Regiment which was equipped with the newly commissioned Tactical Intelligence System. Subsequently a unique doctrine suitable for the area of responsibility was developed.

Surveillance teams are taught the standard procedure for helicopter drills and the “experimental” proposed helicopter drills for surveillance teams. This is where all members debus from the aircraft on one side with a manned LMG pointing to appreciate a possible threat to the aircraft. Two members provide cover while the other two offload the big bags and then place them in a square. The team lies in a square, all facing different directions, in order to provide all-round defence until the aircraft takes off, and they then expand the all-round defence.

During the commissioning parade of the airframe both the traditional and the newly proposed drills were demonstrated to the spectators. The helicopter drills as photographed and displayed in SA Soldier showed the proposed drill demonstration for invited guests. This was done for demonstration purposes only, and allowed all guests present to see the drill; this was explained to the guests as well.

The School of Tactical Intelligence is committed to providing the best training for the SA Army Intelligence Corps in accordance with the vision and mission of the unit. The unit also has excellent and innovative instructors that always seek to contribute to the improvement of doctrine and training. The recent actions in the Central African Republic (CAR) where surveillance teams were deployed successfully is but one example.”

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SANDF AND THE STOCK EXCHANGE

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) - the safeguard of your wealth. A colleague of mine, John, who is not in the Defence space, made a startling statement to me. He said there was a relationship between the SANDF and the Stock Exchange. We were discussing the general importance of the SANDF. He did not develop the idea any further and we went on to discuss something else. I set about exploring this statement. I asked a few senior SANDF members and all of them, without exception, indicated that there was definitely no relationship between the SANDF and the Stock Exchange. I met John again and asked him to elaborate on his statement.

He asked me if I thought there was a Stock Exchange in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). With my limited knowledge of world economics I indicated that I did not know. He indicated that where there was no stability, there could never be a Stock Exchange. I then examined what the Stock Exchange does. In simple terms the Stock Exchange is a facilitator for buying or selling shares. Brokers are middlemen who use the platform of the Stock Exchange to give people an opportunity to make money. On any given day, an average of R20 billion exchange hands in our Stock Exchange.

Here is a very simple statement: as long as one accumulates wealth there will always be a need for someone to protect that wealth. We have alarm systems in our homes to protect what is inside our houses. So the military is the first line of Defence for our country - hence the link between the SANDF and the Stock Exchange. So the presence of the SANDF assures South Africa of free economic activity both within and outside the country.

King Shaka understood the relationship between wealth (Stock Exchange in our case) and the Military. He was the General of the first regiment, called IziCwe. The name came after King Dingiswayo observed the hunting skills of the Bushmen. He was intrigued by the determination of the Bushmen to capture their prey. He appointed Emperor Shaka to lead young warriors called IziCwe (The Hunting Bushmen). He established the amabutho system where the soldiers took more pride in their regimental name than in their personal names. They were surrounded by stronger clans. Emperor Shaka made sure that the confiscated cattle and food were distributed evenly among all soldiers. This should be an example of a reason why the Military Veterans should be looked after. As a civilian I look forward to the day when a soldier of the SANDF takes more pride in the name SANDF than in his or her own name.

In his first year of his reign, Emperor Shaka imposed a share scheme on prosperous cattle owners.
WHAT IS A HAPPY SANDF?

Why do we have to have soldiers in South Africa? The answer is simple, but it cannot be seen by people who are not involved in the security of the country. The SA Police Service (SAPS) are there to maintain the internal stability of the country whereas the SANDF is there to deal with any threat to the country. Most of the citizens of the country do not understand the purpose of the SANDF. When I explained this to people, I used to say: “When a perpetrator is about to steal at your house, does he inform you?” The answer is no, they do not inform anyone. Then I always tell them when other countries are about to attack us they are not going to inform us, but they will come in secret. Therefore it is important to be combat ready at all times for the protection of the innocent citizens of South Africa that may otherwise die.

A happy SANDF is made up of soldiers that are mentally and tactically fit and technically competent. It is also made up of the leadership that ensures all soldiers are treated fairly with a view to boosting their confidence in the team. A happy SANDF can only be ensured if there is no nepotism, tribalism, racism, favouritism or discrimination. Each and every soldier is driven by discipline because it results in cooperation between the person who gives instructions and the person who receives them. Discipline means the glue that holds units together in order to accomplish the assigned mission. Discipline also means to put the task of the unit or team ahead of personal desires. It is crucial for soldiers to be disciplined, especially as lives are at stake. In order to be a disciplined soldier you must have pride, courage, be prepared to work in a team and have commitment. Basic Military Training teaches soldiers to develop good personal qualities and professional skills that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. The most important thing is to ensure that soldiers are well fed in order for them to perform well. The duty of a soldier is to accomplish his or her task with his or her equipment under the most difficult circumstances, such as uncertainty, confusion, stress, and fear of battle. Fear is a natural reaction to combat and unknown situations. Each and every soldier is responsible, while authority is accountable. Soldiers are responsible for making commanders aware of factors that may affect morale, discipline and mission effectiveness.

Soldiers do not fight on behalf of politicians, instead they protect the airspace, maritime environment and land surface of South Africa. A disciplined unit is a unit that is well trained; its members trust each other and believe that they will accomplish any mission given to them to perform. To be a good soldier means to be a good member of the team. Both leaders and soldiers contribute to team building even though leaders are the primary builders. Leadership is learned but it takes time to be where it is expected to be. Good leaders must have values, skills and perform well at all times. A real leader knows his or her fellow soldiers.

Leadership and soldiers must be aware that respect is mutual and must come from both sides. It does not mean that to be a junior you cannot feel the pain. Capt Paulos Mlangeni, Assistant Logistic Officer at 87 Helicopter Flying School.

This is how he addressed the selfishness of the rich cattle owners: “The meaness of the rich and well-to-do is a very serious thing, for they should liberally support the chief, who with his army alone is the shield under which they are able to grow rich. The Army needs cattle and grain, and who alone can supply them but the people who grow fat under its protection, for without the protection of the Army you would all have nothing. Look at me – I am far thinner than any man of my age. Do you eat your cattle and drink your beer? No, but I need these things for the Army and if property owners will not give me what the Army needs, they are useless to me and I will go to feed the birds. Therefore I say if a man has ten head of cattle, he can afford to give one to his chief and tribe, and even two or more in times of stress, for I warn you we have powerful neighbours on many sides who will eat you up and all you have unless the Army stops them.”

Chapter 5 of the Consultative Draft of the Defence Review 2012 addresses the issue of Defence and National Security. National Security extends beyond the military. It includes politics, the economy, social and environmental issues. So the economy cannot thrive and be competitive without the role of the military, which is to protect the sovereignty of the country. The Draft Defence Review says that “the cornerstone of South Africa’s future prosperity is sustainable economic growth and development, both domestically and in the Region”. So national security will be pursued by all means of state power, and that power includes economic power. It is clear to me that the role of the SANDF is much more than we have tended to appreciate. Without the stability brought about by the SANDF, business will not be able to run. Ms Minah Sindane-Bloem, Communication Strategist and Life Coach, Pretoria.

ERRATUM

SA Soldier erroneously published an incorrect photo caption in the November 2013 edition on page 31 that reads “The Army Support Base Western Cape choir during the in-digenous rendition” the correct caption was supposed to have read; “The 35 Engineer Support Regiment Choir (Dunnottar) during the indigenous rendition”. The editorial team unreservedly apologizes for any inconvenience caused by the incorrect caption.

SOLDIER

Let me serve you my nation
If not of love but of peace
Let me hold your hand
Let me guide you to a peaceful place
A land where the grass is green
For I am not an ordinary person
I am your guardian
Your first line of defence
I am a soldier, the warrior

My eyes are red
My feet are swollen
My Life signed away for your life
Darker days are before me, the future bleak
However
Worry less, have no sleepless nights my nation
For I am not an ordinary person
I am your guardian
Your first line of defence
I am a soldier, the warrior

Ms Rebecca Modiba, Intern at SA Soldier.
A busy Festive with the RSA Battalion of the Force Intervention Battalion (FIB)

By Lt John Dovey, Combat Demolition Team leader. Engineer Troop, RSA Force Intervention Battalion

We often get questioned by our wives and loved ones at home who want to know what it is that we actually do. We keep reassuring them that in spite of the reports in the media, we are actually quite safe.

Operations are going on all the time, as determined by the needs decided by the FIB headquarters, but the flow of operations always leaves at least some of us in the main base at Sake.

The fact that we are involved with a unique operation under the auspices of the United Nations, that of the Force Intervention Brigade, has meant that there has been a much higher level of interest in our activities than is usually the case for a contingent deployed with United Nations forces. This has meant that we have grown very accustomed to all sorts of high ranking visits. These visits have been very interesting for us as we have gotten to meet people we would not normally.

The Festive Season has been a busy one as far as such occasions go. The first visit was that of the Deputy Minister of Defence Mr Thabang Makwetla. The Honourable Minister and his entourage was greeted at the Goma Airport by a Guard of Honour made up of members of the Mortar Fire Group on their rest cycle, known to us by their call-sign of Six-One. The Minister spent the afternoon after his arrival in Goma being briefed by, and meeting, the members of the FIB Head Quarters and the FIB Commander, Major General Mwakibolwa of Tanzania. The following morning, the Minister and entourage were airlifted to Sake in a South African Oryx helicopter where they were met and welcomed by the Battalion Commander, Lt Col Altin Gysman and the Regimental Sergeant Major, MWO Coetzee. After being loaded into a Land rover for the Minister and a small bus for the rest of the entourage, they were driven from the Indian Army Landing Zone to the entrance to the RSA Battalion's base, where once again there was a Guard of Honour to greet them.

The Ministerial party was taken to the Ops room where they were given a briefing on the current operational situation as well as the morale and readiness of the Battalion. This was presented by Lt Col Gysman with the Intelligence Briefing presented by Major Makhosi, Battalion Intelligence Officer. The Minister and his party were also introduced to all the Officers and Senior NCOs on arrival.

After the briefing, the party was taken to the large tent, known to members of the battalion as the “Airbus”. There all the members of the Battalion who were present on the base were waiting for the Minister and his party. Once the Minister was present, everyone stood for a reading of the “Code of Conduct for Blue Helmets” which serves to remind us all why we are here and what behaviour is expected of us as ambassadors for our country. After that there was a prayer and scripture reading and then the entire battalion sang a hymn.

The Minister was introduced by Lt Col Gysman and said a few words. His speech was mostly one of congratulations to the battalion on the good job that was being done and a reiteration that the needs of the battalion were known by the highest echelons of government. Then the Deputy Minister sprang his carefully concealed surprise. Included in his entourage was someone who he said wished to address the battalion.

The minister yielded the podium to this person without giving any introduction. This person began to speak and it took a few minutes for everyone to realise that the mystery speaker was none other than the well know comedian, David Kau. This well-known comedian spoke for almost half an hour, and had everyone laughing from the start to the end of his time behind the podium. It was the universal consensus afterwards that the tears of laughter had been a well-deserved cathartic experience and snippets of his jokes were told and retold for hours afterwards.

After the official proceedings were over, the entire Ministerial delegation, together with the Officers and Senior NCOs of the battalion, were treated to a finger lunch prepared from the normal rations of the Battalion. This lunch was enjoyed at the conference area, essentially a canvas tent roof with sandbag walls. The primitive conditions did nothing to detract from the obvious enthusiasm with which the members of the Ministerial entourage, and the Deputy Minister himself took part in the meal and interacted with the members of the battalion who were present. The Deputy Minister was clearly reluctant to leave when urged to by his military aide-de-camp.

The next visit was one day later. Most of the events described above were duplicated for this visit, but there were a number of very big differences. The delegation this time was a civilian one. The occasion was that of the organisations who had sponsored a “goodwill gift” for members of the battalion. After an address by the leader of the delegation, selected members were presented with their gifts with the balance given out after the delegation had left. The gift in this case was a very high quality bag that can be worn on the back or pulled on wheels. It was very favourably received by all members of the battalion as something useful and of good quality.

The next big occasion for the battalion on the calendar was obviously Christmas Day. It was decided that the battalion would be on a “Sunday Routine” for the day with civilian clothing being authorised from the morning. The break from routine was a welcome one and many used the unexpected opportunity to wash their uniforms and other kit. There was a special Christmas church service for the battalion which was enjoyed by all.

Instead of the usual brunch, lunch was scheduled instead and when we arrived at the mess it was to see that the chefs had outdone themselves with preparations. Instead of the food being carried out to the various messes, the kitchen area had been cleared and decorated with a Christmas theme and the food was laid out in the form of a buffet. The preparation and presentation of the food was itself a visual treat and greeted by effusive thanks to the chefs for their effort. As it turned out, the food tasted almost as good as it looked.

In the evening a Karaoke event was planned. This turned out to be a huge success with many people displaying...
unsuspected talents, lead by the Commanding Officer himself!

Over a few days during this period, a project initiated by the Commanding Officer came to fruition. This was a charity drive aimed at helping the various children, including the many orphans, in the area. Members of the battalion were requested to purchase and donate “slippers and biscuits” and donate them to the project. Under the able leadership of Major Makhubela and Chaplain Gxabe, and administered by Sgt Fortuin, this drive was very well supported by members of the battalion.

Over a period of three days, the slippers and biscuits were distributed by the project team to great appreciation from both those receiving these gifts as well as the community members. Chaplain Gxabe also used these occasions to ensure the distribution of the second hand clothing donated for this purpose by members of the community of Grahamstown.

While altruism, social events and visits by high level delegations are not the primary aim of our mission here, they are clearly a part of it. In their own way, these events contribute to the success of the mission because they respectively improve our relationship with the local population, improve morale and show that what we do is appreciated by our government.

Looking ahead to the New Year, it is clear that we have some hard and dangerous tasks still to accomplish, but the social and other events planned will assist in ensuring that we are mentally, physically and spiritually prepared to carry out those tasks efficiently.

As the whole South African Battalion under Operations Cordite (RSA BATT OP CORDITE 13) Headquarters descended to the square between the two kitchens, namely that of the senior NCO’s and Officers and that of the Junior NCO’s down to the riflemen, it dawned on me once I saw the ‘angels’ rendering a song of praise that today had to be Christmas with Capt Thuso Mojakgolo leading the angels. What a beautiful day it turned out to be!

The MILOPS, the CIV POLICE as well as the local UN labourers (Sudanese) were all invited to come and celebrate with us. Isn't that ironic? It is well known that the majority of the civilian population in North Darfur are Muslims, therefore Christmas being celebrated by Muslims? No it cannot be true, but believe me because nivholavhola ntiyiso (I'm telling the truth). On this day, we came under the one umbrella of the United Nations. Lest we forget, not everybody in the RSA BATT 13 is a Christian.

Whoever coined the phrase “South Africa is alive with possibilities” perhaps had the above experience in mind. I cannot say for certain if he/she had any idea how inspirational the phrase would turn out to be.

The preparations for the function were led by, among others, Chaplain Dineo Phaka. Those of you, the loyal readers of SA Soldier, who have ever watched the Wildlife Channel, or even better seen wild animals in a national park like Serengeti or the Kruger National Park, can attest to the fact that in the Lion Kingdom Education System part of the curriculum in the formative years of a cub is to learn to finish off the prey. The lioness catches the prey, but does not kill it. The lioness holds the prey until the cub arrives to practise its killer instinct. Even after the arrival of the cub, the lioness keeps watch and continues to guide the cub. And that is exactly what Cpln Dineo Phaka was doing in this case. Of course, as the saying goes in Phuthaditjaba in the Free State Province, for all the visitors to feel comfortable, dintja di thswanetse ho tlangwa (dogs needs to be chained). It was therefore right time for the OC RSA BATT OP CORDITE 13, Lt Col Webster Maseko, to declare the function officially open after the formalities, the banquet began.

Mitirho ya vholavhola (your action speaks louder), as the saying goes which was made famous by the late Mr Vuyo Mbuli.
The Commander-in-Chief’s Address to the Nation

By Lufuno Netshirembe
Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma

It is the norm that every year the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF and President of South Africa, his Excellency Jacob Zuma, addresses the nation in February. This year (2014) the State of the Nation Address (SONA) was held as per South African tradition in Cape Town in parliament on 13 February. This year being an election year two state of the nation addresses will be held, one on the above date and the next after the election and inauguration of the new President. The newly inaugurated President will address the nation to usher in the new administration.

In my SONA articles of years gone by I normally concentrated on the SANDF aspects, but this year allow me to deviate from this norm by giving you a fresh look at what the opening of parliament or SONA means and explain the intricacies of this prestigious annual event.

What is the State of the Nation Address?
SONA, commonly referred to as the annual opening of parliament, is an address to the nation by the President of South Africa. The President delivers his speech at a joint sitting of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces of parliament. The sitting is called by the President and hosted by the speaker of the National Assembly and the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces. In this annual event the executive, the judiciary and the legislature sit together, something that only happens at this event. The executive is represented by the President, Deputy President and Ministers; the judiciary by the incumbent Chief Justice of South Africa and the Judge Presidents, and the legislature by members of parliament.

The SONA has come to be referred to as the opening of parliament as it is held there every year. The 2014 SONA was, however, not the “opening of Parliament” as the latter resumed work in January with a constituency period, followed by an intense Parliamentary committee programme.

Why must the President address the nation?
In his address to the nation the Commander-in-chief of the SANDF, as the leader, tells South Africans of the status of our beloved country. He outlines our economic, political, and social status and says where we are going as a country, and introduces the state’s policy objectives and deliverables for the year ahead. It is against these deliverables that the Minister of Finance introduces the budget for the coming year. The budget affects all state departments, including the Department of Defence and Military Veterans (DODMV).

It is during SONA that the President tells the nation (including SANDF members) of the state’s domestic and international relations. It thus gives South Africans an opportunity to hear from the Commander-in-chief what the SANDF has done or will be engaged in. Whilst outlining what the SANDF has done or will be engaged in, he will, however, not disclose military classified information.

The Theme.
It is customary for Parliament to adopt a theme for each year. This theme is derived from parliament’s strategic focus and is intended to express the government’s wishes

ABOVE: The Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF and President of South Africa, his Excellency Jacob Zuma with one of the first ladies, Mrs Sizakele Zuma, popularly known as MaKhumalo, standing on the podium of the national assembly building. After the singing of the national anthem the executive goes to the National Assembly from where the President addresses the nation. (Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma).
or its progress since the advent of democracy in 1994 (when the first democratic State of the Nation Address was given in South Africa). The theme is meant to encourage a participatory, representative and constitutional democracy and seeks to focus on parliament’s responsibilities. The 2014 SONA theme was “20 years of a democratic Parliament” to mark a milestone in our democracy.

Participation of in the SONA. While South Africa celebrates 20 years of democracy, the 2014 SONA was the first such address without former President Nelson Mandela gracing the occasion with his physical presence.

As usual the SONA was a ceremonial occasion involving all branches of the state and as well as civilian participation. With the dawn of our democracy in 1994, Parliament’s doors were opened to all.

Guests included civilian participants – a Junior and Civil Guard of Honour and nine Eminent Persons selected by Provincial legislatures in recognition of their contribution to our democracy. Also in Parliament was eighteen young people born in 1994. Nine of them were born on 27 April 1994, the day of our first non-racial, democratic election.

Other guests were representatives of statutory and constitutional institutions, Heads of Mission (the diplomatic corps) and their partners, Guests of the President, representatives of the House of Traditional Leaders, the Mayor of Cape Town, Representatives from civil society organisations, religious bodies, state-owned enterprises, business and trade organisations, trade union federations, academic and research institutions, members of the judiciary and Director-generals of national government departments.

Role of the SANDF in the SONA. The SONA is broken down into three parts; the first being the public participation when the civil and junior Guard of Honour welcomes the President and his guests as they walk along the red carpet.

This is followed by SANDF activities, including a 21-gun salute by the Army and the fly-past by the Air Force. The third part is the actual official address by the President, his Excellency Jacob Zuma.

The 21-gun salute is fired in honour of the head of state, the national flag, other nations heads of state, members of a reigning royal family and former heads of state. Members of the SANDF from the Army, South African Air Force (SAAF), South African Navy (SAN) and South African Military Health Service of service (SAMHS) line the street that the President takes to parliament. A company that included regular and reserve force members from each Service was made available for the 2014 SONA.

According to MWO1 Dan Januarie, RSM at 9 SAI the practicing for this event takes a full week of vigorous and real-time rehearsal before the actual day of execution. “To practise the drill of the day we go to the extent of constructing a replica of Adderley Street so that the rehearsal gets to be as real as the real day”, said MWO1 Januarie.

Maj Lorin Armor, Assistant Director Music of the Air force said: “Of special note was that the Air Force Ceremonial Band wore their new uniform for the first time during the Air Force parade and it was the first time this new uniform was worn at a public event”.

The SANDF indeed executed its tasks with the precision we have grown accustomed to for the 2014 State of the Nation Address.

To the men and women in uniform: well done, and keep up the good work, we shall forever be proud of you.
“Communication is one of the most crucial elements of the modern military; it can be used as a force multiplier and yet if not handled correctly it can have devastating effects in any government department”, said the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said this at the Defence and Military Veterans communicators workshop held over period 21 to 22 January 2014 at the Royal Elephant hotel and Conference Centre in Centurion. The objective of this workshop was to explore how communication could be redesigned and positioned as a strategic support to the execution of the mandate of the Department and the SANDF.

ABOVE: The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula with some workshop dignitaries. FRONT ROW fltr: Maj Gen Mbiza GOC Log Support Formation, Maj Gen Joseph Ledwaba GOC Defence Works Formation, Maj Gen Motlhamme Moadira Deputy Chief of Logistics, Mr Roelf Meyer Chairperson of the Defence Review Committee, Dr Sam Gulube Secretary for Defence, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula Minister of Defence Military Veterans, Chief of Joint Operations Lt Gen Derick Mgwebi, Chief of the Army Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, Chief of the Air Force Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang, Chief of the Navy Vice Adm Refiloe Mudimu and Chief of Defence Intelligence Lt Gen Jeremiah Nyembe. BACK ROW fltr: Mr Siphiwe Dlamini Head of Communications, Brig Gen Xolani Mabanga Director Defence Corporate Communication and Brig Gen Thabiso Mkhosi PSO to Chief of the SANDF.
The Minister requested the department’s communication personnel to fortify the departmental communication measures and efforts. Weakness in communication meant that the citizens were not well informed of the achievements of the Department and the SANDF since the advent of democracy, therefore there is no reliable feedback on how citizens experience and benefit from the new dispensation, including their input on how to deal with various challenges that arise. “Without effective and functioning communicators we as government cannot know who we are in relation to the people we serve”, said Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula.

The Minister cautioned that as a military organization it was essential that information security measures were adhered to and information not be provided haphazardly as there were different security levels in the military. Discipline must be exercised regarding the dissemination of information otherwise highly strategic and sensitive information might fall into wrong hands which will have dire consequences regarding the safety of the state. However, exercising caution must be balanced with the need to share information, thus information management is an imperative that cannot be compromised.

The workshop was attended by esteemed communications experts from various entities ranging from academic institutions to the electronic and print media. Mr Roelf Meyer, Chairperson of the Defence Review Committee, Prof Ronel Rensburg from the University of Pretoria, and Mr Abba Omar, Director Operations of the Mapungubwe Institute, shared sentiments on principles, objectives and the importance of effective communication in government with special focus on the military. Ms Mahlatse Garlands, a reporter of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Mr Mark Klusnher, a reporter of E-News Channel Africa (ENCA) and Ms Erica Gibson, a reporter of the Beeld newspaper explained at length the importance of making information available on time as media worked to strict deadlines. They emphasised that in order for the media to report credibly on military matters, it was important that whilst the Department and the SANDF adhered to its protocols and information clearance procedures it was just as important that the media should be furnished with credible information.

The workshop ended with a networking session, the purpose of which was for the communicators, subject experts, special guests and media personnel to interact informally and exchange ideas on how best to enhance the communication efforts of the Department of Defence and Military Veterans and the South African National Defence Force.
The role of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in promoting peace and security in the region and on the African continent under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and hybrid Peace Support Operations (PSOs) remains a strategic priority of the Department of Defence. South Africa is expected to play an active role in regional defence and peace operations on the continent. Thus the DOD plays a constant balancing act between providing peace-keeping operations across Africa and preparing to defend the country.

The SANDF undertakes a variety of missions, ranging from conventional to peace support operations, defence diplomacy, and support to other government departments, presidential tasks, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. Over the twenty years since 1994, the SANDF has contributed significantly towards creating stability, peace, security and prosperity on home soil as well as elsewhere on the continent.

The foundation for the country’s involvement in peace Missions was laid in April 1999. Since September 1999, the SANDF has been involved in more than 17 peace support operations, involving the deployment of military personnel in the DRC, Burundi, Sudan, CAR, Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia, Eritria, Nepal, the Comoros and Mozambique. South Africa is therefore amongst the world’s largest contributors to the United Nations peacekeeping operations. The SANDF has restored hope for a better life to multitudes that lived in fear in 2002 to June 2004. Operation Teutonic, Bilateral deployment of the South African detachment assisting in the integration and training in the DRC from January 2005. Operation Mistral: mission in the DRC, MONUC now MONUSSCO since September 1999 to date.


**ERITREA**

**BURUNDI:** Operational Fibre, Bilateral deployment and African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) May 2003 to May 2004, and in June 2005 African mission in Burundi (AMIB) was deviated as the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) to December 2009.
the land of their birth because of civil wars and political instability. The SANDF plays a crucial role in promoting stability and security on the SADC and the African continent at large by supporting the South African government’s foreign policy.

The previous deployments of the SANDF have had a great impact and favourable outcome when one looks at the numerous tasks performed by the SANDF, such as during the xenophobia crisis, assisting the SAPS during illegal strikes, the successful world Cup, border safeguarding, Mozambican floods and effective external deployments. The SANDF is and has been always committed to the peaceful resolution of conflicts on the African continent and has made a substantial contribution to mediation efforts, peace-making, peace building and post-conflict reconstruction. However, like all countries, Republic of South Africa has bilateral agreements with individual countries. The South African White Paper on Defence recognises security as all-encompassing as individual citizens can live in freedom, peace and safety; participate fully in the process of government; enjoy the protection of fundamental rights, have access to resources and the basic necessities of life, and inhabit an environment which is not detrimental to their health and well-being.

Despite the increased budget constraints, the SANDF has confidently succeeded its second decade of democracy. Today it is a major role player in promoting peace and stability on the continent. SA’s inherent right to self-defence is a key determinant of the SANDF’s mandate. To remain combat ready, the DOD constantly prepares vast range of contingencies through its involvement in operations locally and internationally.

Over the past two decades, the DOD had to embark on a number of initiatives to promote regional and continental stability. The DOD has deployed its members under the patronage of the UN and the AU. These missions were multidimensional, the military components created a favourable condition for other component to operate, including political component that had to perform its tasks optimally in this volatile country. Peace Missions include participation in preventative Diplomacy, Peace-making, Peacekeeping Operations, Peace enforcement, Peace Building, Humanitarian Assistance and Intervention.

The Lusaka Peace agreement signed in July 1999 prompted the establishment of Operation Mistral under United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations requested South Africa to provide and deploy its troops to its peacekeeping missions after Lusaka Peace Agreement signed on 10 July 1999.

**LIBERIA:** Operation MONTEGO which provided assistance to the United Nations mission in Liberia from October 2003 and was terminated in January 2005.

**IVORY COAST:** Operation PRISTINE, the SANDF deployed to assist in the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process in the Ivory Coast, bilateral agreement in Support of the peace process in the Ivory Coast from July 2005 to December 2006.

**CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR):** Operation VIMBEZELA, during March 2007 RSA rendered assistance to training and the refurbishment of some of the training facilities in Central African Republic (CAR).


Peace in our time...

**Reference**
The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) provides Regular force members and Reserves to be deployed in routine operations within South Africa. These forces are primarily deployed in a borderline control role as part of Operation CORONA.

The forces deployed at the borders are operationally trained, prepared and well equipped with regard to personnel and logistics according to the SANDF doctrine for operational success and morale of the forces deployed in the field.

Echo Company from 121 Infantry Battalion underwent months of rigorous combat readiness training to prepare them mentally and physically to deal with challenges during Operation CORONA.

Operation CORONA mainly targets illegal crossing points at undesignated or gazetted ports of entry, cross-border transgressors, smuggled goods, rhino poaching, stock theft and human trafficking. According to Lt Col Patrick Dumisani Mdlalose, SO1 Land Operations, since Operation CORONA was unveiled a year ago, there have been numerous successes as the cross-border transgressors have been channelled to ports of entry.

Joint Tactical Headquarters North West deployed its forces near the borders, as part of Operation CORONA, to safeguard inter alia Ramatlaba and Derdepoort.

Relieved by Echo Company of 121 SAI Bn from KwaZulu-Natal.

Despite long distances on foot patrol with ration packs, Lt Bongani Petros Mndebele, Platoon 1 Commander, and Pte Sandile Lawrence Gocini, Rifleman of Platoon 1, were able to share knowledge of their previous internal deployments in combating false passports, corruption, illicit activities and bribery at ports of entry as the main focus on this operation. Pte Gocini said there were no challenges with regard to tactical support and sustainment and his colleagues had displayed a high standard of discipline, military professionalism and high morale at the border posts.

The deployed force is a disciplined one with little or no challenges. Col Matolweni longed to have more vehicles and personnel for the types of tasks that need to be performed. Nevertheless the statistics reveal that the operational task of keeping the border safe, in conjunction with other stakeholders and role-players such as members of the SA Police Service, the SA Revenue Service and Home Affairs, has ultimately proved to be highly successful.

Lt Karabo Consolation Mokataka from 1 Tactical Intelligence Regiment in Potchefstroom, detached as an Intelligence Officer in this operation, said no serious cases or incidents were reported at the border. He added that undocumented immigrants were apprehended by Echo Company of 121 SAI Bn as they came across the Botswana border. Operation CORONA continues to yield positive results on the Botswana border, including minimising the flow of undocumented immigrants, combating ivory smuggling, confiscating contraband cigarettes and drugs, and recovering livestock.
The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has in recent times become a source of hope in restoring, keeping or promoting peace through different operations in the region. Not only does the SANDF undertake this task but conducts border control operations too. The South African sons and daughters in the SANDF uniform unselfishly sacrifice their comfort at any time of the year, when called upon to do so, including the festive season.

It is therefore right that their efforts are appreciated. The SA Navy deployed in border line control mission code named Operation Copper has two naval vessels: SAS Galeshewe and SAS Isaac Dyobah which frequently take turns conducting operations from Pemba Bay, a replenishment point. In an effort to acknowledge the hard work to bring peace to the continent the Goodwill Parcel Project annually visits the deployed SANDF members in the region.

In a joint venture between the SANDF and the private sector, goodwill parcels are donated for distribution to all deployed SANDF members over the festive season. The visit took place during December 2013 to Pemba in Mozambique where the Naval Surveillance Patrol operates between the Tanzanian border and the Nabalo region, 200 miles out to sea. The anti-piracy patrol aims to prevent and curb piracy activities in the Mozambican Channel.

Esn Alexander Hugo, combat officer under training said he found the operation fruitful. “This is what we live for. It feels good to be part of the operation that is helping combat piracy. I believe our presence in the region has restricted both piracy and unauthorised fishing.” Esn Hugo said.

On 20 December 2013, the group travelled to the Democratic Republic of Congo in Goma to meet up with members of the Infantry Battalion, Composite Helicopter Unit and the Engineer Squadron deployed under Operation Mistral.

The trip included Sake in the eastern part of the DRC where the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) of affiliated countries have established bases. South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi have pledged troops to back the FARDC forces in the fight against M23 rebels.

Lt Col Alton Gysman, Infantry Battalion Commander on Op Mistral, briefed the visiting group at the base. M23 has been driven out of its stronghold and the situation is relatively calm. They said that since April 2013 a number of operations had been conducted in which they had made contact with the rebels.

M23 leaders had taken refuge in Uganda with the remainder of their forces after the FARDC attack, backed by FIB. They captured the rebels’ last held positions in Tshanzu and Runyoni. They had also mentioned that the situation in North Kivu had improved since the South African deployment. Brig Gen Linda Selepe, Director Peace Support Operations and MCWO Mothusi Kgaladi, Sergeant Maj of the SANDF, who led the visiting group spoke words of encouragement to the deployed members.
On 3 February 2014, the SA Army Foundation held a soil-turning ceremony for a new conference and accommodation centre to celebrate the beginnings of a new milestone in the journey of the Foundation living on its vision of being a dynamic and preferred supplier of validated services and products to the benefit of its members, thereby improving their quality of life.

During his speech, Maj Gen Luvuyo Nobanda, Chairperson of the Board of Control (BOC) said that it was a joyous occasion, especially for the many who had been personally involved in conceptualizing and shaping the SA Army Foundation, including colleagues who shared the vision for the future of the foundation and members who recognize the unique role that the foundation plays in the SANDF and the entire community.

In closing, he said that like the leaders and builders standing before us today, the project we are celebrating required leadership, foresight and careful planning, and he extended his thanks and appreciation to the BOC members, the General Manager of the SA Army Foundation and his staff and their stakeholders for their contribution and support for the new building that will bring new benefits and investments to the members.

For the past 57 years the SA Army Foundation business model has always been to provide value for their members with a variety of excellent market related products, services and benefits beneficial to as many members as possible, including necessities such as life insurance and products aimed at improving quality of life in terms of housing and education.

The soil-turning ceremony coincided with the farewell function for Brig Gen Chris Gildenhuys who left the SA Army to join the Joint Operations Division. On behalf of the BOC, Maj Gen Nobanda thanked him for the services and support he had rendered as a BOC member to the foundation and wished him well in his new endeavours.
An integrated approach to security

By Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma

Tangible signs are visible of the development of our nations, perfectly in line with the building of a globalised Africa and its modernity in a secure and safe environment.

On 5 February 2014, eighty (80) selected officers of the SANDF and international fellow learners from Algeria, Congo-Brazzaville, Lesotho, Namibia and Pakistan converged on the South African National War College (SANWC) in Pretoria to attend the 13th edition of the Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme (JSCSP 13/2014).

JSCSP is a 44-week residential programme aimed at preparing selected officers for senior appointments at the operational level of war by developing their command, staff and analytical skills through broadening their professional understanding of joint and multinational operations, defence management and the wider aspects of conflict.

R Adm (JG) Patrick Duze, the outgoing Commandant of the SA National War College, welcomed the learner group of the 2014 academic year, saying that in this academic year they would be creators and designers of their own paths in the military. He encouraged them and said that it was up to them to determine the shape of their dreams and accomplishments. “You will be given the threads, your hands will be endowed with energy, your minds with more power to reason, your hearts with the power to feel, and you will be placed in a world where nature abounds in the raw materials with which you can build your heart’s desire”, he said.

Officially opening the programme, Maj Gen Manfred Mabuza, the General Officer Commanding of Training Command, reminded participants that African challenges required African solutions. He urged them to apply their minds to the desires of the College, their respective countries and armed forces. He called upon the learners to not individuals and be willing to play your part, study hard and play hard”, said Maj Gen Mabuza.

The 13th edition of JSCSP 13/2014 boasted the enrolment of the first female international fellow learner on the programme, namely Lt Col
Matotsotetsi Tlelai (47) from the Lesotho Defence Force.

Asked by SA Soldier to comment on her expectations regarding the course, Lt Col Tlelai said that our continent constantly witnessed major catastrophes, and security threats that compromised our humanity. She expressed gratitude and appreciation to be on the programme. “I feel honoured to represent my country as the first woman international learner. It is a challenge for me because it comes with a lot of responsibility as my country and defence force expects a lot from me”, she said.

She concluded that in life everything that happens to a person is either an opportunity or a lesson to be learnt. “I hope to obtain great benefit from the programme and learn an integrated approach to security issues, to address mutual challenges and find common ground to identify better ways of ensuring peace and development in our region and continent”, said Lt Col Tlelai.

The JSCSP 13/2014 has 33 students from the SA Army, 19 from the SA Air Force, 11 from the SA Navy, 9 from the SA Military Health Service and 3 from Defence Intelligence.
The first-year students of the Faculty of Military Science at the Military Academy were recently welcomed during the academic opening of the unit. The academic opening is the official opening of the academic year, when all first-year students are welcomed not only to the Military Academy, but to the Faculty of Military Science and the University of Stellenbosch. This marks the beginning of these Officers’ and Candidate Officers’ academic careers, in the service of the South African National Defence Force.

The academic opening was attended by, amongst others, Major General Manfred Mabuza (General Officer Commanding Training Command), Brigadier General Lawrence Mbatha (Commandant of the Military Academy) Prof Russel Botman (Rector and Vice-chancellor of Stellenbosch University), Prof Samuel Tshehla (Dean of the Faculty of Military Science) as well as staff members and lecturers at the Military Academy.

Welcoming the students, Professor Botman said that military intervention is the key to peace enforcement and peacekeeping missions as a means to restore law and order in a country - provided they are legitimately sanctioned, properly constituted and professionally executed.

“The SANDF is a vital cog in Africa’s peace enforcement and peacekeeping machinery. And since these operations are aimed at getting our continent back on track, that’s something we can be very proud of. “

“That’s where you come in. This Military Academy and Faculty can be considered the seat of learning on the African continent for Military Science speakers during the event will certainly accompany the Military Academy first-year students of 2014 or “MA16” as they will be known. They were awarded to keep good company, make good choices and cultivate the right attitude towards their studies and everyday life at the Military Academy.

It is the hope of the Military
University students go from strength to strength as reserves

By Pte Phillip Pitso, SA Soldier. Photos by Sgt Elias Mahuma

A total of 104 University students selected by the SA Army, SA Military Health Service and Logistics Division underwent voluntary part-time military training from June last year under the University Reserve Training Programme (URTP) and finished their Basic Military Training (BMT) successfully.

The passing parade was held on 21 January 2014 at 4 Artillery Regiment Mooirivier in Potchefstroom. The URTP is a military training programme implemented by the SANDF and aimed at enhancing the intellectual and leadership capabilities of SANDF reserves in general, unleashing part-time soldiers but fulltime leaders.

As part of an ongoing process of rejuvenation and to enhance the SANDF’s expansion, this strategic direction illustrates the modern approach to force structure. This time the focus was on the six universities in Gauteng and the North West Province: the University of Pretoria (UP), University of Johannesburg (UJ), University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), North West University (NWU) and UNISA. From these the SA Defence Reserve can draw a pool of highly competent officers that will apply their knowledge and skills in the military environment.

There was a neat and well executed parade by the recruits took place to showcase their newly acquired drilling skills to guests that included Senior Officers from Defence, members of the Reserve Force, university officials, parents and relatives. The main functionary was the chief of Defence Reserves, Maj Gen Roy Andersen who inspected the parade and awarded trophies to the recruits below who excelled individually.

Best academic student: Trooper (Trpr) Carl Smit
Best practical student: Trpr Leseli Mokoena
Best shottist: Trpr Laurence Roodt
Best progress: Trpr Mpitsi Ditlhare
Best male student: Trpr Carl Smit
Best female student: Trpr Lenora Rooyen
Best overall student: Trpr Carl Smit

Gen Roy Andersen commended all those who were involved in preparing for the parade and the training of these soldiers. He emphasised that the kind of leadership they would acquire would and contribute immensely to both their military and professional careers. He added that he had experienced exactly that in his career.

Interviewed by SA Soldier, 22 year student old, Carl Smit, who received three trophies, including best overall student said he was studying for his Certificate in Theory of Accounting (CTA). He explained how determined he was to advance his military career and that he ultimately wished to qualify as a Special Forces Operator. It was indeed a great experience to witness these young students turned soldiers realising their potential and expanding their capabilities.
When Sgt Lulamile Sobantu of 503 Air Squadron was killed in the Drakensberg Air Accident on 5 December 2012, his wife Tamkazi was left behind with five children who were dependent on their late father’s income – not only to survive but also to pay for their future education.

After Ms Sobantu had to evacuate the military house in Thaba Tshwane she returned to the Butterworth district in the Transkei with her two youngest children, Zinette (12) and Mzamo (8). The three older children remained in Pretoria to complete their secondary and tertiary studies.

Chaplain Phumelele (Phumi) Koliti of the Air Force Base (AFB) Waterkloof became aware of the newly established SANDF Education Trust which was established to financially assist the dependents of servicemen and women who have died or have been severely injured in the execution of their duties. He has been spiritually and morally supporting the Sobantu family since the sudden and tragic

ABOVE: Zinette Sobantu (12) proudly shows her 2013 school report

ABOVE: Chaplain Phumelele Koliti from Air Force Base Waterkloof with a happy mother, Ms Tamkazi Sobantu, and her two youngest children, Zinette (12) and Mzamo (8). Now Ms Sobantu also believes that there will be a better future for her young ones.
death of the family’s bread winner.

To be considered for educational aid, application forms must be completed and supported by documents such as proof of income, invoices from schools or institutions, birth certificates, proof of academic progress etc. With Ms Sobantu living in a remote rural area it was almost impossible to get the message to her.

The Implementation Instruction of the Trust promulgated by the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, however provides for a support system to assist families with the application forms.

With the support of the Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, the Acting Officer Commanding AFB Waterkloof and the Trustees, Chaplain Koliti and Col Monica Muller of the Nodal Point that administers the SANDF Education Trust, designed a plan to reach the family, assist them with the completion of forms and obtain the requisite supporting documents.

This is the story of a Chaplain who walked the extra mile in honour of a fallen soldier and a family in need. Congratulations Chaplain Koliti on a job well done!

On Monday, 20 January 2014, Chaplain Koliti reported at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria with the required documents and these beautiful photographs tell the story which will not only bring hope to one family but to many more.

It is believed that this article will also motivate serving members to display the same dedication and passion as Chaplain Koliti in the role they need to play in support of those who need the financial assistance of the SANDF Education Trust.

For background on the SANDF Educational Trust, please refer to SA Soldier, November 2013 edition, page 16.

Enquiries about the SANDF Education Trust can be directed to Col Monica Muller on (012) 355 5107 or faxed to: (012) 355 5882 or email: sandfedutrust@gmail.com.
Waterkloof Air Force Base hosts the first combined Air Force Day and Basic Military Training parade

By Cpl Lebogang Ramaboea, Ad Astra Magazine
Photos by WO2 David Nomthongwana and SASU

Recently Air Force Base (AFB) Waterkloof was host to the first combined Air Force (AF) Day and Basic Military Training (BMT) parade. The annual parade was a first to be staged on a weekend since its inauguration. Lieutenant General Zimpande Msimang the Chief of the Air Force (CAF) was the parade revue officer.

This year’s celebration was held on a weekend, Lt Gen Msimang the Chief of the Air Force (CAF) officiated.

The day was a perfect platform for CAF to address members of the Air Force on the actual state of affairs.

ABOVE: Prestige Unit of the year, AFB Makhado’s Brig Gen Heerden receiving trophy from Lt Gen Msimang

LEFT From civilian to soldiers, fully-fledged soldiers proudly march off the parade ground with a song.
ABOVE: Amn Thabo Matabane, presented with the Best Recruit award by Chief of Air Force.

The general said that in 2014 the organisation will be concentrating on building capacity in every respect, restructuring, transformation in the broader sense, career planning and youth development. The SAAF will also be looking into building reserve force capacity in all mustering and supporting the reserve force flying squadrons.

The CAF was speaking on the 94th anniversary of the SAAF.

Lt Gen Msimang, leading the 94-year-old SAAF, is in early stages as Chief of the Air Force. According to the general, the SAAF is going through a restructuring phase, and he urged uniformed members and captains of industry to allow it to grow in a new direction.

General Msimang spoke about the recent external deployment of the locally designed Rooivalk attack helicopter. The Rooivalk was deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo late in 2013 under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) mission. One of them was on display, still with UN colours, supported by the Hawk, fighter jet.

“The platform was a demonstration of mutual relations between the SANDF and the South African Defence Industry”, said CAF. Moreover, the general said both parties had “designed, developed, and produced the best in the Rooivalk in terms of an attack helicopter”.

On parade, 52 new recruits were presented in public. The course was held from 14 August – 01 February 2014 at Boston near Hoedspruit. General Msimang said the new troops answered the nation’s call, which is “serve our country”. “When I look into your eyes, I know you will carry us even further and higher”, the confident Lt Gen Msimang told the class of 02/2013. The 52 women and men entered Boston as civilians, and on 01 February 2014 they marched off from ABF Waterkloof as soldiers.

Amm Selina Makhunga was declared the fittest female soldier with an average of 84,33%. Amm Makhunga was born on 13 August 1993 in Setlopo, Mafikeng. In 2010 she passed grade 12 at Voortrekkerhoogte High School. The shy Airman said she would be utilised in the protection mustering. “I have always wanted to ‘work’ for my country; now that I am in the Air Force my destiny is halfway fulfilled”, said Amm Makhunga. Amm Thabo Matabane became the biggest winner of the evening with two accolades as the fittest male recruit (90%) and overall (95,1%). Born in Lebowakgomo, Limpopo Province on 02 December 1991 he passed grade 12 at Voortrekkerhoogte High School in 2010. He will now serve the SAAF in the Supply Support environment. Asked what he would miss the most about the course, Amm Matabane said being compared to Cpl Peter “Skappie” Matabane. He said that according to most instructors he was his younger brother, but it should be noted that they were not related: “we just share a similar surname”.

During the parade Lt Gen Msimang presented the award for Prestige Unit of the Air Force (2013) to AFB Makhado. AFB Langebaanweg took the award last year. The trophy, with a fish eagle on top with its wings spread, was handed to base commander, Brig Gen Schalk van Heerden.

The SAAF Band added glamour to the evening with thier brand new uniforms. The band usually receives applause for their music, and 2014 was no different. The band members under the direction of Lt Col Matheys Pienaar, were dressed in their new uniforms. The garments are set to inspire confidence according to the Air Force commander. That is in keeping with the SAAF vision: An Air Force That Inspires Confidence.
MICSSA 2014
Incites Cyber Safety

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma

Research indicates that South Africa is one of the countries seriously affected by cyber-crimes. It is also ranked third most prone in the world to phishing attacks.

The SANDF acknowledges the rapidly evolving cyber-world and has embraced the challenge of adapting the way the military executes its core function.

The Military Information and Communications Symposium

ABOVE: Maj Gen Happy Bhembe (middle) Chief of Command Management Information System said MICSSA symposium puts the country in the map as it competes with other ICT seminars around the world.

of South Africa (MICSSA) 2014 is therefore seen as an initiative implemented by the SANDF to provide a platform where this topic can be discussed and its effects on the SANDF better understood.

The Command Management Information Systems Division (CMIS Div) of the South African National Defence Force and the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) hosted the sixth Military Information Communication Symposium of South Africa, MICSSA.

ABOVE: MICSSA is aimed at local and foreign militaries, the Security Cluster, the ICT Industry (Intercontinental participation), The Academic Environment (including High Schools), and South African ICT organisations and institutes.
Brig Gen Ian Fordred, GOC CMIS Support Formation in the CMIS division said, the theme of the Symposium was “Military Information and Communications Technology within a Rapidly Evolving Cyber World”.

The aim of MICSSA 2014, held from 3 to 7 February 2014, was to continue with the tradition of building on the opportunity of promoting Information and Communication related development between the Defence Community, Government and Industry, both Local and international. MICSSA provides the platform where ideas, strategies, requirements and potential solutions can be shared and discussed.

The first MICSSA symposium in 2003 probed the cost-effective manner in which the strategic ICT requirements of the SANDF could be addressed, hence the theme “In Pursuit of Affordable ICT Strategic Solutions.”

Brig Gen Fordred said cyber warfare is a prospect that needs preparation to keep the country safe. He added that MICSSA has shown how important ICT is in the enablement of command and control to support military operations.

He indicated that MICSSA has seen steady growth in the number of delegates and papers presented. This was encouraged by selecting challenging subjects presented by world class experts in the field.

“In doing so we improve the knowledge base of the members of various defence forces worldwide, we motivate people to study further and become more interested in ICT and we give industry an opportunity to demonstrate new technologies, systems and equipment.” Brig Gen Fordred said.

Maj Gen Happy Bhembe ) Chief of Command Management Information System said MICSSA had an attendance of 17 countries which included Nigeria, Algeria, Spain and the United Kingdom.

He mentioned that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) does have ICT discussion forums with respective countries in the region. Linkages have been forged with government and private entities that are in the ICT domain.

Maj Gen Bhembe said that the SANDF participated with the relevant state departments that oversee the National Cyber Framework which aims to ensure a common understanding and approach to cyber activities in South Africa.

LEFT: Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang mentioned that the defence strategic power does not only exists in land, air water domain, but now include the cyber space.

BELOW: Brig Gen Ian Fordred, GOC CMIS Support Formation said the origins of MICSSA started in the late 90’s when seminars were held under the auspices of the now defunct Maritime Communications Forums.
Musketry simulator for the SAMHS Training Centre Lephalale

Article and photos by Maj Stephan Henrico, Support Wing Commander SAMHS Training Centre Lephalale

Shooting is the act or process of firing rifles, shotguns or other projectile weapons such as bows or crossbows. Even the firing of artillery, rockets and missiles can be called shooting. A person who specialises in shooting is a marksman. Shooting technique differs, depending on factors such as the type of firearm used, ranging from a handgun to a sniper rifle, the distance to and nature of the target, the required precision and the available time. Breathing and position play an important role when handling a handgun or a rifle. The prone position, the kneeling position and the standing position offer different amounts of support for the shooter. Shooting can take place at a shooting range or in the field when hunting, in shooting sports, in combat or by the use of a shooting simulator.

Simulation is the imitation of the operation of a real-world process or system over time. The act of simulating something first requires that a model be developed. This model represents the key characteristics or behaviours of the selected physical or abstract system or process. The model represents the system itself, whereas the simulation represents the operation of the system over time. Simulation is used in many contexts, such as simulation of technology for performance optimisation, safety engineering, testing, training, education, and video games. Training simulators include flight simulators for training aircraft pilots to provide them with a lifelike experience. Simulation is often used in the training of civilian and military personnel. This usually occurs when it is prohibitively expensive or simply too dangerous to allow trainees to use real equipment in the real world. In such situations they will spend time learning valuable lessons in a “safe” virtual environment, yet undergoing a lifelike experience (or at least it is the goal). Often the convenience is to permit mistakes during training for a safety-critical system.

Training simulations typically come in one of three categories:

• “Live” simulation where actual players use genuine systems in a real environment;
• “Virtual” simulation where actual players use simulated systems in a synthetic environment, or
• “Constructive” simulation where simulated players use simulated systems in a synthetic environment. Constructive simulation is often referred to as “war gaming” since it bears some resemblance to table-top war games in which players command armies of soldiers and equipment that move around a board.

In the process of training recruits who have never been exposed to shooting, other than what they have seen in movies or sometimes in real life, none of them has been confronted with the use of a real assault rifle. This fact causes many of the students to be extremely afraid of the weapon, as they are only familiar with the effects of shooting and use this as their frame of reference when using it. The fact that the recruits are afraid of the weapon has the resulting effect that none or few pass their practical musketry training due to the limited amount of exposure to shooting. This is partially due to budget constraints, but most of all due to the lack of infrastructure (shooting range close to the unit) and a lack of time. The SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) Training Centre Lephalale has been instructed to procure a musketry simulator for use during Basic Military Training (BMT) to reduce the cost of musketry training and improve results accordingly.

The use of a simulator reduces cost...
and increases the amount of exposure to the real act of shooting, even if it is only a simulation which we know can never replace the real act of shooting a weapon. The simulator is able to simulate the actions during shooting as well as the result of the shot, which in turn will enhance the confidence of the musketeer. All of these taken together enhances and improves the results when the shottist fires real rounds on the shooting range during practical evaluation. After careful deliberation with SAMHS instructors and role-players in the BMT environment and especially musketry training, have procured us a system that has the following attributes:

The system simulates the complete curriculum of musketry training with regard to the following:

Grouping and evaluation in the following firing positions, namely the prone position, kneeling position, sitting position and the standing position.

The system checks and reports on the following per shot fired, namely natural alignment, aiming picture, breathing, final aiming picture, trigger control and follow-through.

The system is able to accommodate all the shooting tables within the SANDF. The system is able to simulate the following types of firing, namely own time own target fire, rapid fire, deliberate fire and snap fire.

The system is able to teach the members and assist in the firing over longer distances, how to compensate for projectile drop, as well as the effect of wind on the projectile and how to aim off.

On a more technical level the following is provided:

- The system is a fixed installation in a facility of our choice and is able to operate in an existing building with an area 8m wide and 12m long and still has the ability to simulate distances visually between 50m and 300m.
- The system is able to accommodate at least five shottists per session.
- The system is able to report on progress, provide results and errors per individual and subsequently a result is provided by means of a printed report.
- The system has a realistic simulation effect with regard to the recoil and feedback on working parts; sound; effect on target; effect of not compensating for distance and wind; battle commands on shooting point; and scoring and results based on approved shooting tables.

- The system is operable with little training required of the instructor and instruction manuals are included.
- The cost of maintenance and the expertise required for maintenance are very low. All components necessary for the maintenance of the system are readily available and maintenance support is available immediately.
- The system is designed in such a way that the R5 weapons in the unit can be utilised with a minimum of technical adaptation or modification.
- The system is able to limit the number of shots per exercise electronically.

The use of this system will improve the results of musketry training as well as save money on the use of ammunition during retraining. The simulator will also allow us to continue with training, irrespective of the weather conditions, as it is done indoors, thus little or no time will be lost as training can be conducted after hours as well. The unit went through the procurement system and the tender has been awarded to Arms-Strong Technologies, which installed the system which was commissioned on 26 February 2013. Last year the SAMHS Training Centre Lephalale was awarded four slots at the School of Armour to train instructors as musketry coaches. These four members, including the best male and female shottists on the Junior Leader Course of 2012 were trained under the watchful eye of the Training Wing Warrant Officer, WO2 Thabo Masiuana, and were awarded certificates as instructors on this system afterwards.

We believe that the members completing their Basic Military Training at the SAMHS Training Centre Lephalale will soon be on a par with their counterparts at the School of Infantry and 3 SA Infantry Battalion.
Regiment De La Rey – Conventional Infantry Reserve Force in the North West Province

Article and Photos by Mr Kabelo Tsogang, Intern at SA Soldier

After Commando units (SA Army Territorial Reserves) of North West Province were phased out in 2004, Regiment De La Rey became the nodal point for commando members becoming Reserve Force members in the SA Army Conventional Regiment. Since 2009 Regiment De La Rey has received has more than 150 Military Skills Development System (MSDS) Reserves and it remains an active Reserve Force unit. Its members are well trained and prepared to supplement the Regular Force on internal and external deployments. It provides pre-deployment training, guards and continuation training, despite the inevitable budget constraints that continue to impact the Reserves. The role and commitment of Reserve Force members, however, are not in doubt.

Every year Regiment De La Rey conducts a successful Young Lions Programme instituted in the SA Army to orientate learners during school holidays about life skills, leadership, team work, discipline and the role of the SA Army. The maintenance of standards and discipline ensures that the military is at all times prepared for and capable of undertaking its primary tasks, including the successful conduct of military operations. Discipline permeates all aspects of military life: it is the force that guides the ethical and moral behaviour of soldiers during both combat and peacetime.

Regiment De La Rey was deployed externally to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2005 and 2010. Currently it is deployed to the Sudan with 7 SA Infantry Battalion (7 SAI Bn). Regiment De La Rey enhances diversity, is a combat ready unit with both motorised and mechanised infantry. The Officer Commanding of Regiment De La Rey, Lt Col Godfrey Mokoma and Unit Sergeant Major, WO2 Jeremiah Matho, exhibit the leadership and enthusiasm that inspire soldiers in the unit with military professionalism. Discipline is the backbone of the SA Army; no change in methods of warfare or scientific developments will affect this truth.
Reserves receive “real life” training

By S Sgt Johann Kruger,
Communication practitioner at
84 Signal Unit
Photo: S Sgt Johann Kruger and
Mr Larry Bently

Anticipation turned to apprehension as the military convoy turned into the uMfolozi Game Reserve and drove past a herd of giraffe, buffalo and elephant.

The junior leaders from 84 Signal Unit and Natal Carbineers were in the iMfolozi Game Reserve to refine their skills in a “real life” environment. The members did refresher training prior to putting their skills into practice in patrol formations, observation posts, listening posts and vehicle check points in and around the game reserve.

Amidst the roaring lions and laughing hyenas the members proceeded to set up the camp which would be home for the next ten days.

The members received an in-depth briefing from the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Wildlife staff on what to expect and what to do should they encounter various wild animals. The members were informed that each Stick would be accompanied by a game ranger on each patrol.

Cpl Hazel Ndaba from 84 Signal Unit said: “Exercise MACHIBINI was a very impressive exercise. We were able to learn more about how important we are as the first line of safety of this country to secure not only the humans of this country, but also the animals.”

Srn Promise Bhengu from 84 Signal Unit said: “Exercise MACHIBINI was an eye-opener and we learned a lot. We did a lot of night patrols and gained lots of experience. We were surrounded by lots of animals and we got to understand their behaviour.”

Capt Ndumiso Majozi from 84 Signal Unit, Signal Officer for the training, said: “It was very interesting to do the exercise in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Game Reserve. We learnt about the different kinds of wild animals. We also learnt how to communicate with them, and to see when they were angry. Working with the game rangers was a good experience. We formed observation posts, listening posts, foot patrols, including fence patrols, vehicle patrols and roadblocks inside and outside the park.

I would like to see cooperation between the SANDF and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife growing. This was a fruitful exercise. “Lt Col Kenny Lowe, Officer Commanding of Natal Carbineers, said: “The SA Army Reserves are limited by their budget as to how much training can be done in a year, so we have to get the best value for our money and time available. Therefore it was decided to do training in the uMfolozi Game Reserve, as it is a strange environment with real dangers and challenges, which raises the benefits of the training to another level. The training is an accurate indication of how our soldiers will cope in certain situations on deployment.”

He indicated that this level of “real life” training got the members excited and enthusiastic and pushed them to their limit. It became very clear why they had to follow procedures and drills, and why good teamwork was so vital.

Lt Col Lowe concluded: “We had the opportunity to train with night sight equipment and for the drivers to practise and improve their 4X4 driving skills. On the whole the experience had a positive effect and led to an all-round feel-good experience. The locals and visitors to the park were abuzz with excitement on encountering the SA Army on the ground. It was a great show of force and a good opportunity for government departments to work together to the benefit of all. I sincerely hope we can have more of this type of activity.”
Peace Mission Training Centre...A Force Multiplier

Article and Photos by Maj Lizette Lombard, S02 Corp Com, SA Army Signal Formation

The South African National War College’s Peace Mission Training Centre situated on the premises of SA Army College, commanded by Col Edward Ramabu, is a place for learning. It remains the force multiplier of the South African National Defence Force on Peace Missions. One of the courses presented during the year, the United Nations Military Observer’s course, took place from 27 January to 28 February 2014 under the guidance of Learning Programme co-ordinator, Major Sicelo Cornelius Damoyi.

Under the supervision of the Directing Staff, learners received presentations from subject matter experts. Ample opportunity is available on the Military Observer’s Course to utilize knowledge gained, through practical exercises. Learners on course agree...one of the best experiences was a day spent at Gerotek testing their 4X4 driving abilities. Additional practical training on the course include survival skills, hostage and kidnapping, map reading, navigation and GPS, foreign weapons, aircraft recognition, crater analysis, health; stress management, negotiation, cultural sensitivity, Ops Room procedures and establishing team sites.

In his closing address on 28 February, the PMTC Officer in Charge, Col Edward Ramabu said: “Military Observers are the eyes and ears of the United Nations while carrying the flag of South Africa”. He thanked learners for their co-operation during the course and Maj Damoyi for organizing everything.
Members interested in becoming qualified UN Military Observers should be aware that the course should not be taken lightly as it could mean the difference between life and death during deployment. Command and Human Resources channels must be followed in order to be nominated for the course. Further preparations for the course are: ensuring optimal physical and mental fitness levels (as members need to pass the standard SANDF fitness test on the first day of the course); possession of a military and civilian driving licence; researching the United Nations and its role in Peace Missions, and researching the political and economic situation in various war torn African countries.

When they have finished the five week course, learners not only end up with a firm knowledge base for deployment, but also the three pillars needed by UN Military Observer, namely “Observe, Monitor and Report”.

ABOVE: Mr Dirk Lottering of GEROTEK giving guidelines on driving a 4X4 in sand.

BELOW: 4X4 Driving at GEROTEK.

LEFT: Church ruins in the field at 4 SAI Bn’s Doornkop Training Area (just outside Middelburg, Mpumalanga).
Talented shoelace artist

By Ms Lebo Mohapi, Intern at SA Soldier
Photos: Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela

Steven King once said: “Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work.” This is what SANDF Reservist, Pte Thato Ntsane, is willing to do, namely work hard with his talent. He has been blessed with the talent of shoelace artistry. He has dubbed himself the first shoelace artist in Africa and the second in the world, based on his own research done on the Internet.

Pte Ntsane is a member based in Thaba Tshwane at the General Support Base (GSB) under the Supply Support Service Unit, but it is in his spare time at home that he puts his talent to use. He realised his talent last September after he had been tying his shoe laces in different styles and trying to teach his friends how to do it. He is an expert in three styles: shoelace knots, shoelace style and shoelace art.

Shoelace knots are the generic knots that he uses on a sneaker. He creates different patterns, varying between vertical knots, long or short-tail and kasi-style knots. Shoelaces are used by him to create an object or a design out of something from life, eg a flower, a shoe, a foot.

It usually takes him about eight minutes to complete one shoelace object. At some point he wanted to design an eagle representing the SANDF using only his special material, shoelaces. Instead he designed the map of Africa with the colours of the South African flag.

Since starting with his art, Pte Ntsane has been looking for sponsorship, without much luck. Some big overseas companies have made promises, but he would really like to be sponsored locally. One of the biggest shoelace manufacturers, Big Laces in Britain, has contacted Pte Ntsane by Facebook so that his work can now be seen on his and their Facebook page. This can only mean big things ahead for him. He hopes that if he obtains sponsorship, he would be able to showcase his work. He is also thinking of creating his own website for his artwork.

Although art has not always been his passion, his work shows the desire of someone who loves his work. Pte Ntsane said: “When I am doing art, I feel inspired; just holding laces gives me ideas.” He is also inspired by the world’s first shoelace artist, “Professor Shoelace” Ian Fieggen in Australia, who however only specialises in shoelace knots and no other styles. Pte Ntsane has tried several times to contact the professor, but to no avail; he was hoping they could share or collaborate on some ideas.

Asked what he thought the SANDF could do to assist up-and-coming artists, he replied that the SANDF could help by allowing artists to attend an art department to enhance their work and skills and, if assistance is available, ensure that artists are aware of it. Hard work and perseverance are needed. One needs to work hard, have passion for one’s art and be supported by the people who believe in you and even by those who still do not believe in you. It just means you work a little harder to get their support as well. The SANDF can also do its bit by nurturing artists within the organisation.
Medicinal myths and a lack of care for our natural environment will be the forces behind the extinction of this magnificent animal.
This article explains why the overuse of antibiotics can harm you. There are many different schools of thought when it comes to the treatment of illness. Some people subscribe to a more natural approach, citing preventative measures, diet and homeopathic medicines as the solution to managing illness. Others believe in eradicating illness through aggressive treatment and medication. For many healthcare consumers, particularly parents, antibiotics are often viewed as a cure-all.

Dr Neville Wellington of Medicross in Kenilworth in the Cape says: “The reality is that, as doctors, we tend to have a fairly hard time in convincing patients that they do not need antibiotics. I believe that antibiotics are prescribed too often. If a patient does not respond as predicted, more antibiotics seem to be prescribed, when time is often still the best healer.”

When should you and when should you not use antibiotics?

According to Dr Wellington the best approach is to use antibiotics cautiously and only when they are really required. Antibiotics are best suited to treating bacterial infections. They are not effective in treating illnesses that are caused by a virus, like the common cold, flu, most sore throats or runny noses. These will often clear up by themselves. Some ear infections, severe sinus infections, strep throat, severe chest infections, urinary tract and many wound and skin infections tend to be bacterial infections and will need to be treated with antibiotics. The role of physicians in identifying and prescribing antibiotics, when appropriate, should not be underestimated. Correctly diagnosing clinical symptoms goes a long way in the appropriate management and treatment of illness.

Dr Wellington added: “Sometimes it is difficult to tell the difference between viral or bacterial tonsillitis. In such instances most doctors would prescribe an antibiotic. The risk of having a virulent strep throat which could cause rheumatic fever is a concern, and in these instances prescribing antibiotics is necessary and has helped to reduce the incidence of this disease.”

Why the overuse of antibiotics can harm you

The problem with overusing antibiotics is that continuous usage breeds more virulent strains of bacteria, which then become more resistant to the medication. Eventually this requires stronger drugs to be developed to treat disease and this naturally increases
the cost of treatment. In addition, new antibiotics are not being produced fast enough. For Dr Wellington the answer lies in using antibiotics less often to help slow down the formation of more hardy and difficult-to-treat bacteria. He added: “Ideally, the newer antibiotics should be reserved for serious infections like pneumonia, abscesses or severe tonsillitis.”

Dr Dena van den Bergh, Director Quality Leadership and IT at Netcare, fully agrees: “Antibiotics treat bacterial infections, so they should only be prescribed in the event of a suspected or proven bacterial infection. In any event the use of antibiotics for viral infections is not effective.”

According to Dr Van den Bergh the increasing incidence of antibiotic-resistant organisms has highlighted the importance of correct antibiotic use, including bug-drug matching, de-escalation to narrower spectrum antibiotics, appropriate duration of the course and correct dosing. At the same time patients also contribute to antibiotic resistance when they insist on using antibiotics to treat non-bacterial infections or by not taking the antibiotics as prescribed.

Dr Van den Bergh explains: “When microbes are continuously exposed to antibiotics they can develop one or several resistance mechanisms. The genetic coding for this resistance is easily transferred from one bacterium to the next and bacteria are also easily transferred from one person to another. It is for this reason that antibiotic stewardship is under the spotlight in the medical world.

“Patients exposed to multiple courses of antibiotics or extended treatments with antibiotics are at risk of developing drug-resistant microorganisms. An uncontrolled diabetic would, for example, be at higher risk of infection in and outside of hospital; as such a patient would typically receive more courses of antibiotics than a non-diabetic person in good health. In this case the patient’s own, normal gut ‘flora’ of micro-organisms may become resistant.”

How do micro-organisms or infections spread?

Micro-organisms may be spread in any environment and in many different ways. This includes the airborne route, droplet infection (when a person talks, coughs or sneezes) and most importantly, by contact via hands, by touching inanimate surfaces, by equipment that travels from person to person or patient to patient, and on clothing. Frequent and effective hand hygiene by washing with liquid soap and running water and the use of alcohol hand rubs remain the most important method of preventing cross-infection. If we can prevent infections, we can lower the burden on antibiotics.
Bites and stings can be dangerous

Article issued by Martina Nicholson Associates (MNA)
Photo: courtesy of DOD HQ

Bites and stings can be dangerous - generally the smaller the victim the more serious the impact of its venom. The bite can cause pain, cramps and severe anxiety but it does usually respond well to timely, appropriate medical treatment.

A snakebite can cause mild or severe symptoms including swelling or discolouration of the skin in the bite area, a racing pulse, weakness, shortness of breath, nausea and vomiting. In extreme cases, it may lead to shock, convulsions and severe pain and swelling. Never use a tourniquet with a snakebite and always keep the bitten area lower than the patient’s heart. Do not cut the wound or allow someone to try and suck the venom out as this could lead to infection.

Bluebottles and jellyfish

Those who enjoy the sea may need reminding that the ocean is full of its own creepy-crawlies, some of which also bite and sting. Every year many South Africans are stung by bluebottles, and less commonly by jellyfish. For little children the sting of a bluebottle is particularly distressing.

If you get stung by a bluebottle or jellyfish, do not rub the affected area but rather rinse it with sea water. Alleviate the burn by applying vinegar or alcohol to the sting and treat the area with topical antihistamine creams or calamine lotion.

As with other bites and stings, seek medical attention immediately if the person develops muscle spasms, has difficulty breathing or develops an infection. To avoid getting stung by jellyfish or blue bottles, watch for them when you walk on the beach or swim in the sea.
“My 10 year old son, Khwezi, has always wanted to fly aeroplanes. Old Mutual let him spend a day in the cockpit with real pilots to experience his dream job, 15 years before it happens. I have peace of mind knowing that he will have the means to make his dream come true no matter what happens to me. I’m glad I started saving and have life cover in place to help secure his future.”

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How to deal with an ordeal and grief

By Cpln Nkosinathi Ngesi, Chaplain of SA Army Infantry Formation
Photo: Lt Col Gerda Tredoux

The Surgeon General of the United States who served as the country’s medical officer when the AIDS epidemic began was a highly regarded and famous physician. One day he learnt that his own son had died as he was climbing in the mountains of New Hampshire. In a moving and inspiring portrayal of his and his wife’s grief they wrote about their sadness and the faith that sustained them during that difficult period. “Our family life never will be the same,” they wrote, “but we are trusting in the Lord to help us accept the empty place in our family circle and to keep us constantly aware that David is in Heaven, which is far better for him.” Like a number of the parents who the US Surgeon General counselled, he and his wife found a permanent void in their lives after David’s death. In an effort to be comforting so many Christians glibly say: “God will fill the void”, they wrote. “Instead we found that the void was never really filled, but God does make this void bearable.”

In their ordeal the US Surgeon General and his wife discovered what some well-meaning counsellors and preachers had failed to realise: The grieving are not looking for pat responses from people who come to talk rather than to listen. Instead grief filled people need understanding and reassurance, and contact with sensitive individuals who care. The grief ordeal requires a difficult, long-term process of healing that needs no special help; it takes care of itself and, with time, the mourner heals and recovers. The most widely available sources of help are family members, friends, colleagues, ministers, a padre and physicians. These people can help in several ways.

Practical ways to help the grieving person

• Be present and available. “There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me”, wrote C.S. Lewis after his wife died. “I find it hard to take in what anyone says. Or perhaps, hard to want to take it in, it is so uninteresting yet I want the others to be about me. I dread the moments when the house is empty, if only they would talk to one another and not me.” The presence of people can be important, even if they are talking to one another. Try to be available after the ordeal. If, for instance, the ordeal happened to someone special, phone periodically to touch base, and be alert to the need to give support, or to express concern on holidays and anniversaries.

• Make it known that expressing feelings is good and acceptable, but do not pressure the griever to show these.

• Do not be taken by surprise when the griever suddenly withdraws or cries uncontrollably and hysterically, but let it be known that you are available and accepting.

• Be a careful listener. Recognise that persons undergoing an ordeal need their own time and space. Talk about issues such as the feelings and symptoms that are being experienced, the details of the ordeal, even death and the funeral. Details of past contacts with the deceased, the ultimate reasons for the death (“Why did God allow this to happen?”) and thoughts about the future. Guilt, anger, anxiety, despair will be expressed at times. At other times there may be deep moments of silence and withdrawal and these need to be recognised and heard by the helper. Do not condemn these, or scold the mourner or explain his or her feelings away.

• Help the grieving person make decisions and gently try to discourage the making of major decisions (such as the sale of a house or a move to another province or country) at least until a few months have passed.

• Do not discourage grieving rituals, such as “spade washing” or slaughtering to appease the ancestors.

• Lastly and most importantly, pray for the bereaved and comfort them with words from Scripture or the Holy Koran without preaching or using religious clichés as a means for stifling the expression of grief.

How can a person deal with an ordeal/personal ordeal?

I want to start by saying that an ordeal and anxiety are two sides of the same coin: there is a fine line between the two. In Phil 4:6 we are instructed to stop being anxious
about anything. The Bible gives us unusually specific and clear directions for overcoming anxiety. The Bible again becomes so practical in showing how this can be done and in so doing it gives a formula to be shared with people that are undergoing an ordeal.

The following steps can be helpful in dealing with an ordeal:

1. **“Rejoice, this is a command.”** This is repeated twice in Phil 4:4. When the world is dark and dreary, the Christian can still “rejoice in the Lord”. This is because Jesus promised He would never leave us, that He would give us peace, that He would send His Holy Spirit (whom Jesus called the Counsellor) to stay with us and remind us of truths we need to remember and that He would come again to take believers to a place prepared for us in Heaven. With this knowledge we can believe in God and not let our minds be troubled or fearful.

2. **Be gentle.** The Greek word is translated as “gentleness” in Phil 4:5. It has no real equivalent in English. It means: Let everybody see your kind, sweet, gentle, considerate attitude. These qualities do not come naturally. They come with God’s help as we work to control our tendency to condemn others or demand our rights. A negative, condemning outlook on life builds anxiety; a gracious forbearing attitude reduces it.

3. **Pray.** Phil 4:6 gives instructions about prayer in times of anxiety. Such prayer is to be about everything (even small details). It should include definite and precise petitions and should involve thanksgiving for God’s goodness. “If you do this,” the Bible promises, “you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand.” Clearly prayer is therapeutic and a major antidote to anxiety.

4. **Think.** Anxiety often comes when we think continually about human weaknesses, evil influences in the world, and things that might go wrong. Phil 4:8 instructs us, instead, to let our minds dwell on positive ideas, on that which is noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy. This is not to suggest that we should deny problems and ignore dangers. On the contrary, the scriptures are giving evidence for the power of positive, Biblically based thinking.

5. **Learn to cope.** Such coping can be achieved by the following points, each of which can become part of a person’s lifestyle:
   - Admitting fears, insecurities, conflicts and anxieties when they arise.
   - Talking these over with someone else on a regular basis if necessary.
   - Building self-esteem.
   - Undertaking regular exercise; walking is the best.
   - Acknowledging that separation hurts and starting to build new relationships with others.
   - Accept what you cannot change, otherwise you will suffer ill health and eventually die.
   - Move on; do not hold onto the past.
   - Seek help from God and others in meeting one’s needs.
   - Learn to communicate more effectively.
   - Periodically evaluating one’s priorities, life goals and time management.
   - Reach out to others. People who care about others and reach out to give help tend to be the people who cope best with the pressures and anxieties of life. Helping people and bearing another’s burdens may be one of the best ways to control and prevent anxiety.

I want to close this message by saying that the person who learns to walk in daily contact with God comes to agree with the hymn writer who wrote: “I know not what the future holds, but I know who holds the future”. This conviction can bring great security even when others are inclined to be anxious.

At times, however, such trust leads to a blind denial of reality. Such a refusal to accept responsibility or a rigidity of thinking ultimately prevents the person from adapting to changing circumstances. In contrast, the Bible encourages realistic confrontation with problems and flexible decision-making. This lets people grow and adapt to change or danger, even as they maintain an underlying confidence in the sovereignty and wisdom of an all-powerful God.

Let the people of God say Amen, Maranata, Come Lord Jesus come.
To dream a dream …

By Col (Rev) Masello Mothopeng
SSO Religious Communication & Liaison

Frank Sinatra sang “To dream the impossible dream”. Every mother, father, teacher, politician and adult leader has a dream for South Africa’s youth. This dream echoes what Martin Luther King exclaimed in his speech when he said: “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live ...”

We all dream of how our country will develop into an economic giant, a country without strife. The youth are the spring of Life. They leave the safety of the egg and like a baby bird that has broken out of the shell, the youth wait eagerly to spread their wings in the open sky of freedom and hope.

The age of youth is the time when people discover and dream. Without dreams, Mandela would not have become the icon he is today. Without dreams South Africa would not be where it is today. Martin Luther King would have accomplished nothing in his life without his dream. Our youth must dream about the power they have in their hands to transform our country from a developing nation to a developed nation. Is it an impossible dream? No! By becoming aspiring entrepreneurs, speakers of truth, faithful servants, eager participants in outreach programmes and positive thinkers the youth will not just dream a dream, they will live the dream.

They should cast off their indifferent attitude towards politics and corruption. They must realise that darkness will not drive out darkness, but that they need light and love to drive out darkness and take hands with people of all walks and cultures to create a young, unwavering nation. They dare not be indifferent and ignorant. The situation of the country will change drastically if youngsters stand up against corrupt systems.

A whole generation of parents have failed to respect and value ethics, which has given the youth the message that money is to be respected more than values. Many of the youth are conditioned to believing that money, fashion and cheap popularity make the world go round, therefore many of them will not hesitate to earn money by doing wrong. We are part of an environment where people don’t get out of their comfort zone and do something which is really important. Poor excuses such as, “we have voted and elected politicians to take care of these issues” are given.

Like Frank Sinatra they must sing out loud: “I will dream the impossible dream, fight the unbeatable foe of distrust and hatred, and run where the brave dare not go.” Martin Luther King also said: “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter”. It is time that the youth speak out about integrity, respect, responsibility, love and fairness. They must do more than speak about it, they should demonstrate it. It is then that they will be able to sing with Frank Sinatra:

- To right the unrightable wrong
- To love pure and chaste from afar
- To try when your arms are too weary
- To reach the unreachable star
- This is my quest
- To follow that star
- No matter how hopeless
- No matter how far

Let us take to heart the words of Paul in Ephesians 5:16: “Make good use of every opportunity you have, because these are evil days.” Now is the time to live your dream and bring about the change every person in South Africa dreams of.
International Women’s Day

By Mr Tshepiso Mudavheni, Chief Admin Officer, Gender Section

International Women’s Day (IWD) is commemorated annually on March 8th. Its beginning can be traced to the international women’s conference held at Copenhagen in 1910. That historical event was attended by women from seventeen countries, including the outstanding figure of Ms Clara Zetkin whose inspiration led to the establishment of the IWD.

She was motivated by the ideas of women’s emancipation. The day has been acknowledged as a platform for women to advocate their concerns. It is commemorated now throughout the world, and presents women an opportunity to celebrate their achievements. The Department of Defence as an entity is also committed to implementing government policies for equality.

The international theme, “Inspiring Change” is aimed at combating any form of discrimination against women and inspiring them to strive for full participation in social development. The commemoration of International Women’s Day 2014 will focus primarily on developing emerging leadership in the DOD and thus nurturing young officers and non-commissioned officers as the future leaders of the organization.

Lasting change and effective transformation are some of the most difficult achievements for the organisation, but they are essential for grooming junior leaders at an embryonic stage. The departmental theme for this year is “The Transformed Mind Brings Change”. Important as it is to savour our victories, the situation requires that we do not bask in our glory because the women’s long walk to freedom is not yet over.

Gender representation in all decision-making structures and processes in many sectors of society is still a key issue to be addressed. Furthermore, the presence of more women would also serve as a powerful tool for challenging stereotypes and negative attitudes and thus, create an environment that accommodates all members equally.

As we celebrate this day we need to remind ourselves that as much as women are gradually succeeding in their fight for equality and recognition it has been a momentous struggle which is set to continue. The vast array of communication channels should be used as enablers to pursue this agenda further. Activists, equality research, campaigns and corporate responsibility initiatives mean everyone can be an advocate of women's advancement.

Women’s equality has made positive gains, but the world is still unequal. International Women’s Day celebrates the social, political, and economic achievements of women while focusing world attention on areas requiring further action. This day is the story of ordinary women as makers of history; it is rooted in the centuries-old struggles of women to participate in society on an equal footing with men. It is for this reason that we see women advancing in all spheres of life including organizations that were previously male dominated.

Increasingly, International Women’s Day challenges us to take stock of progress made with regard to this endeavour. The Department of Defence and Military Veterans and the South African National Defence Force is honoured to acknowledge women who have sacrificed so much for the future of women. The historical record has demonstrated that women have not hesitated to challenge inequalities and non-inclusive laws. They took a stand all over the world on issues such as discrimination and inequality.
ARMED FORCES DAY
SERVING WITH PRIDE AND HONOUR

A DAY TO HONOUR OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM WHO SERVE THE NATION WITH PRIDE

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