**CONTRIBUTIONS:**

Although all possible care is taken with articles, the editorial staff cannot accept any responsibility for lost articles and photographs.

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After many months of thorough planning and preparation all Services and Divisions of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) are geared and ready to participate in the upcoming Armed Forces Day to be held in Kimberley on 21 February this year.

In 2012 the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Jacob Zuma, proclaimed that 21 February of each year to be observed and commemorated as Armed Forces Day. Thus, the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, authorised the hosting of the celebration in Kimberley this year as well as the ceremonial commemoration of the sinking of the SS Mendi to be held concurrently.

Armed Forces is an appropriate occasion to honour the SANDF men and women in uniform for their patriotic service to the nation and to pay homage to all those who died in the line of duty.

This memorable day (Armed Forces Day) coincided with the commemoration of the sinking of the SS Mendi troopship in which more than 600 members of the South African Native Labour Corps (SANLC) died after the ship was rammed by the SS Darro in the English Channel in February 1917 – the largest naval disaster in the history of South Africa.

This year’s programme of Armed Forces Day, which stretch over a week, will comprise a range of activities. These will include a Fan Park showcasing various career opportunities existing in the SANDF and military hardware. Sporting activities/clinics will be hosted, especially centred around the youth. In addition there will be music events, military capability demonstrations, the Chief of the SANDF Charity Golf Day and an interfaith church service.

The main event of Armed Forces Day on 21 February will commence with a wreath-laying ceremony at the World War I Memorial in Du Toitspan Road to pay tribute to the men who perished during the sinking of the SS Mendi on 21 February 1917. Thereafter a parade will follow through the streets of Kimberley, consisting of a flag company, marching columns, military bands, mechanised columns with hundreds of military vehicles, a gun carriage, as well as a fly-past by the SA Air Force.

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier


Se tla morogo ya gore molaedi moqalo wa mabotho a sešole sa Afrika-Borwa ibile e le mopresidente wa nga morena Jacob Zuma, a hlatho letšatsi la masopedī-tēe Dibokwane go ba la ga kekete kopanele ya mabotho a sešole. Ka go realo, moockedwa mašole a Afrika Borwa a setšåba Kgenerala (Gen) Solly Shoke le yena a napa a fa tišetše le tumelelo ya meketeko ya kopanele ya mabotho a sešole ga e Sitla le se segopotšo sa go nwelwa ga sekepe sa ntwa sa SS Mendi gore di keketsewa sa mma-le-tee toropong yeo ya Kimbali.

Letšatsi le la kopanele ya mabotho a sešole sa Afrika-Borwa le šomišwa go hlopampa banna le basadi lebotho la sešole sa Afrika-Borwa sa setšåba bao ba ikafetšego go hlabanela naga ya bona ka bokgabane ga e Sitla le go gopoloa bao ba lobilebo maphelo a bona mašomong.

Meketeko ya letšatsi le la go se lebalege la kopanele ya mabotho a sešole sa Afrika-Borwa e sepedšišana mmogo le segopotšo sa masetlapelo a go nwelwa go sekepe sa bahlabani sa SS Mendi. Masetlapelo ao a fetele ka maphelo a go feta makgolo-tšhela (600) a maloko a lefapha la bašomi a ba modu a ma Afrika-Borwa (South African Native Labour Corps). Sekepe se sa SS Mendi se nwelše morago ga go thulwa ka mokgwa ya hlašelo go tšwa go SS Darro kanaleng ya Engalela kgwedeng ya Dibokwane ngwengeng wa sekete-makgolo-šeyane lešome-šupa (1917). A ibile masetela-pelo a magologolo historying ya hlabanela-kepe ba Afrika-Borwa.

Go letšatsi šwelwe go meketeko ya letšatsi la kopanele ya mabotho a sešole sa Afrika-Borwa e tla tšeå lebaka la beke ka ge e tbla e tletše ka ditširalo tša go fpapa-fpapa. Ditširalo tšeo di akaretsa lefelė-hlahő lelo le tšlago ya šomišêšašwa go fahloša batho le menyeta le dikgoba tša mesešo tši di lego gona ka šešoleng sa Afrika-Borwa sa setšåba. Go tbla la ga bepe le dihlalho tša dipapadi tši di šedištešgo ba šefa. Ntle ga fao mmimo e tbla mapahaa-phua, go tbla le thupetšo ya bokgabane ba sešole, go beakantšwe le letšatsi la papadi ya Golofo la Moockedwa mašole sa sešole sa Afrika-Borwa yeo e negeše go kgobolelešša mesešo go lešemašeng, go tbla ga bepe le tšlago ya kereke. Letšatsi la kopanele ya mašole a Afrika-Borwa la masome-pedī-tēe Dibokwane kete-pedi lesome-šupa le sepedšišana mmogo le tiragalo ya go bea dikqare tša go gopoloa mašole ao a lobilebo maphelo a bona go sekepe sa SS Mendi se nwelwa. Tiragalo ye e tbla swarela lefelo-le se segopotšo sa ntwa ya pele ya lefase (World War I) mo Du Toitspan Road.

Morogo ga fao go tbla le masepelo ya go moswana-noši wa mašole woo o tšlago kgabišwa le lebotho la go phephedišwa dišofaga, dihlolohla tša mminoa tša šešole, dikarolwana tša mesepele ya go ikgetša ya mašole, makgolo-kgolo a dikolotšo tšo di tšlaketešweke ka dibetša tša tšešole, mabotho a lebašeni, gamgomo le mékabibišo le merašelo ya difofane ya lebatho la moyeng la sešole sa Afrika-Borwa (SA Air Force).

*Néilda Pienaar
MORULAGANYI WA SA SOLDIER

*Translation into Northern Sotho by Mr Malose Malema.
Focus on preventing the infliction of atrocities on wildlife

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photo by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Technical Experts on the Anti-poaching Strategy spent a week at their 4th Multilateral Meeting in discussion to develop ways of preventing the infliction of atrocities on wildlife.

The General Officer Commanding Joint Operational Headquarters, Maj Gen Colin Mokhosi, said the SADC region has embarked on a quest to protect and preserve wildlife and natural resources as a matter of urgency to avoid extinction. He said future generations must be able to witness and celebrate the vast and unique heritage in the SADC region, as such they must devise every means to ensure that horrible acts towards the wildlife is prevented.

Maj Gen Mokhosi said: “Our wildlife is also our economic lifeline which our government and communities must benefit from. As is the case with countries in the Middle East with oil as a natural resource. Southern Africa must economically benefit from its wildlife resources.” He added that wild animals were under severe danger from unscrupulous syndicates which were determined to destroy our heritage. The General said they took advantage of communities living around national parks.

He added: “It is our call to enlighten our communities about the importance of protecting and preserving our wildlife and that they have their own heritage to preserve. We must come with practical solutions to reverse the tide against these atrocious acts directed towards our wildlife by these criminal syndicates.”

Transforming the Cockpit in the Congo

Article and photo by Capt Siboniso Maseko,
Public Information Officer of the Force Intervention Brigade for Operation MISTRAL

On the morning of 29 January 2018 history was made, when for the first time ever since the utilisation of the Rooivalk attack helicopter in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) a Formation of two Rooivalk attack helicopters took to the skies being piloted by an all black crew.

The crew was led by the Mission Commander, Maj Tlhalefo Moroole, and piloted by Maj Msawenkosi Majova. The second Rooivalk helicopter was flown by Maj Mashaole Ramoipone with Lt Sipho Mahlangu being his Weapon Systems Operator. The formation got airborne just after 08:00 on an escort mission with an Oryx helicopter, which saw them complete a six-hour long mission in the South Kivu Province of the DRC.

The Rooivalk helicopter has been deployed since October 2013 in the DRC where they are utilised by the United Nations to support ground troops in their endeavours to stabilise the situation in the Eastern DRC along the DRC/Rwanda border. These two Rooivalk attack helicopters being flown by a crew of highly capable operators have been engaged in successful rocket attacks against different rebel groups in the DRC.
WHAT WOULD WE DO WITHOUT THE VERY FABRIC THAT MAKES UP A COMMUNITY? – WOMEN AND CHILDREN

What is sexual exploitation; women and children abuse? Why does it happen especially to women and children? Is it because women and children are seen as weak vessels? Is it as a result of how women are made to believe that they are soft, caring and forgiving? Is it based on different cultural beliefs, religions, etc? What happened to the spirit of UBUNTU – "humanity"? Where are we heading to as humans? Are we losing the treatment of others in a respectful humane manner and not preserving their human dignity?

What could be the cause of this violation against women and children? I believe that society as a whole, varying to all race groups, are still conventionally patriarchal, which still inflicts the belief that men have authority in society, women are still seen as subordinate to men. It is against this belief that now, in modern days women are faced with a wide range of issues such as domestic violence, sexual exploitation, child abuse, HIV and AIDS, unemployment, gender discrimination as well as poverty. There are also some reason to commit these violence such as, men are more likely to perpetrate violence if they have low education, a history of child maltreatment, exposure to domestic violence against their mothers, harmful use of alcohol, unequal gender norms including attitudes accepting of violence, and a sense of entitlement over women. Women are more likely to experience intimate partner violence if they have low education, exposure to mothers being abused by a partner, abuse during childhood, and attitudes accepting violence, male privilege, and women's subordinate status.

This letter is based on the view of sexual exploitation and violence against women and children in South Africa and other African countries which has become disorderly, cutting across all cultures and at every level of society. It has become a norm that people are no longer seeing humankind as a responsibility of everyone to act against the on-going violence and abuse against women and children which continues to hurt especially some of our vulnerable members of our communities as well as within working environments. Women and children as the victims of violence are also a barometer of the inescapable “culture of violence” in our society.

Sexual exploitation and violence against women and children comes in many forms, such as physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, economical and psychological. All these represent violation of human dignity and rights entrenched in our Constitution.

However, it has been a concern recently that sexual exploitation and more even brutal public forms of violence against women has increased, such as rape, senseless killings, as well “witch burning” in various African rural areas.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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 opinions expressed in letters are not necessarily the views of the Department of Defence/SA National Defence Force. The volume of letters we receive make 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 sacollier@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.

letter of the month

It is very worrying that women tend to be the most victimised sector of communities ravaged by war.

I personally view the violence against women as an “epidemic” which will continue if no action is taken, because it is usually done in the form of sexual harassment, it is widespread, deeply engrained and increasingly considered normative rather than deviant. It is arguable that violence against women has in fact become part of the “culture of violence” in the wider society, in that it has increasingly been subtly sanctioned by society. Women continue to be violated in many ways, and most of the victims are not able to voice these injustices.

It is important to know that sexual exploitation, violence and abuse of women and children not only affects the victims but also influences other issues, such as child and parent relationships; learner and teacher relationships; relationships between children among one another; gender relationships, employer and employee relationships. This also affects societal relationships in general. Violence can also negatively affect women’s physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health, and may increase the risk of acquiring HIV.

The intense experiences of rape, wife/partner beatings and other forms of physical abuse are simply at the most life-threatening end of this spectrum. Violence against women is a much more pervasive and wide-ranging problem which interferes on the social, sexual and psychological dimensions of most women’s lives, and if not solved it leads to severe physiological and psychological damage in a long run. For this motive, solutions to the problem should go well beyond a legal process, whether punitive or preventative. Women need to be empowered. This is primarily a social and educational process that needs to be introduced in societies as well as at the level of departmental and organisational spheres in the country.

Ms Soffie Lidker, Pretoria
COMMEMORATING WORLD AIDS DAY

The Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal (AMHU KZN) in conjunction with the Joint Medical Holdings (JMH) partnered in a venture to commemorate World AIDS Day at the Bluff Military Base in Durban. The event was blessed by Vipra Kirun Satgoor and Chaplain Gideon Hanekom with prayers. The Officer Commanding AMHU KZN, Col Trevor Pillay, welcomed all the members in attendance. He shared a poem titled: “We Shall Overcome” which encouraged young and old members of the SA National Defence Force with their dependants to be responsible in doing whatever they can to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS. All were encouraged to test for the virus regularly as health facilities are readily accessible. Col Pillay counselled men to stop abusing women and children, since it is 16 Days of Activism against Women and Children Abuse. He said: “It’s a man’s responsibility to protect not to harm them.” He then thanked the event coordinating team for making it possible to host this event with success and thanked all units’ Officers Commanding for allowing their respective members to attend the event. The presence and contribution of the JMH to the event was highly appreciated and a token of appreciation was handed over to Ms Jamila Chellan, the Nursing Manager of the JMH Group. The JMH conducted the medical screening of members and the VCT was conducted by the AMHU KZN, the South African National Blood Service and CANSA Association were also part of the Multi-disciplinary Team that was conducting screening of members. More than 250 members including their dependants were screened. The coordinating committee noticed the significant number of men who went for prostate cancer testing and that showed a need to expand the cancer awareness campaigns. The statistics of members who attended the medical screening motivated the AMHU KZN Multi-disciplinary Team to do more health awareness campaigns. The Manager of the Durban Health Centre, Lt Col Diedre Horn, thanked the members for their support and the contribution made by the JMH which made it possible for the coordinating committee to put everything together for this day. Various artists took to the stage and entertained the crowd with reggae, hip hop and jazz music. CO Menzi Cele, Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal

CHRISTMAS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The Force Commander of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), Lt Gen Derick Mgwedi, organised a 21km marathon and 5km race in Goma, North Kivu Province, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, on Christmas Day. Approximately 250 members from different contingents, including the local population from Goma participated in the two races. The aim of the race was to celebrate Christmas and to keep the soldiers in a healthy physical and mental condition. Members from 5 SA Infantry Battalion deployed in Sake and the Composite Helicopter Unit (CHU) participated in the race. In the 21km race LCpl Solomon Tsolo was the winner in the men’s category and Rfn Felicity Farmer won the women’s category. Members who participated received medals from the Force Commander. After the marathon members of CHU aviation celebrated their Christmas in church where Chaplain Richard Modise shared the Word of God with them. Addressing the members, Maj Thabo Khunyile, Acting Officer Commanding CHU, said: “To our loved ones back home, I hope from the bottom of my heart that next Christmas we will not have to hunt for appropriate words to express our Christmas wishes to you, but that having your father, mother, son or daughter, husband or wife back safely and lovingly in your midst will say it all - Merry Christmas from afar.”

Capt Siboniso Maseko, email

Members of the RSA Contingent who participated in the race.

(Photo by Capt Siboniso Maseko)
SA MILITARY HEALTH SERVICE MEMBERS GIVING THANKS

The SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) organised a Thanksgiving Ceremony to thank God for helping this Service and the entire SANDF in 2017 to achieve their mandate of protecting South Africa and its citizens. This vibrant Christian event was held at the Military Health Training Formation Auditorium in Thaba Tshwane.

Speakers at the event started their respective sermons with Christian hymns and quotations from the Bible. Invited SA Police Service member, Col Jonas Masotla was first to deliver his sermon. He quoted from Samuel I, relating the story of Saul whom God chose to be the first king of Israel. He said: “It does not matter whether you had a rough and bumpy 2017, what matters is that you can still rise again in 2018.” Col Masotla reminded the congregation of Saul, an ordinary man who, while looking for his father’s lost donkeys, was destined to meet the great Seer (Prophet) of the time, Samuel. Samuel told him to forget about the donkeys because in the eyes of the Lord, Saul was more important that the lost donkeys. So whatever happened in your in life in 2017, just forget about it because it is of little importance compared to what God will do for your life in 2018.

Col Masotla concluded by encouraging everyone to just be tired of being tired: “So forget about the donkey”. The crowd of approximately a hundred were also inspired by the music and songs provided by the SAMHS Band and the SAMHS Choir respectively. Then it was time for another invited preacher, the Rev Jerry Ramatsi, Deputy Director Spiritual Care Services at the Department of Correctional Services. He prayed for the entire Security Cluster, focusing more on soldiers that may not be able to celebrate Christmas at home with their families. Starting with a hymn, he asked the Almighty to bless all soldiers in the line of duty at sea, on the borders, and those guarding South African airspace to remain strong in their task of keeping citizens safe. He said: “Even King David in his time of distress put his trust in the Lord, saying: ‘Even in the valley of the shadow of death, I fear not for the Lord is with me’. So I say to those soldiers on deployment they should remain in the Lord and their families should not despair.” The main sermon was delivered by Col (Rev) Masello Mothopeng, Senior Staff Officer Pastoral Services. She too spoke on the theme “Forget about the donkeys” in her sermon. She related the story of Job who, despite facing many adversities, overcame the devil’s objective of turning him against God, and he did not succumb to despair. Job remained loyal to God despite the pressure he endured from his wife and close friends who said he should curse God and die.

Col (Rev) Mothopeng said: “Brothers and sisters, the Bible tells us that Job was the man whom God had blessed with all the riches of the world of his time. But owing to Satan’s efforts to cause harm to the most trusted servant of God, he fell from grace. In one fell swoop, Job went from a respected rich man to a mere nobody. He lost all his wealth and children during that faith-testing ordeal inflicted by the devil. But his faith in God grew stronger and God remembered him.” Col (Rev) Mothopeng advised that even if they experience adversity, it is much wiser to thank and worship God as the Redeemer who never sleeps. She said that just as God came through and cured Job of all his sores, He can also dust the 2017 ashes from us and the key is never to forget to thank the Lord when He delivers us, as he did for Job. On behalf of the Surgeon General, Brig Gen Xolani Currie thanked all the SAMHS members for their tireless work in the sickbays and hospitals. He said by so doing, these members are the wind beneath the SANDF’s wings. Brig Gen Currie added: “As much as you took the blame for all the failures in the year, it goes without saying that you should also take this time to rejoice.” He also extended his heartfelt condolences to all the members who lost their lives during the year and bade farewell to those retiring at the end of 2017.

A special tribute was paid to Brig Gen Linda Siwisa who will vacate her post as Director of Nursing in February 2018. The General, one of the few female soldiers to be promoted to General, blew kisses and waved to the crowd as the SAMHS Band played “Time to say goodbye”. Mr Malose Malema and Ms Beauty Pinga, Pretoria

INVENTORS STAND UP

South Africa is in need of new and modern inventions of this age, inventions that will boost economy and decrease the unemployment rate. I think it is about time where South Africa encourages citizens of all ages to come up with their own products. As we all know we have been made in the Creator’s image, God is a creative God and He has made us to be creative. Everybody wants to consume someone’s idea rather than coming up with their own inventions, trying and failing is the best start for any inventor. The education system and society often encourage young people to be labourers “work for someone or Government” more than they encourage creativity. It becomes evident when people perform their jobs that they just studied to pass and to get a job not for passion. Your talent is your passion and it can take you far. There are lots of opportunities in being creative; I mean with the technology in our palms, inventing anything is possible especially for young minds. The truth is not everyone employed in the SA National Defence Force or Government is passionate about their jobs. Yes, education is important, but not everyone will see the university or college doors. Being creative can sometimes make you the fortune you require; sometimes it can take you places and open doors you never imagined. You can be creative using your voice, hands, feet or anything; you can create anything you want. Remember this: A human being alone is imprinted with Godlike characteristics, meaning we are creative because God is creative. Inventors stand up, so that inventors can come up.

Cpl David Mabusha Tshivhula, 1 Parachute Battalion
LAST HONOUR BESTOWED ON BRIGADIER GENERAL MABILU

March 2006 he deployed again to Burundi for Operation FIBRE (ONUB) also as the National Contingent Commander. From January 2009 until September 2010 he was a Training Wing Commander at SA Army College. On 13 September 2010 he was appointed as the Acting Commandant of the SA Army College until 13 January 2012. Brig Gen Mabilu then joined Directorate Product Systems Management as Senior Staff Officer Combat Vehicle Systems from January 2012 until December 2014. From January 2015 until January of 2017 he was appointed General Officer Commanding SA Army Training Formation. At the time of his passing he was Director Doctrine and Policy at SA Army Force Preparation. Conveying his tribute, Councillor Neo Masegela voiced his sadness and his condolences to the family of Brig Gen Mabilu. He further stated that Brig Gen Mabilu played his role in the SANDF and proud to say that he was one of the most senior people in the organisation produced from the town of Kuruman. Councillor Masegela alluded that as the community of Laxey they will always cherish the moments they had with Brig Gen Mabilu and appreciate the organisation for bringing back Gen Mabilu to be laid back at home.

Brig Gen Mabilu’s older brother, Mr Hunter Mabilu, said: “My Brother was a dedicated soldier, patriotic and devoted his entire life to the SANDF. He was married to the SANDF.” He further elaborated that he got to learn more about his brother at his memorial service and he is very proud of his brother as he was informed that he was a very exemplary leader, and gave his all to his subordinates. A lot of people will remember him because he influenced people around him and concluded that by affirming that the late Brig Gen Mabilu was not an ordinary soldier, but an exceptional soldier.

In his acknowledgment the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, said: “Brig Gen Mabilu was a decision-maker, dependable, intuitive and cared about his subordinates immensely. He represented a responsibility to education ... we have lost one of the brains of the SANDF.” Lt Gen Yam expressed his deepest and sincerest condolences to the Mabilu family.

Brig Gen Mabilu is preceded by his father and a sister. He leaves behind his mother, two brothers, three sisters, four children (Thapelo, Lesego, Kgomotso and Boikanyo) and two grandchildren.

May his soul rest in peace. Robala ka kgotso Monareng. CO Masixole Skepe, SA Army Combat Training Centre.

MARRIAGE ACCORDING TO UNMARRIED MEN

Most people who seem to be well informed about marriage are people who have never been married. The prospect creates excitement in women and fear in men. Most women are under pressure to marry owing to their “biological clock”, to which men do not care about that much. Women have made things easy for unmarried men, cohabiting is a new trend which provides men with such benefits. The fear of losing freedom gives most men chills, marriage according to most men is a dream “killer” and they would rather achieve their dreams as a single person before committing. Knowing the real character of a person after marriage is the other problem. The “unmarried” perceive women as nagging and imprisoning and coming back to the same face every day is not an option. Lack of money for “lobola” is another reason why most men are not marrying. Marriage is depicted as the end of life at times. Divorce experiences of friends or family members contribute to the delay of committing for some, although sometimes what one hears or is told might be false, some men think they are not marriage material, until they meet that special person. I have said it before, young people say times have changed and cohabiting is a new thing. In the olden days culture placed pressure on a man and it was demanded that they do the “honourable thing”. In reality, marriage is a natural step which any human being should take whenever they are ready. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they become one flesh.” Just Do It ... Get Married.

Cpl David Mabusha Tshivhula, 1 Parachute Battalion.
The SA National Defence Force in support of the Commander-in-Chief

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Commander-in-Chief and the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Jacob Zuma, recently hosted the annual RDP Education Trust’s Youth and Children Christmas Party at Mnyakanya High School in KwaNxamalala, Nkandla, in KwaZulu-Natal.

The RDP Education Trust was established to assist orphans and children from poor families who could not afford school and higher education fees. Through the Education Trust more than 20 000 children and students, including graduates in Accounting, Education, Architectural Studies, Biomedical Engineering, Marketing, Law, Science and Technology have been educated.

The SANDF lent its support to President Zuma’s 16th RDP Education Trust Youth and Children Christmas Party in line with its constitutional mandate which prescribes that the SANDF shall provide support to South Africa’s population or other government departments in operations and activities other than war, including support for purposes of socio-economic upliftment.

Lt Col Kenanao Lobelo, SO1 Marketing and Recruitment at Directorate Human Resource Acquisition, mentioned that the support of the SANDF to the event was to raise awareness of the role of the SANDF and to show the local community that although the SANDF’s core business is to safeguard the integrity and the sovereignty of South Africa it does not end there and it is not all about guns and war.

Col Lobelo said: “We are here to show the youth that they can choose the SANDF as their career and blossom in the military. There are indeed vibrant career options that the youth can choose from in the SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy and the SA Military Health Service. Within the SANDF the career options we have among others are in Accounting, Architectural Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Marketing, Law, Science and Technology. These are careers that the RDP Education Trust encourages youth to pursue; we are therefore here to enlighten the youth not to despair.”

Talking in typical deep rural isiZulu, Sibongiseni Magwagwa, a 17-year-old local Nkandla youth, said he was extremely excited to see and touch a helicopter (let alone an SANDF helicopter). He said: “I always see this flying machine above in the sky, not even in my wildest dreams have I ever dreamt that one day I will be so close and be able to touch a helicopter. I am so thankful to the soldiers for doing this.”

Some of the local villagers standing in front of an Agusta helicopter on display from 15 Squadron, Durban. (Children, youth and adults from Nkandla and surrounding villages assembled at Mnyakanya High School in KwaNxamalala village to attend the annual RDP Education Trust’s Youth and Children Christmas Party.)
Official opening of the new hospital at Mavivi in the Congo

Article and photos by Capt Siboniso Maseko, Public Information Officer Sake Headquarters, DRC

The RSA Battalion Tactical Headquarters: the Engineers’ Bravo and Charlie Companies, deployed at Mavivi Base near Beni in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) constructed a Level 1 Hospital in their area of deployment in order to ensure adequate health care support for the soldiers on the front line. The Medical Task Group Commander, Lt Col Raymond Kgatitswe, said that the Level 1 hospital was an absolute necessity in enhancing healthcare support within the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) and the mission as a whole. The Commander FIB of the Tanzania People’s Defence Force, Brig Gen George Mshamba, and the Deputy Commander FIB from the SANDF, Col Monwabisi Dyakopu (recently promoted to the rank of Brig Gen), with all FIB contingents were present to witness the good work done by the RSA contingent. Addressing the soldiers, Brig Gen Mshamba appreciated the role played by the RSA contingent in ensuring the primary safety and health of the civilians of Congo. He challenged the deployed military healthcare practitioners to share their knowledge with the local population, as well as with the Congolese Armed Forces, Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC). Brig Gen Mshamba said: “We should strengthen the relationship with the local FARDC hospitals and assist where we can by sharing knowledge. We will be assisting in building a better DRC and a better Africa.”

This hospital will provide healthcare support that includes medical, emergency care/ambulance service, pharmaceutical, psychology and social work support to all United Nations (UN) personnel and other approved clientele. UN level 1 medical support is the first level where medical assistance would be provided by a medical officer and the team. This level of support is usually provided by the basic medical team or forward medical team (FMT) of the field units and includes resuscitation, stabilisation, triage and evacuation of patients. It will be manned by a team of highly trained and capable healthcare practitioners. They will ensure provision of proper medical support to ensure health, prevention and treatment of diseases, evacuation of sick and wounded soldiers and the re-supply of medical material through this facility’s medical logistic section.

The Officer Commanding RSA Battalion, Lt Col Dibuwe Tigele, appreciated the efforts of the Medical Task Group Commander and all members who made the day possible, including invited guests from other countries.

Fltr: The Medical Task Group Commander, Lt Col Raymond Kgatitswe, the Commander FIB of the Tanzania People’s Defence Force, Brig Gen George Mshamba, and the Officer Commanding RSA Battalion, Lt Col Dibuwe Tigele, in front of the new hospital.

The Choir of the RSA Battalion Tactical Headquarters Charlie Company entertaining the guests at the opening of the new hospital.
The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is proud to officially roll-out the first mobility package (operational vehicles) - Toyota Land Cruisers. I am thrilled because these vehicles are strictly designed to protect the soldiers as they risk their lives protecting the KwaZulu-Natal border. I have been waiting for this moment and am happy it has finally arrived, now I can say that the adversaries are in trouble,” said Col Lucky Sangweni (now Brig Gen), the then Officer Commanding Joint Tactical Headquarters KwaZulu-Natal.

The reason for launching these vehicles is to reduce criminal activities on our borders. Our country is faced with a great deal of criminal activity along the border and numerous undocumented persons cross over it. High volumes of illegal goods and even rare gem stones are confiscated, criminals having intended to smuggle them out of the country. The vehicles will come in handy in preventing illegal cross-borders activity and will stabilise the area of operations and neutralise criminal intentions.

Lt Gen Barney Hlatshwayo, the Chief of Joint Operations, said: “I would like to express my appreciation to the CSIR and the University of Pretoria’s Engineering Faculty for assisting with the modification of the vehicles and in keeping their warranty. The SANDF is thankful for this support and assistance. If it was not for this the launching of the mobility package would not have been a success, for that I will forever be grateful.”

SA Soldier conducted an interview with Lt Col Phumzile Shingange, Officer Commanding 1 SA Tank Regiment, deployed on the KwaZulu-Natal border who received the first mobility package (operational vehicles). When asked how she felt after the launching of the new operational vehicles, Lt Col Shingange replied: “I feel great; most important is that my soldiers are pleased with the vehicles. We had challenges when operating on the Mozambique border as we did not have mobility, but now that we have it I am certain that our country
What are some of the challenges that you think you might face as you continue with the mandate and what do you think will be the main challenge? She replied: “The challenge I foresee is that the criminals now know that we have mobility, so I fear that they might be more aggressive. We failed to dominate the borders in the way we wanted to because of a lack of resources, but now things have changed and we strive to dominate and protect our country with everything we have.”

Do you think the design of the vehicles will come in handy and give you an advantage concerning criminal activities on the borders? Lt Col Shingange replied: “Yes, I am certain, these vehicles will facilitate our work as we will be able to cover greater distances on patrol. Protecting our country is our main mission and by combating illegal activities we will do our part. One last thing: my troops are very happy with the outcome and the special features on the vehicles. It’s important to work in a happy environment and to make sure that your workers are also happy to ensure that illegal activities do not take place on our borders.

“I wish I could find a better way to express my feelings apart from the excitement I feel right now. I am really thankful to the SANDF for its hard work in protecting our country. Now I can say that criminals have no place to hide.”

The reason for launching these operational vehicles (mobility package) is to reduce criminal activities on our borders.
The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) addressed the issue of mobility for Operation CORONA in the Musina Operational Base by introducing the newly acquired mobility package (operational vehicles) with the aim of adequately safeguarding the South African borders and its nation.

The Officer Commanding Joint Tactical Headquarters Limpopo, Col Joseph Tshugulu, recently rolled-out the mobility package at Musina Operational Base for Operation CORONA. The mobility package included command and control vehicles, troop carrier vehicles, logistical support vehicles, as well as, namely Land Cruisers (4.2, 4.2 V6 diesel and 4x4 single cab fitted with radios and military specifications).

The command and control vehicle is fitted with an office and dual battery system, which supplies electricity to computers and printers in an office. It is also fitted with an additional generator and weapons.

The troop carrier vehicle is fitted with a strengthened roll cage, which serves as a means of transport for border safeguarding. It has space for six passengers.
The command and control vehicle is fitted with an office and dual battery system, which supplies electricity to computers and printers in an office. It is also fitted with an additional generator and weapons.

The troop carrier vehicle is fitted with a strengthened roll cage, which serves as a means of transport for border safeguarding. It has space for six passengers.

Explaining the features of the logistical support vehicle, Warrant Officer Joint Tactical Headquarters Limpopo, MWO Victor Madzane, said: “The logistical support vehicle is fitted with a 180 litre diesel tank for refuelling other vehicles and a 120 litre tank for water replenishment. It also has weapon compartments, a recovery kit and storage bins for equipment. In addition, the vehicle is fitted with a tyre pressure pump and two diesel tanks to sustain itself.”

In his presentation Lt Col Johan Herbst, SO1 Land Ops Joint Tactical Headquarters Limpopo, said the previous mobility packages were commissioned in 2003. He said the operational vehicles were obsolete, hence the new updated mobility package.

According to Lt Col Herbst the roll-out of the new mobility package was necessary to assist enhancement of the success rate of border safeguarding. He believes that with these operational vehicles soldiers will now be highly mobile with quick reaction time.

Lt Col Herbst said the new mobility package was researched in 2009 to select the best type of operational vehicles needed for border safeguarding. This was done after the SANDF returned to border safeguarding duties. He added that the vehicles were first tested on various terrains for assessment. The procurement commenced in 2015 ushering the roll-out of mobility packages in 2017.

Following the roll-out of the mobility package the soldiers internally deployed on the Musina/Zimbabwe border received Goodwill Parcels from the various representatives of sponsors and SANDF members. This was done as a gesture of goodwill, reaffirming appreciation for the soldiers’ continued efforts in safeguarding the South African borders, especially over the festive season. Representatives of sponsors acknowledged the selfless work done by our soldiers for protecting the borders at the risk of their own lives.

Gathered at Musina Operational Base, Col Tshugulu thanked the deployed soldiers for their good work and for leaving their families in the quest of protecting the country. He added: “You can only do this if you love your country. I know it is not easy to leave your families for several months to perform military duties. I have a lot of respect for you.”
Lt Gen Derick Mgwebi, the Force Commander of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), has a responsibility to maintain peace and ensure safety of all law abiding citizens of the host country and forces under his command. Preventing attacks by negative peacekeepers such as this is obviously very concerning and indeed must be condemned in the strongest terms, they constitute serious violations and as such forces is his highest priority. On the evening of 7 December 2017 negative forces operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) attacked a MONUSCO Company Operating Base (COB) at Semuliki in Beni territory, North Kivu. Lt Gen Mgwebi said: "Attacks on
require appropriate counter measures. As the Force Commander I must ensure that United Nations mandatory prescripts are meticulously adhered to in undertaking countermeasures against these atrocities.”

The attack was viewed in such a serious light that Mr David Gressly, General, with Lt Gen Mgwebi and Lt Gen Paul Mella (Ret), the Ambassador of Tanzania to the DRC, had to fly in two South African Oryx helicopters in United Nations colours to the Semuliki COB to do an aerial assessment of the decimated camp. The delegation, escorted by a Rooivalk helicopter, landed at the Tanzanian Base in Kamago COB where they were met with the soldiers.

In Kamago, Lt Gen Mgwebi expressed his condolences to the families who lost their loved ones and paid homage to the soldiers who perished. He encouraged soldiers under his command not to be disheartened by the 7 December 2017 attack. A memorial service was held at Beni Base on 11 December attended by Mr Gressly, Lt Gen Mgwebi and Lt Gen Mella (Ret).

Rfn Sikhulile Khanyi with the other soldiers ready to go to Semuliki Company Operating Base where they were expected to recapture the base from negative forces.

Rfn Deon Smith ready to recapture Semuliki Company Operating Base from negative forces.

An SA Air Force SANDF Oryx helicopter under the United Nations auspices flying over the dense jungle in Beni in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) has forces deployed as part of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO) in support of peace missions. Over the years the SANDF has embarked on a number of initiatives to promote regional and continental stability. Peacekeeping has been important to the SANDF’s efforts thus contributing to a better Africa.

During May 2000 the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations requested South Africa to urgently deploy its specialist elements in support of MONUC Phase II. Which are now referred to as the SANDF Specialist Contingent (SANDFSPC). The deployment of these specialist elements took place on 6 April 2001 and were prompted by the assassination of President Laurent Kabila in January 2001 and due to the slow compliance with the Lusaka Peace Agreement and the Harare Declaration by all parties concerned.

The SANDFSPC deployed to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) comprised cargo handling teams, air crash team, air medical evacuation team, fire fighting teams and Military Police. Currently the SANDFSPC consists approximately of 164 members; these members are based in different sectors. The SANDFSPC headquarters is based in Kinshasa and other members are deployed in seven sectors across the eastern part of the DRC which is Dungu, Bunia, Entebbe, Beni, Bukavu, Kisangani and Goma.

The involvement of the specialist contingent has brought immense value to the Congolese people and become a beacon of hope to the different parts of the turmoil stricken DRC. In this regard the SANDFSPC have proven their commitment by ensuring that their contribution towards peace and stability will be a footprint that will forever be remembered by the people of DRC, which is evident in the manner that they have conducted their assignments for the benefit of the mission and the Congolese people at large.

On a recent visit to the DRC, SA Soldier conversed with Lt Col Bethuel Moumakoe, General Officer Commanding Joint Operational Headquarters, Maj Gen Thabiso Mokhosi, greeting members of the SA National Defence Force Specialist Contingent on his arrival at the unit in Kinshasa.

The incoming Officer Commanding of the SA National Defence Force Specialist Contingent, Lt Col Emily Molusi, in her office in Kinshasa during the interview.
news from abroad

LEFT: The outgoing Officer Commanding of SA National Defence Force Specialist Contingent (SANDFSPeCC), Lt Col Bethuel Moumakoe, handing over the symbol of office to the incoming Officer Commanding of SANDFSPeCC, Lt Col Emily Molusi, in Kinshasa.

the outgoing Officer Commanding of SANDFSPeCC who stressed that the contingent has done their utmost best to ensure that they adhere and uphold the mandate and policies of the United Nations as stipulated specifically for SANDFSPeCC. He mentioned that since their arrival in the DRC in support of peacekeeping operations, members of SANDFSPeCC have proven their value and worth, and they had done a sterling job and performed exceptionally well.

Lt Col Moumakoe said: “In order for us to perform well, we ought to work as a team, respect the mandate of the UN, as well as our country, we need to fly the flag of South Africa very high. Also as leaders we must ensure that discipline is enforced and inculcated to our subordinates and by doing that we will be able to achieve our goals.”

He remarked that theirs is to support the government of the DRC in its stabilisation and peace consolidation efforts. Furthermore he said that the contingent has made tangible contribution to the implementation of the mission’s mandate. It is worth mentioning that their troops have rendered emergency humanitarian aid to the conflict affected areas such as provision of food, water and medical aid as well as evacuation of the seriously wounded.

Furthermore he said that besides their core mandate of bringing peace to the DRC, the contingent has gallantly supported the civilians in their area of operation, they have conducted community outreach programmes and contributed to creating hope for a better future for the people living in the DRC.

SA Soldier also spoke with the incoming Officer Commanding of the SANDFSPeCC, Lt Col Emily Molusi about her priorities as the new incumbent. She said: “Most importantly, I will command everyone with respect and not lose focus on the job at hand. Our deployees must bear in mind that there is zero-tolerance on sexual exploitation and other abuse cases. People in the areas we are deploying are vulnerable and I do not wish that they take advantage of that. I will maintain zero-tolerance on SEA and I will not tolerate ill-discipline.”

Lt Col Molusi said her responsibility includes commanding soldiers on the ground and will use the authority vested upon her by her appointment and superiors to ensure that her members abide by the rules and regulations of the deployment. She said: “Most importantly, I will command everyone with respect and not lose focus on the job at hand. Our deployees must bear in mind that there is zero-tolerance on sexual exploitation and other abuse cases. People in the areas we are deploying are vulnerable and I do not wish that they take advantage of that. I will maintain zero-tolerance on SEA and I will not tolerate ill-discipline.”

The SA National Defence Force Specialist Contingent deployed to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) comprised cargo handling teams, an air crash team, an air medical evacuation team, firefighting teams and Military Police.
The Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme graduation ceremony

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photos by Mr Katiso Mabuza

 Altogether 104 graduates for the 16/2017 Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme (JSCSP), comprising SANDF officers and learners from Botswana, Brazil, Ghana, Nigeria, Pakistan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe will treasure a defining achievement of a lifetime after the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, endorsed them during the SA National War College (SANWC) graduation ceremony recently held at the Peace Mission Training Centre in Thaba Tshwane.

Addressing the learners and guests, the Commandant of the SANWC, Brig Gen Siseko Nombewu, said that of special note the class of 2017 academic year has been named the SS Mendi Detachment. They pay homage to the centenary of the sinking of the SS Mendi in which more than 600 soldiers of the South African Native Labour Corps drowned after the ship was rammed by the SS Darro in the icy depths of the English Channel in February 1917.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula presented awards and certificates to highlight their meaningful academic achievements and the highest standards obtained during the programme. When addressing the members during the ceremony, she shared the sentimental value of the programme which is in line with the recommendations of the Defence Review. The Minister said that they have walked many steps towards a thousand miles. She added: “I wish to remind you that you have been trained on the mastering of operational art and national security. The learning process does not end here and now, but will carry on throughout your military career.”

The Minister expressed her gratitude and appreciation to the Commandant of the SANWC, the SANDF Directing Staff members and the Directing Staff drawn from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE: Lt Col Malesela Kwakwa, the 16/2017 Best Overall Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme Learner (middle) flanked by Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, and Lt Gen Lindile Yam, the Chief of the SA Army while Mr Mike Nkuna, Chairperson of Masingita Group of Companies, looks on.

WELL DONE: Chaplain David Mokobe, the Chaplain of SA Air Force Headquarters, received the trophy for Best Academic Performance SA Air Force Learner (left) with Brig Gen Siseko Nombewu, the Commandant of the SA National War College (back), looking on with a smile. Lt Col Robert Netangaheni (right) was awarded the Best SA Military Health Service Commanders Brief Award at the graduation ceremony.
He replied that it was not family time. “I had to repriorise my activities and allow my books to take precedence over both my social and family lives, given the intensity of the year-long study programme.”

**What were the benefits that you obtained from the 16/17 JSCSP?** Lt Col Kwakwa attested to the professionalism with which the programme was presented and the openness of the Directing Staff when it came to robust engagements. The Programme was pitched at the highest level and thus prepared us for the strategic level. He also cited the value of the experiential international study tour in respect of acquiring knowledge about divergent political environments.

**What made you emerge as the best out of the entire group?** Lt Col Kwakwa said that one would not find true joy in sleeping or in relaxing. He added: “I had to stick to my “DDD” philosophy. “It has greatly helped me to emerge as the best among the group. I strongly exercised a huge amount of discipline to ensure that I remained focused to the expectations and timelines of the course. Again, I was determined to attain both my personal and organisational goals which served as my major inspiration to always remain steadfast to the course. I believe my positive attitude towards learning from my fellow course mates substantially contributed to my success and the fantastic support I got from my family.”

**When you met challenges, how did you manage to overcome them?** He mentioned that the nature of the military is premised around team work and mutual support. Lt Col Kwakwa said: “Take the effort to understand the root cause of the problem. Analyse various options to solve it, such as asking for advices from the Directing Staff, and eventually solving the problem in a just and fair manner without fear, favour or prejudice.”

**What could you say have been the highlights of SANF Officers engagements with the international fellow learners?** Lt Col Kwakwa replied that once you are on foreign soil you automatically assume the status of an ambassador and thus it becomes key to always project professionalism. He also added that as South Africans, we needed to extend hospitality to our international fellow learners so as to develop a desirable knowledge and perception about our country. He added: “It is common cause that a student exchange programme is likely to contribute towards interoperability, commonality, standardisation and cooperation.”

**What did you learn from the international fellow learners and what did they learn from the SANF Officers?** Lt Col Kwakwa said: “This programme created an opportunity for both local and international students to network and engage on different issues that will expand our knowledge base. With the view to adapt their best practices, we learnt how respectful, patriotic and committed they are towards their countries. I have no doubts that they also learned some of our best practices, such as the campaign planning process.”

Graduates received the South African Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) accredited qualification – the National Diploma in Joint and Multinational Operations, as well as the SANWC - Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme qualification.

SO1 Combat Readiness, SA Army Armour Formation Headquarters, Lt Col Malesela Kwakwa, excelled academically scooping various awards such as the 16/17 Best Overall Learner JSCSP, Best Academic Performance SA Army Learner, Meritorious Trophy for Excellence and Best Academic JSCSP Learner. He was congratulated for displaying the highest level of professionalism, zeal, determination and leadership among his peers.

Asked by SA Soldier to comment on his achievement, Lt Col Kwakwa quoted the words of Benjamin Disraeli who said: “The secret of success is consistency of purpose. The happiness you are searching for comes through reflecting on the worthy aims you are dedicated to achieving and then take action daily to advance them”.

**How did you manage to balance your time between books, social and family time?** He replied that it was not easy to maintain a balance however it required of him to effectively plan and exercise maximum control over his academic, social and family time. Lt Col Kwakwa added: “I was compelled to repriorise my activities and allow my books to take precedence over both my social and family lives, given the intensity of the year-long study programme.”

Cdr Zimasa Mabela, Officer Commanding SAS UMHLOTI (right), receives the floating trophy for the Best SA Navy Academic Learner from the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, while Mr Mike Nkuna, Chairperson of Masingita Group of Companies, and Brig Gen Siseko Nombewu, the Commandant of the SA National War College, look on.
announcing the activities of the 2018 Armed Forces Day at a media briefing on 25 January 2018 held in Kimberley, the Head of Communication, Mr Siphiwe Dlamini, said that the event will be held to honour SA National Defence Force (SANDF) men and women in uniform for their patriotic service to the nation and to pay homage to all those who died in the line of duty.

The Head of Communication added that the event also provides an opportunity to bring the SANDF closer to the people, expose society to the SANDF and for the youth to learn about careers in the SANDF. Mr Dlamini said: “It is important to celebrate the lives and bravery of those members who served their country with dedication as well as those who still serve with loyalty, dedication and diligence. The citizens of this country must be educated and informed of the commitment of these former and current men and women of the SANDF. We do all this with a clear understanding that the SANDF is the people’s national defence force.”

In 2012 the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Jacob Zuma, proclaimed that 21 February of each year will be observed and commemorated as Armed Forces Day. Thus the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, authorised the hosting of the celebration in Kimberley and the ceremonial commemoration of the sinking of the SS Mendi to be held concurrently.

Apart from the main event on 21 February, the programme which will stretch over a week, will comprise of a range of activities, including a military capability demonstration at De Brug Training Area near Bloemfontein which will include a static firepower exhibition and mechanised attack with air support. Members of the public are invited to a capability demonstration on 20 February, it is anticipated that more than 10 000 people per day will visit the Fan Park at AR Abass Stadium in Kimberley between 15 and 21 February 2018. The Park will have a career village, Services and Division villages showcasing the SANDF capabilities and various career opportunities existing in the SANDF to the public.

Ten music events will take place over the period 12 to 15 February 2018 at schools around the Kimberley area, such as Roodepan High School, Seochoareng Assisted Living Centre, Platfontein School, Mayibuye Cultural Centre, Pescodia Secondary School, Kimberley Hospital Complex, Retlameleng School for the Disabled, New Park Shopping Centre, Diamantveld High School and Green Point High School.

An estimated 1 200 learners per day will take part in sporting activities/clinics to be held at several locations between 16 and 20 February. A music event including military bands and choirs will take place at Mittah Seperepe Convention Centre on 17 February, followed by an interfaith church service at the same venue on 18 February.

The main event of Armed Forces Day on 21 February will commence with a wreath-laying ceremony officiated by the President at the World War I Memorial in Du Toitspan Road to pay tribute to the men who perished during the sinking of the SS Mendi on 21 February 1917. It will be followed by a parade through the streets of Kimberley, comprising a flag company, a gun carriage, marching columns, military bands, mechanised columns with hundreds of military vehicles and a flypast by the SA Air Force.

A total of 6 525 SANDF members will participate along with 41 aircraft from the SA Air Force, 222 specialised military vehicles, 374 operational vehicles, 66 buses and 60 motorcycles. According to Brig Gen Kobus Butler, coordinator for the 2018 Armed Forces Day, the SA Air Force aircraft will include Hawk and Gripen, C-130, CASA 212, King Air transports, and Rooivalk, Agusta A109 and BK 117 helicopters as well as Pilatus PC-7 trainers and aircraft of the SA Air Force Museum, including an air display by the Silver Falcons aerobatic display team.
ARMED FORCES DAY
21 February 2018
KIMBERLEY

MILITARY PARADE AND PRESENTATION OF MEDALS TO OUR SERVING HEROES AND HEROINES BY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

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The Centenary Celebration of the 1st Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force
SA Army bestows awards for deeds of bravery

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

The SA Army recorded some special moments in 2017 on various interventions from military capabilities, sportsmanship to humanitarian aspects among others. Awards and Commendation Certificates were awarded during the Chief of the SA Army Awards Ceremony and Gala evening in Thaba Tshwane.

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, believes that they are a force to be reckoned with: “The SA Army has been hard at work in pursuance of its mandate to safeguard South Africa and contribute towards continental peace and security and has to that effect contributed forces - your sons and daughters - to safeguard our borders in what we call Operation CORONA and related efforts to curb the scourge of Rhino Poaching and other environmentally unfriendly practices.

“Operation CORONA, our flagship border safeguarding mission, continues in full swing curtailing illegal activities such as stock theft, illegal immigration, vehicle smuggling, drug trafficking, trading in contraband and arms trafficking along our borders and in doing so we protect the economic interests of South African businesses and the integrity of our customs services. As we speak, there are 15 companies deployed along our vast borders on a six-month rotation basis, with the intention to expand our footprint to 22 fully fledged companies guarding our borderline in future”.

The expansion of the number of companies on the ground is meant to close the gaps that have been identified in the border safeguarding duties over the years and dependent on the availability of resources to fund such an expansion. The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, had supported the expansion to 22 companies as a requirement raised by Joint Operations and SA Army commanders.

Following recognition by the United Nations (UN) for bestowing a UN Military Gender Advocate Award of the Year to a SA Army member, Lt Gen Yam felt indebted to pay homage to this special individual for being an exemplary ambassador. A Special Commendation Award was presented to Maj Pearl Block for her efforts in promoting the principles within the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 as a peacekeeper and being an outstanding Gender Advocate under the auspices of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

Lt Gen Yam said: “Let me also take this grand opportunity and congratulate Maj Block, one of our special guests here tonight, a lady of great courage who was recently recognised by the UN Organisation for her Gender Advocacy work during her tour of duty as part of the MONUSCO at the Force Headquarters in Goma over the period July 2016 to July 2017. Maj Block was honoured by the UN for her game-changing mission-wide short message service launched in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to encourage armed groups in that country to surrender and also encourage women and children to freely report gender based violence. This is commendable...
work and the SA Army is proud to have
gender advocates like her in our midst.”

In recognition of the bravery and
selfless acts exhibited in the face of
utmost danger in the Central African
Republic, 1 Parachute Battalion, the
country’s historic airborne capability
within 44 Parachute Regiment had
stood the test of time. Along with
8 SA Infantry Battalion, they were
recognised for bravery and selfless acts
demonstrated when they stood against
many odds in the Sudan Republic
where some SA Army members paid an
ultimate price in pursuit for peace and
stability. They both received a Special
Commendation Award for their
acts of bravery.

Lt Gen Yam’s fondness of the SA Army
members could be sensed from his tone
when he spoke of their deeds: “Tonight
we celebrate our finest men and women;
the hardworking recipients paraded
here, whose deeds ensured that the
SA Army could stand proud and ready
to execute its mandate. Our service as
the SA Army is rooted in a deep sense
of patriotism and responsiveness that
has at its apex the embodiment of hard
work, equality for all our people and the
unwavering desire to keep our citizens
safe and out of harm’s way.

Allow me to appraise you on some of
the work that the SA Army has been
doing during the course of the year.
Ordinarily we undertake numerous
tasks of a varying nature, key among
which is the force preparation of our
army to be combat ready and ready
to execute its mandate locally and
internationally. The SA Army, a notable
force contributor to the UN and the
African Union (AU) missions, remains
steadfast in its commitment towards the
achievement of the African Agenda 2063.
We support the AU’s Peace and Security
Council’s keen undertaking to deliver
African solutions to African peace and
security challenges, and thus have a
significant footprint in
the DRC as part
of the UN mandated Force Intervention
Brigade that is a vital catalyst to
suppress distress and has thus drastically
reduced loss of life resulting from
unmitigated conflict.”
TRANS ENDURO - the untold love story between sport, giving and uniting

Article and photos by Mr Tsholanang Zwane, Human Resources Division Corporate Communication

Napoleon Bonaparte once said: “The first virtue in a soldier is endurance of fatigue; courage is only the second virtue.” The word Enduro is a form of long-distance race for bicycles over rough terrain, designed to test endurance.

When I first received the invitation to be part of the team to cover the event I was somewhat sceptical about the benefit thereof. Each year the Military Academy students raise funds by planning, organising and participating in an exceptional event called Exercise TRANS ENDURO. Four teams - a cycling, sea, land and Team Masiza travelled from Port Elizabeth to Saldanha over a period of nine days, staying over in towns along the way. A total of 230 members participated in this year’s exercise.

The General Officer Commanding Training Command, Maj Gen Lawrence Mbatha, stated that he was asked by students to make this exercise an annual event. He stated that this is the commitment they kept and encouraged the students to not take the exercise lightly as it really touched many lives judging from the responses received since the inception of Exercise TRANS ENDURO.

What makes this exercise special and exciting is the endurance required by these students to complete the run. They have to wake up every morning at 04:00 to prepare for the day ahead.

The amazing part of this event is in the name itself.

Teams gather at Saldanha harbour on the final day of Exercise TRANS ENDURO.

George the cycle team experienced two breakdowns. The team however did not let this deter them. Team spirit and perseverance got them through this challenge. Maj Gen Mbatha continued to lend his support to teams and commended them on the 40km already completed by the land team.

The breaking point of the exercise is carried by the Media team and the Land team, as well as Team Masiza. The main aim of the media team is to ensure that the students live up to it as they endure through team work; functioning together and apply leadership skills learned from the academy. The sea team braved wind and waves, only to have two members held up in the ocean for four hours. One team member stated that he did not know what to do as both of them became sea sick, but with the help of the other team member from the SA Navy they were able to row until they reached land.

Travelling from Jeffreys Bay to George the cycle team experienced two breakdowns. The team however did not let this deter them. Team spirit and perseverance got them through this challenge. Maj Gen Mbatha continued to lend his support to teams and commended them on the 40km already completed by the land team.

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The Commandant of Exercise TRANS ENDURO, Lt Ryno Ruiters, receives a cheque of R5 000 from the Mayor of Cape Agulhas Municipality as part of their support to Team Masiza projects regarding the 2018 Exercise TRANS ENDURO.

Team Masiza donates a fridge and soccer balls to a primary school at a local school in Struisbaai in the Western Cape as part of their community outreach programmes.

The teams gather at George Mall surrounded by the local Councillor representing the mayor to support the 16 Days of Activism against Women and Children Abuse campaign as part of the exercise.

The municipalities of the various cities which the participants are going to visit during Exercise TRANS ENDURO are in support of the event. The Mayors were ready for the teams and gave messages of support to the students and handed over a letter of goodwill to be delivered to the next city. While competing the teams are to compile a book on Exercise TRANS ENDURO with photos and stories gathered along the way which will be passed on to the next generation which should perform the exercise even better.

Breaking through their comfort zone is the land team. This team braces through the storms in Port Elizabeth to roam the streets with prepared tins to collect donations from people for next year’s community projects. When asked how he felt about the Exercise TRANS ENDURO one team member replied that this was an amazing experience, it has really humbled him and as an individual it has changed his perspective and he believes this is a good cause which has really built up his character.

Team Masiza seems to be a special team among all the other teams as they are the heartbeat of the exercise. The team is responsible for community projects in all the towns where the exercise travels through. These community projects range from painting to carpentry. Team Masiza visited a school in Jeffery’s Bay to refurbish their sport field. The team also visited the Rosedale Educare Center just few kilometers outside of George on the N2 on the way to Cape Town.

This play group centre in Rosedale caters for approximately 40 children of all races and operates out of six converted containers. The centre has applied for recognition as an NPO, before it can apply for grants. The centre is open from very early in the morning, with some children only being collected late in the afternoon, with their last meal being catered for at lunchtime. Team Masiza set themselves to work by renovating the boards inside the containers, touching up the paint, repairing toilets and doors. The team divided themselves to do different errands in order to keep time but that did not make the job go as quick as expected. The project took almost the whole day as the team only arrived in Stilbaai at 21:00. The Commandant of Exercise TRANS ENDURO, Lt Ryno Ruiters, led the wrap up meetings at the end of each day. He ensured that all the teams were ready to host the mayors and cover interviews.

Eden FM, a local community radio station, hosted Maj Gen Mbatha and the Acting Commandant of the Military Academy, Col Nelson Dlamini, to go live in their afternoon drive show in order to engage and inform the community about the exercises and the benefits thereof.

2018 will mark a major milestone in the incredible story of the late President Nelson Mandela, his centenary. The Nelson Mandela Foundation launched plans to honour the legacy of this iconic hero in 2017. In celebrating the Nelson Mandela Centenary, plans are already underway and the 2018 Exercise TRANS ENDURO will embark from Qunu to Saldanha which is about 1 198km, making the exercise even longer than 2017.

Team Masiza seems to be a special team among all the other teams as they are the heartbeat of the exercise. The team is responsible for community projects in all
As outlined and reiterated in the Defence Review, the Department of Defence (DOD) has acknowledged the importance of future military leaders and states that education, training and development coupled to the exposure to military complexity over defined periods of time is the proven pathway for the development of military leaders with the required character, knowledge, skills and attitude.

The SA National Defence College (SANDC), the senior academic institution of the SANDF and a centre for strategic leadership in Security Studies, recently hosted its Certificate and Awards Ceremony for the 03/17 Security and Defence Studies Programme (SDSP) at the Encore Complex in Hatfield, Pretoria.

The main objective of the programme is to concentrate on national security in domestic, regional and continental context against the backdrop of global issues.

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, on behalf of the Chief of the SA National Defence College, Brig Gen Peter Sereko (first from right) looks on.

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The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, on behalf of the Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) congratulated the graduates and wished them well for the future and encouraged them to discover what lies beyond.

In order to receive the SDSP qualification members were required to undergo intensive individual assessments at the end of each field of study, a syndicate assessment for Exercise SUMBANDILA and hand in a Commandant Research Paper. They were also required to demonstrate cross-field outcomes throughout the programme, viz problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, leadership, organisation, planning, written communication, oral communication and they had to demonstrate the world as a set of related systems. With the exception of Africa and International studies, assessments were conducted by reputable external assessors in order to guarantee objectivity. The SDSP was presented between 16 January and 24 November 2017.

The following awards were presented to members who excelled during the course:

- Brig Gen Musa Mazibuko was awarded the Golden Rivet Trophy for the most valued contribution to the success, morale and esprit de corps of the programme.
- The Ibandla Trophy was awarded to Syndicate 1 and 3 for the highest mark in Exercise SUMBANDILA.
- Best Commandant’s Research Paper: Col Thabo Ntoni
- Best Academic Achievement: Col Thabo Ntoni
- Overall Academic Achievement: Col Thabo Ntoni

SA Soldier conversed with Brig Gen Mazibuko, the 03/17 Regal of the SDSP, who said the programme placed a high premium on human security. He added that it exposes and prepares members of the DOD/SANDF, senior officials from other government departments to be able to address emerging challenges and to craft and propose strategic responses.

In general the programme also observes developments in the international affairs and the security environments in order to keep up with world trends and developments, governance, politics, rule of law, international relations and national security aspect in the domestic, regional, continental and global space.
Joint Operations Division Gala Evening

By Capt (SAN) Jaco Theunissen, Senior Staff Officer Operational Communication at Joint Operations Division
Photos by Capt Matthew de Jager

The Joint Operations Division presented its Gala Evening recently at the Velmore Hotel Estate in Erasmia, Pretoria, for personnel from the Joint Operations Division and invited guests. The dinner was intended to show appreciation for the hard work and dedication of identified members.

RIGHT: The Chief of Joint Operations, Lt Gen Barney Hlatshwayo (left), congratulates Capt Justice Mosweu on receiving recognition as the Most Diligent Soldier of the Chief Directorate Operations.

The Joint Operations Division Gala Evening
Directorate Operational Development and the Headquarter Support Unit.
Addressing the members, Lt Gen Hlatshwayo said: “To all of you who received an award this evening, congratulations, you thoroughly deserve it! Please remember that your Directors nominated you, and if you received an award it means that your Chief Director recommended it and I approved it. Therefore, I urge you not to take this award lightly. You worked hard for it and your seniors noticed your hard work and dedication and rewarded you for it.”

The Joint Operations, Lt Gen Barney Hlatshwayo, congratulates Ms Rose Mahlangu on receiving recognition as the Most Diligent Civilian Worker in the Command Group.

The Chief of Joint Operations, Lt Gen Barney Hlatshwayo (left), congratulates WO1 Johan Fourie (Ret) for being the Best Finance Person of the Year.
A new crop of VIP Protectors qualified

By Sgt Tebogo Kekana, Journalist of Ad Astra
Photos by Lt Thomas Mulaudzi

Twenty-three of the 24 VIP Protectors completed their four-month long course and received their certificates during a ceremony recently held at Air Force Base (AFB) Hoedspruit.

The course was attended by 11 SANDF members and 13 members of the Armed Forces of Nigeria. The curriculum included Static Protection, Close Protection, Law, Weapons Training, Driving, Planning and the Self-defence Module.

One student was found not yet competent in convoy driving, but will be afforded the opportunity to qualify in the next course. According to Capt Vuhlari Baloyi, the Course’s Shooting Branch Commander, the protectors went through rigorous training to test their endurance.

“My heartfelt gratitude goes to the instructors. They exuded passion and put soldiering first and their families last. Your commitment made the course interesting, especially because two countries worked seamlessly with very few hiccups.”

Capt Baloyi said: “This course consisted of various mustering:

Protection, Air Police, Defence Intelligence, Drivers, Apprentice, Ceremonial Guards, Regiment, Combat Marine and Air Suppliers. We thank the Officer Commanding of the SA Air Force Gymnasium, Col Riaan van Wyk, and the Command Council for their guidance and directives.”

The Wing Commander of the Nigerian High Commission, Mr M.J. Aliyu, expressed how proud he was to witness the competence of his fellow countrymen: “This is what maximising bilateral relations looks like: shared training, development of fresh ideas and looking at the future with one vision. I want to take the opportunity to

Pte Koketso Mojela scooped the Best Academic and Overall Student Awards.
thank the SA Air Force for contributing to the pool of competent VIP Protectors who were trained by the best there is. “We can now confidently declare that we are on the scrolls of the greatest training institutions in the military world. The Federal Republic of Nigeria aims to nurture and sustain this relationship as part of bringing peace to the African continent. This course forms part of this initiative that is part of our military strategic intent. We will grow from strength to strength with future training and we shall remain combat ready.”

The Commander’s words were echoed by the Nigerian student leader, Sgt D.K. Ewuah, who said: “This mission was hard, but we soon realised that nothing is beyond a willing mindset, it is set to win. We exceeded our expectations and I am confident that the lives of our dignitaries will be protected with cautiousness. We thank the Government of Nigeria and the Armed Forces of Nigeria for giving us a chance to learn the South African way of doing things: what a spectacular time we had. Words are not enough to express our profound gratitude for trusting us with your knowledge which we will put to good use.”

To date, the SA Air Force Gymnasium has presented the VIP Course to Pakistan, Nigeria and Senegal. Chief Air Staff Corporate Services, Maj Gen Portia More, said: “Quality protection is an absolute must wherever VIPs find themselves travelling the world. Many potential attacks have been thwarted before they had the least chance to materialise, thanks in no small part to having highly trained protectors. Although usually romanticised, the work of the protector is far more than suits, dark sunglasses and a serious face. They travel the world with their principals, mingle with the top people and observe important events at close quarters.”

Maj Gen More said that the best protectors possess skills that allow them to handle diverse and dangerous situations, adding: “VIP Protectors must be diplomatic when dealing with people and must exercise control when necessary. A loyal protector must be committed and earn the principal’s trust and not betray it. To the Nigerian VIP Protectors, go and implement what you have learnt here and transfer those skills. We are honoured that you have come to us for this. What would a course like this caliber be without women as well? Congratulations to the women who conquered this course: you did us proud; we stand firmer because of you.”

Cpl Khensane Maringa, the only SA Air Force woman on the course expressed how grateful she was that she was given the chance to qualify in such a distinguished mustering. She said: “Many people do not know the satisfaction of pushing oneself to the limit. I work at Mobile Deployment Wing and nothing can compare to what I have learnt here. I am going to live up to what the instructors taught me.”

From the new crop of VIP Protectors, those who stood out were: Pte Koketso Mojela who scooped the Best Academic and Overall Student Award, while Cpl Karabo Pelle obtained the Best Driver and Best Academic Achiever Awards with Able Seaman Mncedisi Ban receiving the Best Shottist Award.
When it comes to firepower, Lt Cdr Thandeka Motsene is the go-to person aboard the SA Navy’s frigate, the SAS ISANDLWANA.

The 33-year-old anti-air warfare officer or weapons officer is responsible for advising the captain of the vessel on how best to use weapons to defend the ship against attacks from the air. For security reasons she cannot go into the details of what this entails.

She explains: “When the ship is not in combat situations or advanced military operations, my job entails training gun operators to ensure that they know how to operate the weapons safely and accurately.”

Lt Cdr Motsene’s typical day aboard the ship begins with her conducting system checks to ensure that they are all operating efficiently and effectively.

Once this has been done, she briefs warfare teams on the day’s programme and maintenance schedules.

She says: “I am also expected to maintain a watch on the bridge to ensure that the ship is kept safe from collisions and groundings. I also brief the captain about personnel training, ship status and any matters related to the achievement of the ship’s objectives for the duration of the time spent at sea.”

On the path to success

While Lt Cdr Motsene’s life is now at sea, that is not how she once envisaged it.

She wanted to be a pilot with the SA Air Force. However, she did not meet the weight and height requirements for the fighter aircraft’s ejector seat as she was too short and lightweight.

Lt Cdr Motsene said: “The SA Navy was my second choice, mostly because it sounded interesting and I loved the uniform.”

She was born in Tembisa and lived in Viljoenskroon in the Free State until she was 11 when she moved to Ennerdale, south of Johannesburg.

After completing matric in 2001, she joined the Department of Defence’s Youth Foundation Programme.

This is a skills development programme for previously disadvantaged students, which allows participants to improve their matric results so that they can pursue tertiary studies or join the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

Lt Cdr Motsene has been in her current position for about a year and a half.

Before joining the SAS ISANDLWANA as its weapons officer...
she completed 10-month warfare course in preparation for the post.

Lt Cdr Motsene previously served aboard the Inshore Patrol Vessel, SAS TERN as the Acting Commanding Officer, where it was her responsibility to ensure the ship was maintained in order to meet the operational requirements of the SA Navy.

A sea of opportunities

Lt Cdr Motsene joined the SA Navy in 2003 and relishes the opportunities she has been given to thrive there.

She said: “The fact that I am a woman in what is still considered a ‘man’s world’ always creates an opportunity to shine brighter, not because I need to prove anything, but simply to show that I am just as capable.”

She admits that she struggles with being referred to as ‘the first woman to do this or that’ each time she obtains a qualification.

Lt Cdr Motsene said: “This is mostly because I feel as if it takes away the hard work that went into obtaining the qualification and instead focuses on the fact that I am a woman.”

Serving with pride

Lt Cdr Motsene is extremely proud of the SA Navy.

She said: “I have encountered women from various countries who were shocked when I told them what I do for a living, simply because they are not afforded the same opportunities in their own countries.

“It makes me proud to say that I work for an organisation that allows women to fulfil any role, be it a chef, engineer or even commanding a naval vessel.”

And while the SA Navy has opened the door to many opportunities, Lt Cdr Motsene stresses that the key to success is choosing to be disciplined and putting in the hard work.

She advises other young people wanting to join the Navy to be prepared to serve and not look for self-glory.

Lt Cdr Motsene said: “You are not entitled to anything in life. You have to work hard for anything you want to achieve.”

For Lt Cdr Motsene, the hard work is far from over. Her job requires her to continue learning, especially in her specific field. She loves sharing that knowledge with her junior colleagues.

As for her future plans, Lt Cdr Motsene cannot picture herself anywhere else but serving the SA Navy and her country.

This and that

How do you relax?
I hardly get the chance to relax, because there is always something I have to do. If I do manage to relax, it will be by going out to a formal dinner or to watch a movie with my husband. When I am at home I love to bake.

What is your favourite food?
Pap and chicken intestines.

What is your favourite colour?
Blue.

Your favourite book?
“Deal with It”, by Paula White.

What is your favourite holiday destination?
Greece. It’s absolutely beautiful and I would love to go back to explore it with my family.

If you were not doing the job that you do now, what would you be?
That’s easy: a pilot.
focus on youth

SA Army Foundation congratulates its bursary recipient graduates

By Ms Lerato Mtambanengwe,
SA Army Foundation Communication Coordinator
Photos by Mr Frans Setlau

The SA Army Foundation, headed by its General Manager, Mr Angel Ramphele, reports on a governance level to a Board of Control and the Chief of the SA Army as its controlling authority.

The Board of Control is made up, as per its constitution, of Army Formation and Brigade General Officers Commanding (GOCs), with the GOC SA Army Support Formation, Maj Gen Luvuyo Nobanda, at its helm. He is supported by the Deputy Chairperson, Brig Gen Andre Retief, GOC SA Army Armour Formation, offering strategic guidance and ensuring that the SA Army Foundation remains the top performing Service Fund of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) by providing validated benefits and services to its members.

One such service is a much needed tertiary bursary. The SA Army Foundation, partnering with Maxi Credit Solutions, established the Adopt A Student Programme in order to offer financial assistance to the children of members who would otherwise not be able to afford to send their children to institutions of higher learning. Since its inception in 2014, the programme has seen six graduates complete their studies with total or partial assistance from the programme. Assistance in this programme includes 100% tuition fees, 100% accommodation fees (or part thereof as required), 100% textbook assistance (or part thereof as required) as well as a monthly stipend to assist in day to day requirements of the student.

At the 2017 Board of Control year end and graduate congratulatory event held at the SA Army Foundation Head Office in Clubview, Centurion; the Adopt A Student Programme saw its first two male graduates come up for their congratulations. Mr Nicholas Masindi and Mr Andre Page both completed their studies in record time. In his speech of congratulations, Maj Gen Nobanda expressed pride in their achievements. Moreover he encouraged management and board members to continue to uphold the programme as its fruit was far reaching and insurmountable. An emotional speech of gratitude by both students drove home the importance of the Adopt A Student Programme, amidst a national call for free higher education in a difficult economic climate.

Mr Page completed his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (BA Psych) obtaining six distinctions in his studies at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. His mother is a Public Service Act Personnel (PSAP) member in the SA Army and a member of the SA Army Foundation.

Mr Masindi obtained Honors in Earth Sciences in Mining and Environmental Geology (BESMEG) studies with five distinctions from the University of Venda. His father is a Private at 15 SA Infantry Battalion and a member of the SA Army Foundation.
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Two TS WOLTEMADE Sea Cadets, AB Nikita Adams and New Entry Buren van Wyk, were awarded bursaries by the S.A.T.S. General Botha Old Boys Association to further their maritime studies at Lawhill Maritime Centre in Simon’s Town for 2018. Both bursaries will include boarding fees so that the learners can focus on their studies.

AB Adams resides in Capricorn and has attended Steenberg High School where Maths and Science are included in her curriculum. She explained that she was “excited and proud to be selected” by both General Botha and Lawhill. She aspires to be a maritime judge and this is the start of her journey towards this goal. When not assisting her four siblings she plays the trumpet and listens to instrumental music.

New Entry Van Wyk resides in Atlantis and attends Atlantis Secondary school. Maths and Science were subjects he chose with a view to a future career. He spends his free time working on engines, playing rugby, cricket and golf as well as assisting the aged in the community. His dream is to be a professional engineer focussing on mechanical engineering at sea or in the air.

Officer Commanding TS WOLTEMADE, Lt Cdr Paul Jacobs, expressed his delight at the opportunity afforded the Sea Cadets knowing that they would both make good use of the opportunities provided. May these two Sea Cadets’ dreams become a reality as they are inspired by the teaching staff and learners at Lawhill Maritime Centre.

The two students are very privileged as they will be under the tutorship and guidance of Capt Iain Peddle, a Master Mariner, and SLt (SCC) David Walker, an officer in the Royal Naval Reserve who has previously instructed British Sea Cadets. Capt Peddle was trained at the General Botha and is retired from sea. He serves on the staff of the Lawhill Maritime Centre where he teaches aspects of seamanship and cargo stowage. On a Saturday he gives instruction to the TS WOLTEMADE Cadets on navigation and other related seamanship subjects. SLt (SCC) Walker has a PhD in Marine Biology, lectures Marine Science at the Cape Peninsular University of Technology and is the sailing instructor at TS WOLTEMADE.

Both staff will be keeping a keen eye on the two TS WOLTEMADE Sea Cadets and will ensure that the necessary support is provided to ensure their success.

TS WOLTEMADE, a Training Ship, attracts youth from 13 to 18 years old with an interest in nautical, maritime and naval matters.

Capt Tony Nicholas, Chairperson of the S.A.T.S. General Botha Old Boys Association, indicated that their Bursary Fund intended to establish a long term relationship with the Sea Cadet Corps to provide suitable maritime scholars and thereby keep their organisation relevant. This kind gesture would provide much needed funding for those who had the aptitude.
however were short of funding. The Maritime economy would ultimately benefit from a core of enthusiastic, well trained and specialised job seekers.

In 1920 the British Cruiser, HMS Thames, was purchased by Capt T.B.F. Davis, a Master Mariner, entrepreneur, yachtsman and philanthropist, as a training platform for the Cape Town Naval Cadet Corps.

A crew was assembled under command of Capt F.B. Renouf and consisted of a Sea Cadet Officer, twenty Cadets and other skilled men. The ship was renamed the TS General Botha and sailed from England on 8 February 1921 arriving in Cape Town on 26 March 1921 after an eventful journey and much adventure.

It was soon realised that a part time Cadet organisation would be unable to finance and maintain the ship and after negotiations the ship was handed over to the South African Government. It continued to be used for the full time training of young men for careers at sea and for the next twenty years was moored in Simon’s Bay. During this period 1 276 Cadets were trained with an excellent reputation.

Owing to the possibility of a German submarine attack during World War II and the risk this posed the Cadets were rehoused ashore on Red Hill. The ship was commandeered by the navy and moored in the harbour for accommodation and as a detention quarters.

The names of 83 former Cadets appear on the General Botha Roll of Honour for World War II. These included various arms of the service and merchant navy, Merchant Service, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, Seaward Defence Force/SA Naval Forces and SA Army.

Many former Cadets were decorated during World War II, the best known was Squadron-Leader J.D. Nettleton who was awarded the Victoria Cross and was later killed in action.

The S.A.T.S. General Botha was sunk in False Bay on 13 May 1947. The Cadets continued to be trained in Gordon’s Bay at what has now become Naval College where all SA Navy Officers receive their training. Later the S.A.T.S. General Botha was relocated to Granger Bay where a custom facility was built. In 1987 the S.A.T.S. General Botha ceased to exist as the training was taken over by the Cape Technikon. The approximately 3 000 Cadets trained are always spoken of with respect as they all uphold their motto: “Honour and Duty”.

Traditionally the TS WOLTEMADE Sea Cadets provide a Guard of Honour at the annual General Botha War Memorial Service in central Cape Town. The association between the Sea Cadets and General Botha Old Boys Association is also reflected by the navy blue and dark green colours of the Sea Cadet Ensign and the insignia (e.g. ties, cravats) which are used by the Old Boys.

It is therefore significant that the General Botha Old Boys Association wishes to continue the tradition of supporting Sea Cadets in furthering their maritime training.

The Lawhill Maritime Centre is associated with the Simon’s Town High School and offers a maritime studies programme. This industry focused course provides the school leavers with finding employment in the maritime environment.

Founded in 1995 as a pilot program more than 3 000 young Southern Africans have successfully completed their studies and have gone into various aspects of the maritime and related industries.

The Centre receives no state funding and the majority of its students come from financially stressed homes, who benefit from bursaries provided by the maritime industry to cover their Grade 10 to 12 studies. The following two quotes sum up the excellent work at the Centre:

“'The Lawhill programme has shown that we can find and nurture maritime talent among those who have no idea such an industry exists, let alone knowing about exciting careers it offers” - Brian Ingpen, Lawhill Maritime Centre.

“Many schools do a good job of educating the youth, but few schools prepare young students for a career. A school such as Lawhill Maritime Centre at Simon’s Town School is exactly what South Africa needs considering the country's high levels of unemployment” - Sean Day, South African born Chairperson of the Teekay Corporation (and a former Cadet of the General Botha).
**Nurturing our future leaders**

By Ms Beauty Pinga
Photos by L Cpl Paul Mpangala

Children are the light that shines for ever, they can be a handful, but without them our lives are incomplete. In many cases you would find a parent saying: this child is a headache, although a painful headache I cannot live my life without him or her. I for one, as a mother, cannot imagine going a day without seeing my boy.

The children at Kiddy College Day Care Centre in Tek Base were recently honoured with a visit by esteemed guests: the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Spouses Forum and its Chairperson, Ms Charlotte Shoke.

The graduation ceremony was opened by the Principal of the Centre, Ms Veronica Curtis. She opened the ceremony with Scripture reading from Psalm 127:3-4, “Lo, Children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth”. The programme director, Lt Col Judith Phiri, said: “Today I have witnessed the painful and stressful road that teachers go through in raising our children. Teachers are the ones that spend most of the time with our children and most parents never give recognition and appreciation for their hard work and perseverance. I have come to realise that teaching a toddler is hard work, teaching them how to sing and read are not easy.

“I do not regret this day; I have seen our children singing, dancing and playing drama. My heart melted when they sang the song: ‘God is Good’. I appreciate the effort teachers take effort in insuring that our children are safe. This day I will forever cherish and save in my heart, indeed the children are the light in the darkness.”

SA Soldier conducted an interview with a mother of twins, Ms Shirley Kobe. Both her 3-year-old daughters, Anthia and Athina, attend Kiddy College Day Care Centre. Ms Kobe is the Secretary of Director Military Judges at Defence Legal Service Division. How would you rate Kiddy College Day Care Centre? Ms Kobe replied: “As a mother of two children in this centre, I am satisfied by their service and patience towards my children, I rate the Centre 9/10.”

In terms of learning, are your children improving? She replied: “They surprise me every day; they sing a new song to me every time they come home.”

How is the treatment from the teachers; is there any communication between parents and teachers? Ms Kobe replied: “We communicate on a daily basis, and I have a good relationship with the teachers.”

LEFT: Children from Kiddy College Day Care Centre forming a guard of honour to welcome Ms Charlotte Shoke, Chairperson of the SA National Defence Force Spouses Forum.

RIGHT: Ms Charlotte Shoke, Chairperson of the SA National Defence Force Spouses Forum (left), presenting a Certificate of Star Performer to Ms Veronica Curties, the Principal of Kiddy College Day Care Centre.
"We believe in heroes. We keep your spirit alive"

The SANDF Education Trust


The main objective of the SANDF Education Trust is to support the education needs of the dependants of the following persons:

- SANDF members killed or severely injured subsequent to April 1994, while on official duty.

- Civilian members of the Department of Defence (DOD) killed or severely injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, while deployed during official SANDF operation.

- Citizens of the Republic of South Africa killed or injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, during official SANDF operations provided that such citizens are not engaged in activities opposing the SANDF.

The SANDF Education trust is funded through donations and contributions received from the private sector and international business enterprises. Ongoing fund raising initiatives are in place, and the SANDF welcomes all contributions.

For more information on the SANDF Education Trust, visit www.dod.mil.za

The banking details are as follows:

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We believe in heroes, we hope you do too.
Together we move South Africa Forward
The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Spouses Forum recently hosted the first anniversary celebrations of the Johannesburg Ladies Branch in Johannesburg.

Ms Senekhaya Yam, spouse of the Chief of the SA Army, delivered the keynote address on behalf of the Chairperson of the SANDF Spouses Forum, Ms Charlotte Shoke. Ms Yam said: “Although Ms Shoke could not make it today, she said she is proud of you all. “I am so excited that this day has finally come. As I stand in front of you all I would like to say that you are the light and you have the ability to brighten every corner where you are. Be proud of this day because we are all gathered here to celebrate the baby we all gave birth to a year ago. When you go home today please take home these words: let us forget about the past, it cannot be changed, but we can change the future and always remember that unity is your strength and that divided you fall. She closed her speech by quoting from Proverbs 14:1 “Every wise woman buildeth her house but the foolish plucketh it down with her own hands”.

Lt Col Thobile Ndlovu, a member of the Spouses Forum and SO1 Social Work, said: “I am so honoured to stand here and speak to you all. I have been requested to stand in for the Director Social Work, Brig Gen Eugenia Moremi, who is not here with us today. I have come to realise that the amazing thing about the human brain is the way that its starts working as soon as you are born and stops the minute you are asked to speak in public.” Lt Col Ndlovu added: As we are gathered here today to celebrate the most important day of our lives, we must take time to reflect on some of the relevant activities that are very important to us and are commemorated during this period in our country, on our continent, and the rest of the world. Such as the 16 Days of Activism: No Violence against Women and Children Campaign is between 25 November and 10 December, while 1 December is World AIDS Day.

History of the Johannesburg Ladies Branch

A need for the empowerment of the spouses of soldiers was identified in 2016 by members of the Doornkop Military Base Married Quarters. The Married Quarters house soldiers from the various Services and different units. The identification of this need in the Married Quarters led to the establishment and subsequent launch of the Johannesburg Ladies Branch in November 2016, under the leadership of Ms Vella Mapheto, spouse of Brig Gen Mapheto who was then the General Officer Commanding 46 Brigade. Shortly after the launch Brig Gen Mapheto was transferred to the USA as a Defence Attaché. Subsequently Ms Mapheto accompanied her husband. Ms Averal Witbooi was the Vice Chairperson and took over as Chairperson with Ms Noto Vilakazi as Vice Chairperson. After the launch of the Johannesburg Ladies Branch a number of projects were identified and planned. These
began while Ms Mapheto was still the Chairperson.

The projects that were identified by the spouses were as follow:

- **Welcoming function in February 2017:** The year plan was discussed and finalised.

- **Farewell function for Ms Mapheto:** It was a mission to keep it a surprise for her. Thirty women had lunch at Mike’s Kitchen and a gift was handed over to her as a token of appreciation.

- **Cooking, baking, sewing and knitting classes:** This started monthly at different houses in the Married Quarters. They grew to such an extent that the Acting Officer Commanding of 21 Battalion, Maj Mediro Caleb Lekabi, was approached to provide a room at the Non-commissioned Officers’ Mess for these classes. This was granted and the projects were carried out in the Mess. The Johannesburg Ladies Branch recipe booklets were compiled containing some of the dishes made during the monthly classes. The dishes that were prepared on the day of the event were prepared by the spouses. Knitting classes were not well attended, but they will try again in 2018. Sewing on the other hand kicked off well. They were taught to cut patterns out of brown paper to use as a pattern template. They were also taught how to thread with a needle by hand and to sew stitches.

- **Youth Day celebrations:** These were held for the youth/children of Doornkop as well as the Lenasia military communities. Children from Lenz were transported to Doornkop. This event was well supported by 21 Battalion, 46 Brigade, Joint Tactical and Army Support Base Johannesburg. These units assisted them with tents, tables, chairs, food and transport. There was a display by 46 Brigade, a fire and rescue display by Army Support Base Johannesburg, a stall by the sickbay at 21 Battalion including one by the Military Police. During this event the children received gift packs. Members of the Johannesburg Ladies Branch also sponsored food for the participants as well as support staff of the different units.

- **Mandela Day celebrations:** During this event the Hospice at Lenasia Military Base was spring-cleaned by the spouses.

- **Cleaning of the Non-commissioned Officers’ Mess at 21 Battalion:** This was their way to thank the kitchen staff for allowing them into their space. They were on knees scrubbing, high up on ladders washing windows and walls. They worked together as a team.

- **Gala Evening:** The spouses did the decor and food, including the cleaning afterwards.

- **Celebrating Women’s Month with a trip to Durban:** The spouses were taken for site-seeing daily and Army Support Base KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) spoiled them with a picnic on their private beach. KZN Naval Base gave them a tour as did KZN Air Force Base.

Ms Witbooi said: “This will be my last function as Chairperson as I am moving to Bloemfontein. I want to wish the new Chairperson, Ms Noto Vilakazi, all of the best in her new role. I would like to urge the women to support her to the best of your ability. Remember this forum is to the benefit of both the military community and yourselves. I leave you with a Bible verse - Proverbs 3:5-6 - “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.

"Without the guidance of our Heavenly Father we will not have accomplished the above. A special Thank You to Capt Olivia Priscilla Erasmus: with you by our side we conquered many stumbling blocks. You were the confidante, psychologist, advocate, disciplinarian, adviser and many other things. I would also like to extend my thanks to Lt Col Ndlovu of Social Work for allowing Capt Erasmus to commit herself to run with this sustainable project.”

The day was filled with joy and dancing.

**LEFT:** Lt Col Thobile Ndlovu, SO1 Social Work.
CISM ESALO Annual General Assembly

By AB Samuel Ramonyai
Photos by Mr Katiso Mabuza

The International Military Sports Council (CISM) Eastern and Southern African Liaison Office (ESALO) member countries are mandated to host an Annual General Assembly (AGA) according to rotation as scheduled. The SA National Defence Force (SANDF), as a member of CISM ESALO since 1994, hosted the 34th meeting at the St Georges Hotel in Pretoria with the theme: “Peace, unity, friendship through sport”.

When officially opening the AGA on behalf of the Chief of the SANDF, the Chief of the SA Navy, V Adm Mosiwa Hlongwane, said: “The hosting of this event is to create an endeavour to assist non-member countries. “ESALO is the coordinating body responsible for the planning, implementing and monitoring of sporting programmes in the region.”

The Chief of the SA Navy, V Adm Mosiwa Hlongwane, opening the 34th CISM ESALO Annual General Assembly.

CISM ESALO to discuss the promotion and development of military sport in the ESALO region. It is done to encourage participation in sport, physical training and education. More so, this event promotes friendship through sport among armed forces of both member and non-member countries. The Chairperson CISM ESALO, V Adm Sebastiao Vaso, thanking the member states for the smooth running of the Annual General Assembly.

The Chairperson CISM ESALO, V Adm Sebastiao Vaso, thanking the member states for the smooth running of the Annual General Assembly.

According to V Adm Hlongwane the role of sport in the development of soldiers should not be underestimated. He urged the ESALO member countries to take responsibility to ensure that this very principle is applied and promoted within the region.

Following his opening address the CISM ESALO AGA commenced. The meeting was attended by the Chairperson CISM ESALO, V Adm Sebastiao Vaso, the Board of Directors of CISM ESALO, the Chairperson of the Defence Force Service Commission, Prof Edna van Harte, and delegations from member countries.
Guided by the agenda of the meeting, members discussed military sports business that is of interest to all member countries, constitutional matters and the latest developments in the sporting arena. The regional sporting calendar was also organised and the participation in sporting clinics and in regional and continental activities was encouraged. The deliberations of the aforementioned areas tested the strength of the member states to identifying gaps and devise improvement strategies.

At the end of a week-long meeting, all discussions amounted to improving ties, cooperation and participation in military sports in the region.

In closing the conference, the Chairperson of CISM ESALO acknowledged the delegations for the dynamic and enthusiastic way in which the work was carried out. He thanked them for clarifying the settlement models which they should follow regarding communication with the CISM world body and member states.

Furthermore V Adm Vaso said the session enabled them to formulate the way forward in the achievement of their objectives. He urged members to use the decisions taken as a reference during their performance at their respective armed forces. He explained: “This decision will increase the importance of our tasks and prestige of our institution in order for us to overcome the challenges which impact on the promotion of our military sports.”

Finally, Director Physical Training, Sport and Recreation, Brig Gen Andries Mauyoma, acknowledged those who made the event a success. He thanked the delegation for their commitment as well as unity and friendship shown throughout the week. He closed by encouraging the delegations to implement the resolutions taken to improve sport and physical training in the region.
SA National Defence Force honoured at the second cricket test between South Africa and India

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) opened the second cricket test match between South Africa (Proteas) and India in January 2018 at SuperSport Park, Centurion, with military flair.

The request of the Titans cricket franchise came following the first appearance of the SANDF in August 2016 when the SANDF presented a successful opening ceremony for the cricket test match between South Africa and New Zealand at SuperSport Park.

The Titans have chosen the SANDF once again to honour the SANDF in appreciation of its services to the country. The 2018 SANDF basketball champions - the Gauteng province team.

The Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube, ringing the bell to signal the start of the second cricket test match between South Africa and India while R Adm (JG) Fred Hans, Director Naval Logistics, looks on.

The Department of Defence Head of Communication, Mr Siphiwe Dlamini, and the Chairperson of the Defence Force Service Commission, Prof Edna van Harte, were among the dignitaries who attended the second cricket test match between South Africa and India.

The Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang (right), and the Chief of Human Resources, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, were some of the SA National Defence Force esteemed guests invited to witness the second cricket test match between South Africa and India.

Article and photos by Mr Lufuno Netshirembe
participation in cricket test matches under the theme “Honour our Forces” has a special significance in honouring the patriotic service of the men and women in uniform and all the heroes and heroines who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty protecting the sovereignty of South Africa.

The SANDF’s participation further presents a good opportunity to promote Armed Forces Day, which takes place annually on 21 February, to cricket enthusiasts.

It was with this in mind that Dr Sam Gulube, the Secretary for Defence, officially opened the second cricket test match between South Africa and India by ringing the bell on the first day. The ringing of the bell is significant in that it signifies the start of the game and only esteemed persons are invited to conduct this task.

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Combined Band comprising the SA Army Band Limpopo, the SA Air Force Band and the SA Military Health Service Band played the National Anthems of the two countries before the cricket match started. There was also a fly-past by two Gripen fighter jets of the SA Air Force while the arena lining was done by 200 uniformed members representing the four Services of the SANDF.

Each day of the test match the SA Navy and the SA Army (Artillerists) performed a precision drill display between the tea and lunch breaks. The SA Navy was responsible for overseeing the 2018 SANDF participation in this world renowned sporting event.

In reciprocating the SANDF’s valued support the management of the Titans donated a percentage of the first day’s gate fees to the SANDF Education Trust.
Ushered into a new year: Newness of thoughts, words and deeds

By Chaplain (Rev) Sebataolo Edia Elijah Loate, Chaplain at the SA National War College

Compliments to all those who by the grace of God were ushered gracefully into the New Year. A lot is decided at the end of a passing year, that’s why at the beginning of a new year, people talk of new resolutions.

Recently, I read a piece of paper with the following words scribbled on it: “Our hope is not in the new year … but in the One who makes all things new” (Author unknown). These words reminded me of what prophet Isaiah speaks of in chapter 42:9, “See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them”. The prophet, bearer of good news, heralds the idea where God is introducing a new season, time, birth and teaching.

When a year passes, it passes with its own baggage, i.e. trials, hurt, pain, agony and fatigue. The joys and happiness of that year remains as a good moment or memory. For God, new things can further imply new promises, which shall as certainly be fulfilled in their season as old ones were. God promises that in the present time which can include the New Year He will be making new things, and He will give new favours such as have not been conferred formerly.

When God is ushering you into a new year He is saying to you that the Old Testament blessings you have had abundantly; are now taking a new turn as He as God declares in the New Testament blessings, not a fruitful country and dominion over your neighbours, but spiritual blessings in heavenly things. Before they spring into the open in the preaching of the gospel, “I tell you of them, under the type and figure of the former things”. The receipt of former mercies may encourage us to hope for further mercies, for God is constant in his care for his people and his compassions are new, even into the New Year.

New or newness is simply explained as different from one of the same which existed before; made fresh. Scripture expresses God’s concern for persons and larger creation in the broader categories of a new act and a new relationship.

God’s New Act: Scripture often calls to mind past acts such as the creation and mass departure that reveal God’s care for God’s world and people. Though deep-rooted in God’s acts in history, Biblical faith does not reduce in importance God to the distant past. Time and again writers of Scripture called God’s people to expect God’s new involvement in their lives. Isaiah 43:14-21 promised Babylonian exiles that God was now “doing a new thing” which paralleled God’s acts saving Israel from Egyptian slavery.

God again acted in a new way in Jesus Christ who offered a new teaching with authority (Mark 1:27) and whose ministry could be compared to new wine overflowing old expectations of God’s involvement in human deliverance (Mark 2:22).

New Relationship: This can be linked to new birth, a term referring to God’s impartation of spiritual life to sinners. It is one and the same with regeneration and finds its origin in John 3:1-10. When God ushers you into the New Year, He continues to establish a new and present relationship with you, notably with the descendants of Abraham and the people of Israel at Sinai. Jeremiah anticipated God’s establishing a new agreement with God’s all too often faithless people, a pact in which God would make knowledge of the law a matter of the heart (Jer 31:31-34 and Heb 8:8-13).

Luke 22:20 points to Christ’s sacrificial death as the basis for this new covenant or pact. In Christ, the believer experiences newness of life (Rom 6:4 and 2 Cor 5:17). This renewed life is characterised by new relationships with God and others (Eph 2:15-16 and Colossians 3:10-11).

As you are ushered into a New Year, allow the Spirit of Jehovah to renew you, enter into a personal covenant with Him. Allow yourself to be a new creation, in thoughts, words and deeds. Start this New Year with a clean heart. Cast away doubt; wipe away tears; and for the rest of the year chain away fear and worries in the belly of Sheol. Set your eyes on your goals and dreams.
An “angel” in SANDF uniform

Article and photos by Mr Lufuno Netshirembe

The act of UBUNTU is an act of benevolence that measures the true character of humility of any human being, meet Lt Col Constance Tlhaole, a SA National Defence Force (SANDF) soldier with a heart of gold and God-sent officer deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) at Munigi Base in charge of the engineers. Lt Col Tlhaole is without any doubt a true embodiment of UBUNTU.

Without jeopardising her military duties she somehow makes time to assist impoverished orphanages that she adopted. The orphanage that Lt Col Tlhaole adopted houses and takes care of displaced children owing to wars and loss of parents due to HIV and AIDS in Munigi and its surrounding areas. This orphanage struggles to have bare necessities and as such the children are sickly and highly malnourished.

Her nurturing characteristics were re-awakened after observing local children who would hang around the base asking for food every evening. Lt Col Tlhaole, being a mother herself, found the behaviour of these children unsettling, emotional and out of character for their age. Each time these children came to the unit to beg for food she kept asking herself questions like why were these children doing so and where were their parents. The questions she asked herself stirred something in her that only a mother could feel for children.

As a South African she was raised with the spirit of UBUNTU, the spirit that instils compassion by educating one that a human being is only human because of those around them. UBUNTU meaning helping one another and compels one not to see oneself as an island, but an individual that completes the whole. It was UBUNTU that made Lt Col Tlhaole realise that she was not going have peace of mind unless she helps these children.

She decided to assess the magnitude of the challenges that these impoverished children were experiencing. She visited a nearby orphanage where she met Ms Deborah Musenge who founded the non-government and non-profit orphanage after seeing the dire plight of the local children. Lt Col Tlhaole was in distress when she found out that the small dwelling inadequately housed 133 children of all ages. Some of these children were in urgent need of medical attention. Lt Col Tlhaole lamented: “After seeing the situation and condition of the children I was truly traumatised, I cried a lot, I prayed a lot so that God could grant me the energy to propel me into doing something to reduce the suffering that these children were forced to live under. In fact, no human being was supposed to live under such miserable conditions. My heart was torn apart when I was told that some children do die due to lack of various resources.”

In an attempt to get some financial assistance to buy basic necessities to help these children, she encouraged soldiers under her command to freely donate small amounts of money during Sunday church services. With the little money she collects she buys beans, rice/cassava or any source of starch and carbohydrates, cooking oil, salt, tea and sugar. Lt Col Tlhaole has recently established a vegetable garden as a sustainable food source.

Her efforts did not go unnoticed; before long Radio Okapi, the United Nations radio station in the DRC, took interest in her endeavours to assist. The interview she had with the radio station raised awareness of the plight of the children and Col Tlhaole’s endeavours to assist. Many local community members freely offered assistance. Students from the university in Goma who heard Lt Col Tlhaole on Radio Okapi offered their assistance to teach these children as part of their internship.

Ms Deborah Musenge said: “You cannot help but be deeply touched when you see the love she has for these children and how much the children adore her, she is truly a God-sent angel in uniform. We could not have asked God for a better gift for these children than Lt Col Tlhaole.”

Lt Col Constance Tlhaole, a SA National Defence Force (SANDF) soldier with a heart of gold and God-sent officer deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) at Munigi Base in charge of the engineers. She is without any doubt a true embodiment of UBUNTU.
Medicinal myths and a lack of care for our natural environment will be the forces behind the extinction of this magnificent animal.

The South African National Defence Force is a pillar in the reactive physical campaign being fought against poaching on the ground and in the skies. We also engage in proactive educational campaigns to spread awareness about the intrinsic value of this magnificent animal.

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