SA Peacekeepers in the DRC
The hero within us

A peace and goodwill ambassador in her own right

National University of Defence Technology from the People’s Republic of China visit SANDF training institutions

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2005 - Winner of the Government Communicator of the Year Award (GCIS).

2005 - Winner of the National Ubungcweti Award (GCIS).
THE RAND SHOW: Soldiers fast-roping from an Oryx helicopter at the Rand Show, where the SA National Defence Force received the Platinum Award for the Overall Winner in All Categories.

(Photo by Mr Katiso Mabuza)

Lupus causes the immune system to attack its own tissues and organs

It’s back to Basics for the SANDF’s leadership

Message of Hope

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The nation bade farewell to the late Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela (81) during a Special Official Funeral held at the Orlando Stadium in Soweto on 14 April 2018.

Mama Winnie was born on 26 September 1936 at Embongweni Village in Bizana in the Eastern Cape. She passed away on 2 April 2018 in Johannesburg.

The men and women in uniform of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) bade her a dignified farewell with deserved honours as instructed by the President of the Republic of South Africa and the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa. President Ramaphosa delivered the eulogy at the funeral service.

I sat glued in front of my television on Saturday, 14 April, to bid farewell to a remarkable woman. I was mesmerised by this strong woman the moment I personally met her: I was honoured to personally meet this formidable woman and stalwart way back in the early 1990s in Parliament when I was still a journalist. Her warm and friendly demeanour towards me touched me. I felt so much warmth from her when I asked her if I could pose with her for her photo. I will forever remember the way she made me feel … indeed a woman who possessed extraordinary resilience!

Mama Winnie’s casket with her mortal remains was carried in the same military hearse that was used for her late former husband, the first Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force, the late President Nelson Mandela, during his funeral in 2013.

Her casket was draped in the South African national flag reflecting a country united in grief for the “Mother of the Nation”. The National Ceremonial Guard Band played the national anthem at the funeral service.

The sermon came from the scripture: Psalm 46 read by Bishop Ravis of the Methodist Church. Mama Winnie’s favourite Hymn – Hymn 81 - “Nzulu ye mfihlakalo”/Great mystery was sung at her funeral service. Bishop Ravis added: “God is with her she will not fall.”

The funeral service was attended by a delegation from the United Nations (UN) and members from across the globe. The UN Secretary General, Mr Antonio Guterres, says they will continue to support all efforts to ending racism in honour of Mama Winnie. The UN held a special memorial service for her at the organisation’s Headquarters in New York.

Thousands of people, including international dignitaries attended the funeral service. Foreign and local dignitaries including the US Civil Rights Activist, Rev Jesse Jackson, the American Religious Leader, Louis Farakhan, and the British supermodel, Naomi Campbell, who was a family friend.

When speaking at the funeral service, Naomi Campbell said: “I stand here to celebrate the life of Winnie. She is rightly known as the mother of the nation. But she was much more than that she was a heroine of the continent … Courageous … She was always striving for equality. She made many personal sacrifices. She always stood tall. She stayed closed to her roots … I first met her with Madiba when he was released in 1990 … Winnie taught us to overcome our fears”.

She was a fearless fighter for freedom. Being torn apart from her family; she made immense sacrifices. She did not only fight against injustice and patriarchy here, but globally.

Mama Winnie was a social worker at heart and soul. She loved children. She was the first black social worker appointed at the then Baragwanath Hospital. She was a true social activist; and a women’s activist. Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela gave dignity to women.

After the funeral service, when the casket was carried out of the Stadium the floodgates of heaven opened and rain came pouring down while. Soldiers slow march while escorting the cortège from the terrain. Mama Winnie’s mortal remains were laid to rest at the Fourways Memorial Park, north of Johannesburg, during a private ceremony. The Military Command, led by the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, paid their last respects to Mama Winnie’s before her internment.

Mama Winnie, a fighter of patriarchy, once said: “Women will bring change in South Africa. And we did.” “Wa thinta Abafazi Wa thinta imbokodo!”/You strike a woman, you strike a rock!

Viva women! Viva! God bless Africa.

Hamba kahle mama Winnie!

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier
The Trailblazing Social Worker

By Maj Gen Ntsiki Memela-Motumi, Deputy Chief Human Resources

As the dust settles after the passing and burial of heroic Mama Winnie, I have been left even more disheartened at the loss. From the time the announcement of her passing was made on Easter Monday until the burial on Saturday, 14 April 2018, it has been a flash of memories passing through my head. This is because I have been fortunate to spend time with Mama Winnie from September 1990 after the unbanning of liberation movements and the return of exiles. At the time, I was a young social worker with few years’ experience and had been with the African National Congress (ANC) Social Work Department in exile, based in Lusaka, Zambia and looking after the welfare of the members of the ANC and MK.

I had landed in this situation a few years earlier after I had skipped the country to evade arrest for my underground and mass democratic movement activities as part of the ANC and MK. It had been during this time that I had known Mama Winnie, as a fearless and fierce fighter for women’s emancipation and people’s rights. She had been involved with the structures of the Federation of South African Women (FEDTRAW) and the Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDSAW), precursors of the ANC Women’s League. While this had been more of a cursory relationship, I had an opportunity to work closely with her upon return from exile as part of the first group sent by the leadership of the ANC in 1990 to make an assessment and prepare the ground for the returning exiles. This was in particular for those who had incurred injuries in operations, some resulting in disabilities, and whose families needed to be identified and prepared for the return of their sons and daughters after the armed struggle. This took us throughout the length and breadth of the country, towns, dorpies, cities and villages. During this time, Mama Winnie was at the helm, and saw the overall running an administration of the programme as the Head of the Social Work Department of the ANC, now based inside the country after the unbanning. It was not an easy task, having to assist the reintegation of mostly former combatants of Umkhonto we Sizwe, MK into society. Some found that their families were no longer alive or homes destroyed at worst.

In other cases while the returning exiles were able to find their homes and families still intact, the excitement of a returning combatant father, brother or sister faded away at the realisation that they do not bring the expected goodies or any form of alleviation of the plight of their families. This was a difficult task and the modest monthly allowances that were provided by the Repatriation Committee of the SACC did not go a long way to alleviate the plight of the returning exiles and their families. Mama Winnie was at the forefront guiding us in finding solutions to some of these challenges, such as the accommodation for those who had been displaced, some of whom had brought partners and young children. She set in motion processes for the legalisation of the children and assisting with access to education. In this regard, bursaries were also offered to the dependents of the former exiles and combatants. One of the most difficult areas was integrating those who had become disabled due to their involvement in armed conflict. The difficulties were to do with reconfiguring their homes to enable them to live better or comfortably, counselling their families about the new status of their loved ones as they left fit as a fiddle.

In her own way and still working against the establishment at the time as it was prior to the 1994 democratisation, Mama Winnie became a trailblazer of our new democracy and laid the basis for the new dispensation’s social welfare framework. Even in liberated South Africa, she kept her party, the African National Congress, and government on their toes. Examining the four pillars of our struggle – mass mobilisation; underground work; the armed struggle and international mobilisation, Mama Winnie embodied all these four pillars of our struggle and interwove them at various times, in ebbs and lows. She was an integral leader of the mass democratic movement through mass mobilisation against apartheid; in the thick of the underground structures under the nose of the regime’s security forces, recruiting and working with MK operatives; actively involved in the armed struggle and lastly, in international mobilisation.

Mama Winnie was a recognised military veteran and in that regard, was awarded a Medal of Honour by the former President Jacob Zuma in 2014. It is sad that she passed on during the year of the centenary of her former husband and father of her children, our first President Rolihlahla Mandela.

She died with her boots on! And as we pick up her spear, we recommit ourselves to serving the people of our country with pride and honour. May her Soul Rest in Eternal Peace. Malibongwe! 

On the left is the then Lt Col Ntsiki Motumi, Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Ms Carol Hendricks and Maj Gen Jackie Sedibe (Ret) at the 1997 Department of Defence Women’s Conference.
ARE PAST FAILURES HOLDING YOU BACK?

How do we move forward after so much failures, disappointments and hurt? Why does it always come back to haunt us whenever we think we have finally moved on?

What is evident is that no one can go back to undo the past. If we could, all of us would have made different decisions and choices. But because the past is in the past it will always remain in the past. As a new baby is born into this world there is so much excitement because of this joyful bundle of hope. Everyone is so excited and expecting the new baby with open arms. You are born into this world with no idea what is going to happened or which family you will join. You as that baby have no power to decide with whom you want to spend your life and who should raise you. You are vulnerable and eager to learn and grow. You are being taught to walk and eat but still you cannot make decisions for yourself. It is so easy to forgive, forget, smile and being honest about anything with everyone. You just have no worries because all you should do is ask your parents anything without worrying how you will get it. You just know that the next day it will be there. How they managed to get it you do not bother asking. You are so free from anxiety and stress and are enjoying being a child with all the innocence it entails.

Then you become a young adult, finishing school, studying or whatever you will be doing. You come across decisions that you now have to make on your own. Mom and Dad are no longer standing next to you to guide you. Yes, you have obtained the best education, family life but now you are out into the world discovering new adventures. You must make new friends and get “connected” as people would call it these days. Life happens and you make extremely poor decisions in a lot of areas of your life. You go with the stream and just join the crowd. It anyway seems more like fun than being prim and proper. People seem to be happy anyway so why not join? Then it hit you that weekend after weekend after reckless partying you always have a guilty conscience and you do not feel good at all. You feel so sick and tired and ashamed of all the scandals you did the previous night. Funny the next weekend you still repeat it even though you already know the outcome. This repeatedly happens and finally by the grace of God you realise but all of this adds no value to your life. There must be something else to do. But what can it be? How will you know?

Eventually you start to get your life together but still you keep getting flashbacks of your past mistakes and it tries to steal your happiness. You feel unworthy and you start thinking you will never change. You allow past failures to control your mind. It is so important to first start to realise what you want to do with your life. You should renew your dreams, goals and get your vision back. This however can be obtained with the help of Our Heavenly Father. We try to escape the source of life, where it all started but without acknowledging His power over your life you will not be able to make any progress. He made you and therefore He is able to give you the right direction. The same way your earthly mother and father will accept you back after disappointing them, God is standing with wide arms waiting for you to forget about your past because He does not remember it the moment you repent and follow Him. Capt Chrisandy Sieglaar, email

VAN KERWEL FAMILY EXPRESS THEIR APPRECIATION

The Van Kerwel family wishes to thank you for the special honour you granted to the late WO1 Leslie van Kerwel, a husband, father and grandfather. It was his wish to be laid to rest with military honours.

We would like to express our sincere thanks for the professional manner in which our request was dealt with.

Your understanding and assistance in this regard sent a positive note out to the community and the congregation of Stellenbosch.

Thank you for granting this special honour despite the fact that the deceased did not qualify for this special benefit. Thank you so much for going the extra mile. The community, family members and everyone who were present at this special funeral service were very impressed with the selfless contribution of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF). It just goes to show that humanity is very much alive in the SA Army and in our beloved country, South Africa. We are proud to be South Africans.

We would like to thank your representative, Brigadier General January, for his contribution on behalf of the SANDF. We would like to take this opportunity to thank your office and the members instructed to arrange the funeral and everyone who participated in making this all possible.

The funeral was a memorable occasion and we would just like to thank you as the Chief in Command of the SANDF for this special privilege. Mr Kallie Ekstraal, family representative of the late WO1 Leslie van Kerwel

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 sasoldier@mil.za. We would like to hear your comments or ideas, particularly about matters concerning the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be published - Editor.
SA FEMALE PEACEKEEPERS CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY IN CONGO

International Women's Day is celebrated in many countries around the world. It is a day when women are recognised for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political. International Women’s Day first emerged from the activities of labour movements at the turn of the twentieth century in North America and across Europe. Since those early years, International Women’s Day has assumed a new global dimension for women in developed and developing countries alike. The growing international women’s movement, which has been strengthened by four global United Nations (UN) Women’s Conferences, has helped make the commemoration a rallying point to build support for women’s rights and their participation in the political and economic arenas. South African female peacekeepers celebrated the day by conducting patrols in Beni in the Democratic Republic of Congo, thereby indicating how women in the mission area cope with conducting patrols and operations while working with their male counterparts.

LEFT: Cpl Dipuo Letsoalo and Samkelisiwe Ndlovu rendering medical support to the United Nations Mission in the Congo female peacekeepers on patrols. (Photo by Capt Siboniso Maseko)

MACADAMIA MILITARY BASE

It is a nice base where 14 SA Infantry Battalion (14 SAI Bn) Bravo Company Headquarters is situated. It is very clean, especially ever since 14 SAI Bn arrived in September 2017 to March 2018. The Company Commander is Maj C.M. Fuller who succeeded Maj Z.M. Zulu who has since left to assume his new post after being transferred to KwaZulu-Natal Works Regiment in Durban.

14 SAI Bn managed to confiscate contraband which included a large amount of clothes, tobacco, liquor and arrested many undocumented people from Mozambique who are coming to South Africa more especially through the Mbuzini area and at the Lebombo port of entry. Among the most valuable confiscated goods are 4x4 double cab vehicles such as Toyota Hilux, Toyota Fortuner, Ford Rangers, Nissan Raiders and other trucks. Leisure Time Utilisation is arranged once a month and most soldiers’ stress is relieved as they play or attend sporting events at local stadiums. Communication with the Company Commander is good and members remain updated with what is happening around them as it is deemed unprofessional for soldiers to depend on rumours.

The guards’ house at the main gate of Macadamia Base is outstanding. It is clean and well built. Inside is a table where there are different registers (military and civilian access control, weapon and movement control registers). There is a water cooler, telephone and a toilet. It is very spacious and properly equipped as a result that when you are on duty at Macadamia Base you enjoy it because it feels like you are running your own office.

Rfn S. Nqumama, member of Bravo Company currently deployed at Macadamia Military Base.
UN MILITARY GENDER ADVOCATE ATTENDS WOMEN IN PEACEKEEPING DIALOGUE IN CANADA

After being presented with the United Nations (UN) Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award in November 2017 in Canada, Maj Pearl Block was recently invited to attend a design workshop for the Elsie Initiative on Women in Peace Operations that was hosted by the Government of Canada on 22 and 23 February 2018. The award was in recognition of her work towards gender integration and advocacy during her deployment with the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

In November 2017 at the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial, the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr Justin Trudeau, announced the Elsie Initiative. With this initiative, Canada aims to create the conditions for the deployment and full participation of women in peacekeeping operations. Government officials, women peacekeepers, UN representatives, researchers and civil society representatives spent two days reviewing challenges, opportunities and recommendations in increasing the number of women serving in military in peace support operations.

Maj Block said she was invited to the conference owing to the recent award she received and her experiences of peacekeeping operations. She said: “The Elsie Initiative is about the innovative and mutual initiative to design, implement and evaluate a combination of measures to overcome barriers to women’s deployment in UN peace operations in military and police roles, and to support their effectiveness once in a mission.”

She further said that the approach to be tested and promoted by this initiative included the technical assistance packages, referring to the in-depth assessments for troop contributing countries. The other methods that were supported during the workshop were assistance to several UN missions and a financial mechanism, meaning the incentives for the recipient nations for deploying women peacekeepers. Maj Block added: “One of the recommendations made during the discussions was the formation of an Elsie Initiative enabling team that will accompany the deployed women of the countries cooperating with Canada in preparing, training and increasing the numbers of deployed women. This is from the recruitment into the system, to mentoring them and ensuring a smooth re-integration back to work at their respective units.”

She emphasised that the effectiveness of women in peacekeeping missions should not only be subjected to support duties, but that they should be utilised in frontline tasks such as patrols.

THE SECOND CORPORATE COMMUNICATION COURSE

The second Corporate Communication Course was recently presented at the School of Tactical Intelligence in Potchefstroom. Three members of the Reserves attended the course and did very well. 2Lt Nobulele Tyokozo from 2 Tactical Intelligence Regiment was the second best learner with 87% and the course average was 82%.

The course content covered all aspects of Corporate Communication as applied in the SA National Defence Force: internal and external communication, media liaison, corporate communication in support of operations and the coordination of the corporate communication function. The course consisted of both theoretical and practical assessments. The practical assessments were related to the environment where the members will be working and the members were also required to present assignments which also included speeches. As the course progressed the confidence of the learners improved drastically and by the end of the course they were very fluent in their presentation skills.

Prior to the end of the course, the members visited the Thakaneng Care Centre in Potchefstroom to treat the children to some snacks. They collected money to spoil each child with hot dogs, juice, a packet of chips and an apple.

The Care Centre has about 90 boys staying permanently at the Centre and it also provides after school care to another 80 children. It is run exclusively by volunteers from the community; and this year the Centre is supported by volunteers from Germany. The course members all agreed that one receives so much from reaching out to others; and that the smiles on the children’s faces were priceless to them.

Maj Merle Meyer, Corporate Communication Part 1 Course Facilitator at SA Army Intelligence Formation
1 MEDICAL BATTALION GROUP CHANGING OF COLOURS PARADE

1 Medical Battalion Group recently held a Change of Unit Colours Parade. Addressing the members, Maj Gen Lesley Ford, Chief Director Military Health Force Support, who was the main functionary, informed those present about the history of unit colours. He said that regimental colours were developed from the banners of the medieval nobility, which in turn originated from the flags and standards of the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians. In their earliest form, colours and standards were used for the exclusive purpose of distinguishing friend from foe, in the heat of battle.

The dignity with which the colours are treated today was not acquired overnight, but was the result of a gradual evolution. The awarding of battle honours dates back to 1768 in the British Army. As was the case with colours in other countries, South Africa adopted the practice of awarding battle honours to its units. The introduction of the National Colours by the then South African Defence Force was approved by the State President on 8 March 1988.

The SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) has received recognition for its support since its founding in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) with colours being awarded to 1 Military Hospital, SAMHS Training Centre and 3 Medical Battalion Group. 1 Medical Battalion Group also received their battle colours on 17 July 1987 that was later lain down owing to the damages acquired over the years. Today, as we take up these colours, it is for the sole purpose of reviving the significance of battle honours and to fly them with pride during esteemed military events.

This ceremony is historical in the military where armed forces or military units are honoured with battle colours for partaking in various battles, and it is evident that the SANDF also left its mark on the development of colours and the tradition connected therewith. The colours remain the visual symbol through which the honour, traditions and deeds of a unit are brought to the façade and of which former, present and the future members of such unit may be truly proud.

Maj Gen Ford urged 1 Medical Battalion Group to ensure that the tradition is carried through by teaching and sharing this knowledge: Honours are awarded to a unit for the service done and it is therefore of great importance that they should maintain their prestige. Colours are never compromised or destroyed, but should be kept in a church, a registered military museum or any other public building. Nobody has the right to sell old colours or to dispose thereof in any other way and under no circumstances may any individual be permitted to gain possession of colours. He added: “It gives satisfaction and pride to know that the image of the SANDF will be taken care of for decades to come. Your discipline as a unit will now be tested through how you carry, maintain and display the colours you have received today.”

CO Menzi Cele, Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal

COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN SADC AND THE PEACE MISSION TRAINING CENTRE

Front, fltr: Col Phangani Kuhuni, Deputy Commandant of the RPTC (Zimbabwe), Maj Gen Lawrence Mbatha, General Officer Commanding Training Command, Lt Col Dipuo Raadt, Acting Officer in Charge of the Peace Mission Training Centre (PMTC), and Lt Col Oliver Mubita, Senior Officer Operations and Training (Zambia). Back, fltr: Lt Col Jackson Dhlame from PMTC, Lt Col Patrick Mahlangu from PMTC, Brig Gen Siseko Nombewu, Commandant SA National War College, Lt Col Michael Phillips, Facilitator at the PMTC.

CO Menzi Cele, Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal

1 Medical Battalion Group Changing of Colours Parade. (Photo by CO Menzi Cele)
There were jubilant celebrations of a special life, songs, powerful speeches and tears as the world bade farewell to Mam’Winnie Madikizela-Mandela - South Africa’s undisputed Mother of the Nation.

True to the SANDF’s mastery of official funerals, the people’s SA National Defence Force (SANDF) led the charges to afford full honours to the revered Mother of the Nation, following the President of the Republic of South Africa and the Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa’s declaration that a Special Official Funeral be accorded this anti-apartheid icon.

Thousands descended on the Orlando Stadium where the second part of the funeral service was conducted before the cortège could leave for Fourways memorial Park where the mortal remains of Mam’Winnie Madikizela-Mandela were laid to rest, and the SANDF was there to lead the way as the nation accorded this icon her fitting burial rites.

Delivering his eulogy during the service, President Ramaphosa reminded mourners that: “Mam’Winnie was a witness to the truths and horrors of our nation, not only because of her own hardships but because of her courage”.

The President struck a healing tone and rallied mourners to follow Mam’Winnie’s lead to build a better South Africa, when he said: “In death, she has demonstrated that our many differences along political party and racial lines and the numerous disputes we may have are eclipsed by our shared desire to follow her lead in building a just, equitable and caring society”.

Speaker after speaker celebrated the beautiful life of the struggle led by Mam’Winnie and most were in agreement with what President Ramaphosa said: “Hers was a life of service”.

In between speakers, the stadium erupted in celebratory freedom and gospel songs, as Zonke, Thandiswa Mazwai and Sipho “Hotstix” Mabuse belted out tributes dedicated to Mam’Winnie.

One of the most poignant tributes of the day was delivered by Mam’Winnie’s daughter, Princess Zenani Mandela-Dlamini. Flanked by her sister, Zindziswa, and bravely battling a consistent cough during her address, Zenani celebrated her mom’s life and extended words of gratitude to the people of South
Africa and the world - who stood by Mam’Winnie at the height of her persecution by the evil apartheid regime. Zenani thanked all those who sent their condolences and supported the family saying: “We have been touched by your humanity”.

She gave a glowing tribute of how her mother loved her country and family. Zenani said: “She made the choice that she would raise two families: her personal family and the larger family that was her beloved country. And to her there was no contradiction in this choice, because she cherished freedom as much as she treasured her family.”

She also had stern words of rebuke to those who sought to vilify Mam’Nomzamo post-democracy, accusing her of all sorts of terrible untruths aimed at discounting her pivotal contribution to the attainment of freedom in South Africa, but was reassured that the narrative was now starting to change with the truth about her mother finally coming out.

At the height of her total onslaught against apartheid - a time when a clenched fist, association with the African National Congress (ANC), attendance of funerals of anti-apartheid activists and the Amandla war cry was punishable by death and imprisonment, Mam’Winnie defied all odds and was there to support her people and bereaved families, and those families and their descendants came in droves to bury their mother - the mother of the Nation.

Commensurate with her character and life story of a towering anti-apartheid leader and matriarch who never disowned her people and defeated the often-crippling brutal apartheid police harassment while living among ordinary people in Soweto, Brandfort and other areas across the length and breadth of our country, Mam’Winnie’s final farewell saw her people return the favour, coming in droves from across the land to bid their final respects.

Mother Nature also played her part in honour of South Africa’s great matriarch and freedom fighter. In what is considered a good omen in African folklore; the African skies opened up with an unrelenting downpour on the Orlando Stadium – a sign that Mam’Winnie was well received in the afterlife.

However, the downpour did not dampen the spirits of the dedicated men and women from the SANDF who marched in the rain to ensure that Mam’Winnie’s burial happens with the necessary decorum, pomp and ceremony.

As the procession led the way out of the stadium - a stone’s throw away from the Mandela House, No 8115 Vilakazi Street in Orlando West, Soweto - the SANDF Guard of Honour comprising soldiers from all Services, a leading detachment with bearers and pall-bearers, carried Mam’Winnie’s rain-soaked casket, draped with the national flag of the nation for which she braved repression, onto the Samil 20 Gun-carriage under a heavy downpour on the way to Fourways where she was finally laid to rest.

Among those in attendance were monarchs, current and former heads of states, the SANDF’s top echelon, heads of delegations, members of the diplomatic corps, American cleric and civil rights leader, Rev Jesse Jackson, the clergy, civil society organisations, leaders and members of political parties, business women and supermodel Naomi Campbell, the rich and poor as well as ordinary folks who wanted to pay homage to Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.

Mam’Winnie’s burial marked the end of the ten-day mourning period declared by the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, President Ramaphosa, following her death on 2 April 2018 after a long illness.
Social responsibility

1 SA Tank Regiment contributes to the lives of the Pongola community

Article and photos by Mr Lufuno Netshirembe

"Blessed is the hand that gives", this seems to be the mantra of 1 SA Tank Regiment members deployed at Pongola, KwaZulu-Natal, for borderline safeguarding and protection. Over and above the execution of their mandate of keeping the border safe from illegal activities, they make sure that they leave behind a positive footprint in the community where they operate in. By getting involved in different social responsibility projects these deployed soldiers not only promote the image of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) but they also empower the community.

From September 2017, 1 SA Tank Regiment has been deployed at Pongola for six months under the leadership of the Battalion Commander, Lt Col Phumzile Shingange. Since the beginning of the deployment, Lt Col Shingange identified a community project to build a house, which she wanted her members to engage in.

Owing to the extremely poor circumstances that Ms Duduzile Ntshangase from Deckville village was living in, she was identified through local community channels to benefit from the community project. During January 2018, in an exceptional move members of Alpha Company of 1 SA Tank Regiment under the guidance of the project team leader and Company Commander, Maj George "Monk" Nthatisi, started to build a house for Ms Ntshangase.

Ms Ntshangase who is unemployed and a mother of seven children, including her two grandchildren have been living in dire straits of poverty in a small uninhabitable shack. The members relied on local donors for the building material for them to build the house.

Not only did the members construct the house but they also designed and built a children’s double-bunker bed using the surplus planks and poles after the roofing was done.

The members handed over the house to Ms Ntshangase on 8 March 2018. Coincidentally, the day the house was handed over to her, was International Women’s Day. Present on this day to witness the handing over of the house were the locals of Deckville village and the representatives of the Royal House, Mr Richard Vilakazi and Mr Ben Ntshangase. The Royal House through its representatives expressed their support and appreciation to the SANDF and wished success upon everything that the SANDF engages in and on its future acts of Ubuntu.
Expressing her overwhelming gratitude, Ms Ntshangase said: “I am sincerely thankful for what you did for me and my children. I feel appreciated as a human being and indeed realise that God works in mysterious ways. I personally would like to say to you that you will be awesomely blessed as you have blessed me: blessed is the hand that gives than the hand that receives. Through the South African military, God truly shone his glory on me who is a nobody. From today onwards I will sleep like the rest of the villagers. I will not have any headaches when it rains. Thank you for giving my dignity back to me.”

The newly erected wooden play bridge designed and built by 1 SA Tank Regiment members for the learners of Laconco Primary School.

The members of 1 SA Tank Regiment also handed over the newly built playground with swings and other children’s play paraphernalia that they erected to Laconco Primary School. The school has 189 learners from Grade R to Grade 7. The Principal, Mr Sipho Similane, thanked the soldiers for what they have done for the school. Mr Similane said: “We are really blessed to have such structures erected for us. It is indeed important to have this playground. Learning and playing are part and parcel of growing and developing of children, especially for the Grade R. I am sincerely grateful for the efforts the soldiers made to improve our lives and that of our children.”

1 SA Tank Regiment to date has played an integral part in improving the lives of people in Pongola by getting involved or initiating more than twenty community projects. These include donating food and water at various local schools, créches and the community, including donating school shoes to learners and sanitary towels to school girls. In addition repairing windows, painting and buying curtains for different destitute schools, as well as handing out Bibles to community members. Siyakhula Secondary School, Dinqikuwasi Secondary School, Selinde Primary School and Ndumo High School are some of the schools that benefitted from 1 SA Tank Regiment’s social responsibility projects.
Parliamentarians visit South African peacekeepers in the DRC

The deployment of members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been positively received by the Members of Parliament. This was evident during the Portfolio Committee on Defence and the Joint Standing Committee on Defence visit to the DRC recently. The aim of the visit was to examine the conditions under which our forces operate in the DRC.

The role of the Parliamentary Defence Committees is to ensure effective oversight and is also charged with the responsibility to monitor, investigate and recommend on matters related to Department of Defence and Military Veterans and related entities which include budget, functioning, organisation, structure, staff and policies.

In terms of the above, the defence committees have the responsibility to monitor the operational and combat readiness of the SANDF and that the morale of the members of the SANDF remains at a high level. Combat readiness refers to the extent to which the SANDF can maintain and sustain its core capabilities to fulfill its mandate, as well as whether the SANDF can meet its obligations. In this respect the committees stressed the importance of the SANDF being managed and structured as a disciplined force and the renewed efforts towards the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peace building.

Currently the SANDF has more than 1 300 soldiers deployed in the DRC as part of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO) with the responsibility of ensuring peace and stability, to
Members of the SA National Defence Force deployed as part of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO) and Parliamentary Defence Committees in Kinshasa.

Capt Siboniso Maseko, Public Information Officer of the Republic of South Africa Battalion, engaging with members of the Parliamentary Defence Committees.

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Mr Stanley Motimele, with a South African peacekeeper in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

South African peacekeepers with members of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) at the Landing Zone in Erengeti, Beni.

Members of the Parliamentary Defence Committees greeting South African peacekeepers at Erengeti Company Operating Base in Beni.
news from abroad


Members of the Portfolio Committee on Defence with SANDF air crew.

help restore peace and economic development. This is done to support democracy, facilitate economic and social stability and create a better life for all. Since taking part in peace missions the SANDF has helped to bring peace and stability to war-torn communities on the continent.

During the visit, the defence committees interacted with members of the South African Embassy in Kinshasa, members of the SANDF Specialist Contingent in Kinshasa, the Republic of South Africa Aviation Squadron in Goma, members of the SANDF Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in Erengeti Company Operating Base (COB) and Mavivi COB and the leadership of FIB in Beni.

In his remarks the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Mr Stanley Motimele, extended the committees appreciation to members of the SANDF, in this regard the committee noted with satisfaction the progress that has been achieved in restoring peace in the DRC. They also expressed concern at the allegations of sexual misconduct cases made against the SANDF. However, they noted that progress had been made to address ill-discipline among the ranks.

They further expressed satisfaction with the commitment and cooperation demonstrated by South African peacekeepers. Mr Motimele said that having seen the challenges faced by the SANDF, the committee is committed to support the SANDF.

In addition he said that they have received positive feedback about the SANDF since their arrival in the DRC and that the SANDF is capable of delivering on the task ahead but need the necessary support. Mr Motimele said: “As a committee we must ensure that the SANDF is in a constant state of readiness. Your sacrifices have strengthened the commitment of the United Nations of ensuring that they continue to protect civilians in harm’s way, promoting human rights and the rule of law, advancing negotiations and securing a better future.”
SA Parliamentarians engage with United Nations members in Kinshasa

On their recent visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), members of the Portfolio Committee on Defence and the Joint Standing Committee on Defence engaged with the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), Ms Leila Zerrougi and her staff are focussed on the United Nations Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO) related issues affecting members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) deployed in the DRC.

Ms Zerrougi said: “In line with its mandate and in conformity with the DRC Constitution, MONUSCO remains committed to supporting the full implementation of the 31 December 2017 Agreement, which contains the guiding principles for the holding of elections, the peaceful transfer of power and the consolidation of stability in the DRC.”

The SRSG thanked the Government of South Africa for contributing equipment and personnel to the United Nations (UN) for the cause of peace in the DRC. In addition, she applauded the appointment of Brig Gen Patrick Dube, Commander of the Force Intervention Brigade. Ms Zerrougi said under her leadership MONUSCO will continue to implement its mandate as set out in the Security Council Resolution 2348. This includes good governance and professionalism in support of the political process and protection of civilian populations.

When asked about the issue of alleged sexual misconduct cases reported against South African peacekeepers, Ms Zerrougi said she was recently made aware that those were old cases not recent ones as reported. She said her office wrote a letter to the UN Headquarters in New York to explain the matter. She further said that the current South African contingent deployed does not have any cases pending against them. She thanked South Africa for being one of the countries that take immediate action when these cases of misconduct are reported against their members.

Additionally the SRSG clarified the issue and said that this does not mean those allegations were of rape. The SRSG said according to UN principles, peacekeepers are prohibited to have an affair with a citizen even if consent was obtained. The UN has a zero tolerance approach to this principle. Having any relationship with a citizen when on deployment is in contravention of the UN standard and it is classified as sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Ms Zerrougi urged South Africa to enforce this standard, to be more preventative and proactive before they deploy.

However, Ms Zerrougi said: “The UN expects all peacekeeping personnel to adhere to the highest standards of behavior and conduct themselves in a professional and disciplined manner at all times.”

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Mr Stanley Motimele, said the committee and the people of South Africa share the same sentiments because we all serve the world’s people and work for peace and the advancement of humanity. He said the UN is a source of inspiration and a beacon of hope for all. They together pledged that they would not tolerate anyone committing or condoning a crime, in particular, crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse and make zero tolerance a reality.
news from abroad

South African women peacekeepers serving on the frontlines

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

South Africa has the largest women’s contingent deployed as part of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) as part of the United Nations Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO). South Africa is one of only a handful of countries incorporating women in combat.


ABOVE: SANDF members conducting a visibility patrol in Muzambayi Village in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

LEFT: A, SANDF member based in Mavivi Company Operating Base conducts an engagement patrol from Mavivi to Muzambayi in Beni.
operations and peacekeeping missions. South African women in uniform play a significant role in peacekeeping missions in Africa. It has been a key factor in regional security, notably through its deployment of soldiers with the United Nations (UN) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), multi-dimensional peace support operations, and in numerous other UN and African Union (AU) missions on the continent.

The role of women peacekeepers is clear. They are required for specific tasks that sometimes relate to cultural differences. These tasks include facilitating investigations of gender based violence and performing body searches on women and engaging with local women. Furthermore, SANDF women peacekeepers are more approachable and less threatening to the local population. They also serve as role models inspiring local communities.

Recently the South African women peacekeepers in the DRC as part of the Force Intervention Brigade celebrated International Women’s Day. The event afforded the SANDF an opportunity to honour the many women in uniform who have successfully entered a predominantly male dominated field. These women serve on the frontlines to safeguard our nation. They have even taken on multifaceted responsibilities in peace support operations. They have faced down the enemy abroad and fought discriminatory barriers within. These women peacekeepers work in hazardous conditions and put their lives at risk for the greater good of humanity. Theirs has been a life of duty to preserve life, property and help build relations in many troubled parts of the continent in support of government foreign policy.
news from abroad

In view of the above, the South African women combatants based in Mavivi Company Operating Base conducted an engagement patrol from Mavivi to Muzambayi in Beni. The task was to conduct a visibility patrol using vehicles and on foot in order to gather information regarding the security situation in Muzambayi Village.

These SANDF women peacekeepers have seen combat since their arrival in the DRC. In fact they have been carrying out offensive operations alongside the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) as there are still numerous armed groups active in the eastern DRC.

International Women’s Day also afforded the SANDF time to reflect on the gains they have made in advancing women’s empowerment and rights. The SANDF has made significant inroads in so far as gender parity and women empowerment are concerned.

They have made great progress in ensuring that women enjoy the same rights and privileges as their male counterparts.

LEFT: SA National Defence Force women peacekeepers based in Mavivi Company Operating Base conducting patrols in protecting the area.
The hero within us

By Syndicate 2 Members:
Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College Course 38, 2016/17

The journey to an unknown destination is more like an expedition on the high seas without a navigation instrument. It is said that a soldier is the one who goes where he is told to go and does everything he is instructed to do without asking why, but how far. This was our situation as Army students ready to commence with Term 2 at the Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College (GAFSC). GAFSC had seven syndicates with nine students each from 13 different countries. Syndicate 2, our syndicate was no exception. Unlike other syndicates with well-known Ghanaian and Nigerian Directing Staff (DS), the onus laid on Syndicate 2 to taste the directions of one of the first ever SA Army DS in GAFSC. The journey to the unknown in search of professional knowledge was just about to commence.

Knowledge is acquired through learning from others or one’s own experiences. Institutional knowledge is however taught by others. The reflection of the teacher is what the student exhibit. It is believed that, examination portrays what a teacher has been able to impart and what students have been able to assimilate. One can therefore infer that the success of a student in an examination depends greatly on the efforts of the teacher. It is however sad to note that it is not everyone who leads a class that can be referred to as a teacher. It is not everyone who has a teaching certificate that can impart knowledge and it is not by virtue of being a superior in the Armed Forces that makes one a teacher or DS. While some people believe that teachers are made, others maintain that they are born. Irrespective of which side of the argument one belongs, what society expects from a teacher is that, he teaches what is acceptable and also positively influence the lives of his students. In contemporary times, teachers with such traits are difficult to find, but Syndicate 2 was blessed to have had one in the person of Lt Col Andrew Arnoldus. The teaching style of Lt Col Arnoldus at GAFSC is one that deserves commendation and emulation. Indeed, there is the need to honour our heroes while they are alive than to shower beautiful praises on their corpse during their funerals. A hero is not the one who dresses nicely and speaks with authority, but, the one who rescues the down trodden and make a star out of the less endowed.

Having travelled several miles across countries and oceans, Lt Col Arnoldus did not know that he was on a heroic mission. To be a life transforming DS requires a personality with the strength of an eagle to unravel the hero in students. This was the true reflection of the name Arnoldus. Despite the difference in cultural orientation, educational system and the weather, Lt Col Arnoldus was able to settle in and successfully accepted the challenge as DS for Syndicate 2. He had the courage, integrity, sense of humour, patience, motivation and an approachable personality to make heroes out of his students. “Give it a go” he will say and as students, we were motivated with the “can do attitude”. Words cannot express the wonderful teacher in Lt Col Arnoldus but our lives will forever be shaped by the way he handled us as a syndicate.

The story is told about Alexander the Great that shows the strength of his leadership and the solidarity among his soldiers. When he was once stricken with a high fever, one of his soldiers found water for him in the desert and brought it to him in his helmet. Alexander refused to drink a drop, saying since there was not enough for all his soldiers, he could not drink. Alexander often fought in the front line during battles and a replica of him is exactly the charisma of the hero we found in our DS. With an “adult approach” as he called it, he managed to unearth the hidden talents in us by his words of encouragement and care for our academic development. Under the able direction of Lt Col Arnoldus, a magnificent transformation occurred among Syndicate 2 students.

Lt Col Azera (Senior Nursing Officer, Ghana Army) became a Tactician, Maj Magnibo (Togoese Army) became an English man while Maj Nana (Ghana Army) transformed from Infantry to Engineers. Maj Munguya (Zambian Army) became a Logistician; Maj Yayu (Nigerian Army) became more vocal while Lt Col Karbgo (Sierra Leone Armed Forces) became more cooperative than ever. Maj Eduah (Ghana Army) became a superb organiser and Maj Bondah (Ghana Army) an apprentice in the shadows of the DS. The South finally met the West and the journey to the unknown gradually revealed the heroes in us.

The teacher, brother, friend and father we found in our DS is a gem no amount of money can buy. A true gem from South Africa is in GAFSC and the lives of many students will surely be touched in the military profession. As the Akans will say “if you want to talk to God, speak to the winds”. To the harmattan winds we therefore pronounce that we have been mentored by a hero who devoted his time to ensure that our challenges were turned into opportunities. We have seen the hero within us and shall always remember the good officers he has made of us. The brotherhood we share will never be forgotten; for we are heroes.
A peace and goodwill ambassador in her own right

By S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole
Photos courtesy of Maj Caroline Komsana

A peacekeeper and goodwill ambassador in her own right - Maj Caroline Komsana - has always wanted to be part of something bigger than herself.

She has plenty of experience as a peacekeeper having done tours in the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) respectively. Maj Komsana is adamant that women are an essential part of all peacekeeping operations, and often bring more to the role than men. Her deployment experience comes a long way since 2004 when she was deployed with the SANDF Specialist Contingent in Kinshasa and when she was deployed in field missions in

2012 as the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegtaition (DDR) Information Operational Officer at South Kivu in Bukavu. Her role was to map all the armed groups operating in the area. She was involved in field missions and also extraction of combatants for the DDR process.

This is why she found herself enlisting in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) in 1996. After joining, Maj Komsana moved up the ranks in the SA Air Force inter alia as Supply Support Officer, Vehicle Fleet Manager and Technical Stores Manager.

Since 2012 Maj Komsana is appointed as SO2 Military Capability (Research and Development) at the Peace Mission Training Centre (PMTC) in Thaba Tshwane. As part of her responsibilities at PMTC, she is a course leader and a facilitator for the DDR Course for the past five years based on her practical experience as DDR officer when she was deployed to the DRC and also facilitated other peace mission courses presented at PMTC.

Recently she was deployed to the United Nations African Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) in the Sudan and appointed on dual roles as UN Chief Civilian-Military Coordinator (UNCMCOORD) Officer and Gender focal point for Sector North Headquarters. This was her fourth deployment to a UN peacekeeping mission. She had 15 teams’ sites reporting to her including five battalions, one company and the Mongolians Hospital. Her responsibilities included the training of all the teams’ sites on issues of Quick Impact Project, CIMIC, gender, culture, awareness on zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse.

Her highlights of the mission were the successful projects she facilitated, monitored and handed over to the local authorities and communities which ranged from the rehabilitation of schools, construction of a new primary school for the returnees and provision of school furniture, equipping of a women’s clinic laboratory and a drug centre. All this work was done in coordination with the United Nations’ country teams such as UNICEF, WFP, OXFEM, UNOCHA, WHO and also the government of the Sudan.
When asked why it is important to invest in peace, Maj Komsana replied: “The absence of peace implies an absence of hope in my opinion. Peacekeeping, peace building and conflict prevention are, therefore, essential prerequisites to bring hope to people living in conflict-affected regions across the world. Only a peaceful society can ensure that its inhabitants enjoy their human rights, socio-economic freedom and unbiased rule of law institutions. As the late Mr Nelson Mandela said: ‘We commit ourselves to the construction of a just and lasting peace.’ It is this commitment that motivated me every day in Darfur”.

Furthermore, Maj Komsana has been working as an International Facilitator with the UN women - UN Female Military Officers Course (UNFMOC) under the mentorship of Maj Gen (Ret) Cammaert from the Netherlands, which aimed to equip female military officers with knowledge and tools needed to enable them to meaningfully implement UN policies, and guidance when deployed to a UN peacekeeping operation. In addition it is also to support mission activities related to protecting women, children and civilians from all violence to include conflict related sexual violence. To increase the pool of trained female officers with UN member states who could be made available to UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations for Deployment to a UN mission on short notice and promote the Office of Military Affairs Gender Action Plan 2014-2018.

Maj Caroline Komsana has been part of this programme since the second pilot programme that was held at the PMTC in South Africa in 2015, and then she attended other courses held in India, China and Kenya respectively. She had contributed by sharing her mission experience with the learners as well as syndicate facilitation.

This is undoubtedly an important representation of South Africa on an international platform and indeed an ambassador of South Africa.
National University of Defence Technology from the People’s Republic of China visit SANDF training institutions

A delegation from the National University of Defence Technology from the People’s Republic of China led by Maj Gen DENG Xiagang, visited the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and its training institutions to further strengthen the existing military cooperation between the Chinese People Liberation Army (PLA) and the SANDF.

The deliberations of the meetings between Maj Gen DENG’s delegation and the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Training Command, Maj Gen Lawrence Mbabha’s delegation, ranged from consensus on issues relevant to technological improvements that are needed at military training institutions. Common themes discussed during the meetings included enhancing mutual understanding, boosting mutual trust, technology development and promoting cooperation and working to push for fresh progress in the developments of relations between the two military institutions.

Maj Gen Mbabha highlighted several areas for a positive military-to-military relationship, among others, respect for each other’s core interest; bolstering strategic mutual trust through enhanced dialogue and communication; and that both parties must be motivated by greater common interest of pursuing a unilateral competitive edge.

The delegates further reached consensus on promoting new developments of military ties and engage in mutually beneficial efforts and also identified projects as a next step in pragmatic bilateral cooperation. They also agreed that healthy, stable and reliable military ties are an important part of bilateral relations and agreed to continue with high-level military contacts and dialogues, which will create a positive atmosphere for joint efforts.
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Chief of the SA National Defence Force warns against ill-discipline at an Easter church service

By Mr Malose Malena
Photos by L Cpl Paul Mpangala

Before wishing members well for the Easter weekend, the Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke, issued this warning: “I want to put it on record, as the Chief of the SANDF that I do not take kindly to that type of behaviour, and if anyone misbehaves regarding social misconduct, we deal with them thoroughly on the spot”.

His dissatisfaction comes in the wake of the United Nations (UN) report recently released which points to sexual misconduct of some members of the SANDF who are deployed in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

General Shoke said that despite the negativity contained in the report, his orders to send more personnel to central Africa still stood. He said the selfless bravery and discipline showed by the members of the SANDF was enough to still make this country proud.

The Chief of the SANDF concluded by appealing to those embarking on various journeys over the Easter weekend to be cautious and to travel safely. He also asked the members to spare a thought for SANDF soldiers safeguarding the country’s ports of entry and those maintaining the nation’s integrity abroad.

The Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, gave a moving sermon and benediction for Easter.

With that out of the way, the event became alive with this important question: What is Good Friday? The answer lies in the book of Luke 24:1-7, which speaks about the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Messiah sent by God.

But if you think the story and the message of resurrection are normal in many churches at this time, then it means you have never been privileged to encounter a sermon by the Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile.

In reference to Lewis Armstrong’s
“What a wonderful world”, Brig Gen (Rev) Jamangile began his sermon by asking the congregation of approximately 300 a rather simple and often ignored question: What is Easter? Referring to Luke, the Chaplain General said there was nothing good about Good Friday. He said: “Good Friday as you know it today was a cruel, trying and painful time for our Lord Jesus Christ. Be that as it may, all that pain and suffering was soon forgotten, merely three days later. The resurrection happened so quickly when the enemies of the Lord were still celebrating their temporary victory.”

He also encouraged and advised those facing adversity to hang in there and never lose hope in God. He said: “Most people feel powerless and neglected during hard times (analogous to Good Friday). So my brothers and sisters, the only key to reaping the fruits of your tears and blood is survival and absolute trust in the Lord. Remain committed and close to Him and soon He will deliver your Easter.”

The Chaplain General advised people to find solace in their turbulent situations. He said: “Do not feel despondent as a trooper because you are in charge. Do not feel ashamed being ordered around by your seniors. What you do not realise is the fact that you are in charge. You as a soldier are the one who has the right to lead a General in or out of a site. This means you are in charge. So do not despair, wait for your Easter, it is coming”.

The Chaplain General ended the Easter church service with this touching benediction: “May the Grace of the Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest and abide in all of us, now and forever more. Amen”. 

Bishop Themba Mambo of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and the Deputy Chair of Security Services Christian Advisory Board were among the main speakers at the Easter church service.
The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) delivered on its promise of presenting memorable military capability demonstrations and exhibitions at the 2018 Rand Show. The primary aim for the SANDF to extend collaboration with The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, engaging with the General Officer Commanding SA Army Infantry Formation, Maj Gen Rudzani Maphwanya, while the Chief of Joint Operations, Lt Gen Barney Hlatshwayo, and an Infantry Formation member look on.

The audience were intrigued by the team work of the SA Navy demonstrating the gun run.

An SA Army Specialised Infantry Capability Unit member from Potchefstroom performing the Nutcracker at one of the afternoon sessions at the Rand Show.
the Rand Show is to take the SANDF to the people. The opening ceremony saw the crowds flocking in to witness the SANDF showcasing and demonstrating its capabilities. The demonstrations unfolded with a battle scenario based on rebels staging an attack. Members from the SA Army consisting of Paratroopers, Engineers, mechanised and motorised Infantry participated in the demonstrations.

This was followed by SA Army Specialised Infantry Capability Unit (SAASIC) members from Potchefstroom demonstrating an anti-poaching simulation of intruders into the Kruger National Park. This specialised unit provides horse-mounted infantry, motorcyclists, dog handlers and visual tracking capabilities to the SANDF in a wide variety of disciplines as well as for area defence purposes. Furthermore, paratroopers from 44 Parachute Regiment led by WO1 Kasu Makabele were parachuted onto the battlefield. This was followed by 500 Squadron from the SA Air Force and 7 Medical Battalion...
Group demonstrating the evacuation of injured personnel from the roof of the arena. Adults and children said they were captivated by the action, which ended with a fly-past conducted by SA Air Force aircraft.

During the opening parade, the Chief of Joint Operations, Lt Gen Barney Hlatshwayo, pointed out that the Rand Show provides a platform for the selfless men and women in uniform to interact with their fellow countrymen of diverse backgrounds. The intention here is to educate them about the heavy responsibility that soldiers carry on their shoulders in the dangerous quest of defending and protecting South Africa’s integrity.

An awards ceremony marked the official end of yet another SANDF’s successful participation at this year’s Rand Show. The SA National Defence Force was awarded with the Platinum Award for the Overall Winner in All Categories at the Rand Show by the Chief Executive Officer of the Johannesburg Expo Centre, Mr Craig Newman. In addition, certificates of appreciation were also presented to members of Joint Operations, the SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy, the SA Military Health Service, Human Resources Division and the Defence Reserve Division.

Addressing SANDF members during the closing ceremony, the Head of Communications, Mr Siphiwe Dlamini, informed the participants that they should be proud of themselves because South Africa has an immeasurable trust in them. He started by relaying greetings on behalf of the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, who was then in Moscow and had asked him to relay a message of gratitude to the SANDF members.

Mr Dlamini could not hold back on his praises for the sterling work done by SANDF members during the 2018 Rand Show. He said: “I am informed that the performance not only on the arena programmes this time, but also at our static displays were excellent. I thank you from the bottom of my heart and I would like, through you, to thank your families, your husbands, wives, children and the rest of your relatives for allowing you to avail yourself to be here during the Easter weekend when you are supposed to spent some quality time with them.”

A drill squad from 4 Artillery Regiment in Potchefstroom testing the bridge erected by engineers from the SA Army Engineer Formation.
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Mathematician in the SA National Defence Force

By Mr Malose Malema
Photos by Mr Katiso Mabuza

The laws of exponents and factorisation are some of the difficult mathematics concepts for most people, but not Maj Ramotjaki Lucky Monaledi and S Lt Khodani Sheriff Tshivhi. Maj Monaledi is a Mathematics lecturer at the Faculty of Military Science at the Military Academy, Stellenbosch University, while S Lt Tshivhi is an Academic Assistant at the Mathematics Department at the Military Academy.

Maj Monaledi grew up in the dusty rural area of Hammanskraal, near Pretoria. After finishing matric he applied at various universities without any success. This is despite the fact that he had Prof O.D. Makinde.

As a lecturer at the Military Academy, Maj Monaledi presents six courses, namely Maths 122 and Maths 152 (First level Algebra), Maths 222 and Maths 242 (Second level Algebra and analysis) and Maths 322 and Maths 352 (Third level complex analysis and optimisation).
Since 2010 as a lecture at the Military Academy he was nominated four times as the best lecture who made the greatest contribution towards the academic success of the top achieving first year students.

In addition, Maj Monaledi always finds time in his tight schedule to assist learners (Grade 6 to 12) with Mathematics on Saturdays from various schools and N1 – N3 Maths students at the Vredenburg Further Education and Training (FET) College as part of community service.

Maj Monaledi’s success is not only limited to his personal achievements. He said seeing his students pass is an awesome and indescribable feeling. He said: “Last year I managed to guide my first year maths students to a 96% pass rate, 98% pass rate for the second years and 100% pass rate for my third year students.”

He credits this to his unique teaching methodology: the story-telling technique. According to Maj Monaledi this method is the best since it uses practical examples, namely family dynamics. He said: “When solving Mathematical problems for example X or Factorisation we use examples such as mother, father and child, etc. These people replace the typical numbers and fractions which are sometimes very difficult to manoeuvre. And since using this methodology, the results have been nothing short of being marvellous”.

Maj Monaledi says that he receives so much support from the Department of Defence and the Military Academy since he got the opportunity to become a Mathematics lecturer, such as completing his Masters and to do the necessary research, including community service.

He said: “I thought my tertiary career aspirations were done and dusted when I joined the SANDF in 2003. I thought the SANDF was all about guns and ammunition. But I was surprised to discover the various career options in the military. Just look at me today - without the organisation I would not have achieved this much.”

Maj Monaledi added that even though he got a few offers from the corporate world, he is committed to the SANDF. He said if it was not for the SANDF, he would not have reached these heights. Therefore the best way is to remain humble and committed to the SANDF.

He encouraged young people, especially those from poor backgrounds to be persistent and to never limit themselves. Maj Monaledi said: “Falling is not staying down. You fall, you get up again and walk head high towards fulfilling your dreams.”

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Lt (SAN) Khodani Sheriff Tshivhi (left) and Maj Lucky Monaledi with some youth at the Military Academy stall at the Rand Show.
SA Army Engineer Formation under new command

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhole

Brig Gen Abram Nthejane recently assumed command of the SA Army Engineer Formation as the General Officer Commanding (GOC), relieving Maj Gen Willis Nkosi during a Change of Command Parade held at Military Base Dunnottar in Springs. Maj Gen Nkosi has served as the GOC since April 2013 and has since been appointed as the Chief Army Force Structure Plan.

Under Maj Gen Nkosi’s guidance the SA Army Engineers achieved a lot of successes during the performance of its primary task of enhancing the mobility and survivability of own forces as well as the improvement of the SA Army Engineer Formation image and professionalism.

Addressing the members, Maj Gen Nkosi thanked his staff and commanders for their effort in leading the SA Army Engineers and providing seamless service to the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and people of South Africa. He quoted the famous words of Harry S. Truman who once said: “It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit”. Maj Gen Nkosi said while he will always believe that, recognition and thanks are still always appreciated. He is proud of his team as they always put the SANDF first.

In addition, Maj Gen Nkosi laid out his three key pillars that shaped his Commander’s intent, know yourself as an individual and as an organisation, he cited the minutes that make up a day and advised the attendees to spend them on what’s important, and to be excellent in all they do. Being excellent across the board professionally, mentally, physically and spiritually - is the foundation of true success.

He acknowledged the vast efforts the SA Army Engineers contributed in support of peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo as part of the United Nations’ mission, along with the Engineers’ successes in various operations as well as humanitarian projects conducted with other government departments.

Following his speech, Maj Gen Nkosi handed over the symbol of office to Brig Gen Abram Nthejane who assumed his position on the podium as the new parade commander and acknowledged the general salute from the parade. Prior to taking his new position, Brig Gen Nthejane was the Officer Commanding of Infantry School, a position he held since 2013. Brig Gen Nthejane brings to the appointment more than 30 years of wealth of experience, values and leadership.

It is understood that as GOC, his responsibilities will grow exponentially as compared to his previous appointment. Foresight and courageous leadership are pivotal to the attainment of the SA Army’s goals. As GOC, a high degree of political maturity is expected from him, the sobriety to make sound decisions under pressing circumstances and a sense of selfless volunteerism.
“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.

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We believe in heroes, we hope you do too.

Together we move South Africa Forward
Military spouses tour Soweto

By Mr Malose Malema
Photos by Mr Katiso Mabuza

It is true that behind every successful man, stands a powerful woman. This phrase explains the raison d’être of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Spouses Forum.

Defence Foreign Relations (DFR) collaborated with the SANDF Spouses Forum in organising a social tour of Soweto. However, this was not just any adventure for the wives of SANDF general officers and foreign military attachés based in South Africa, but is an annual event to forge interaction and cooperation between the SANDF and the rest of world.

Participating countries included: Algeria, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Thailand, Uruguay, the United States, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The early morning tour started with a visit to the Mandela House at number 8115 Vilakazi Street in Orlando West, Soweto. Vilakazi Street, the only street in the world where two Nobel Prize winners lived (Mr Nelson Mandela and Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu). Here the touring party had the rare opportunity of being under the roof which the world renowned icon, the late Mr Nelson Mandela, called home.

Many visitors could not hide their excitement at the sight of the memorabilia covering almost every wall of the four-roomed house, such as honorary certificates, a replica pair of boots (the original pair having since been taken to the Nelson Mandela Museum in Qunu, the home village of Madiba) which he wore in prison and a rare green boxing

Ms Charlotte Shoke, the Chairperson of the SA National Defence Force Spouses Forum (left) exchanging gifts with Ms Sanam Ali Saudi, the Secretary of the Military Attachés and Advisory Corps Spouses Forum and the wife of Pakistani Naval and Air Adviser.

The SA National Defence Force Spouses Forum had a chance to visit the Hector Peterson Museum where they were taken on a trip down memory lane by Hector Peterson’s sister, Ms Antoinette Sithole (front row, 5th from left).
championship belt given to the great man by the equally gigantic boxing icon, Don King. The travelling party seized the opportunity to take pictures of every corner of the house.

From there they proceeded to the Hector Peterson Memorial Museum where they were taken on a trip down memory lane by Peterson’s sister, Ms Antoinette Sithole (the girl who is seen in the iconic Hector Peterson picture). She relayed everything, from the march organised to the actual peaceful protest against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in schools across the country.

Then the visitors went to the Kliptown Open Art Museum, the home of the Freedom Charter. Here people had a chance to view the 10 pillars making up the Freedom Charter, which forms the basis of the modern South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996).

The visitors had a chance to see most of Soweto, which is jam-packed with historic and iconic sites and remains that serve as a reminder of the bitter struggle endured by those oppressed by racial segregation.

These include *mama* Winnie Madikizela-Mandela’s house (where she lived), the Regina Mundi Church and Mandela’s training house to mention but a few. It served as a hide-out for the media-shy Madiba subsequent to his release from prison in the early nineties.

The approximately four-hour tour ended with a 5-star lunch at the Sakhumuzi Restaurant adjacent to the Mandela House. Here the guests looked forward to the carefully prepared African and European cuisine. *Malamogodu* (tripe), *Semphemphe* (porridge made with mealie-meal and orange water melon or pumpkin), *chakalaka*, *pap*, etc were also on the menu.

Ms Fatima Farhan from Pakistan said this had been the best experience she had so far during her two months stay in South Africa. She said: “This trip was fun and informative at the same time. I mean I had the chance to get closer to things we only see on television or read about in the newspapers back home. So next time I’ll make sure I bring my children along.”

Ms Diana Castello from Peru reckons that South Africa is a beautiful country. But just like her Pakistani counterpart, she said Soweto was the cherry on the top. She said: “The whole trip was very nice and entertaining. We enjoyed it very much. South Africa is indeed a nice and beautiful country.”

Speaking in her capacity as both the Chairperson of the SANDF Spouses Forum and the host, Ms Charlotte Shoke, commended the SANDF and DFR in particular for organising such a magnificent and relaxed networking session. Ms Shoke highlighted the Goodwill Parcel Project and reputable crèches in Makhado and Hoedspruit as some of the standout successes of the SANDF Spouses Forum. She said that they also shoulder the responsibility of being skills providers to less fortunate women. The Forum is also responsible for the general skills development of lower ranked women in Thaba Tshwane.

Ms Shoke said: “Trips and initiatives like these would not have happened were it not for the undying dedication and the full support of our remaining sponsors. We, as the SANDF Spouses Forum, do not have a designated budget from the SANDF. We are very grateful to companies such as Mass Mart, Huletts and Tiger Brands that react so generously to our pleas. We also appeal for more financial contributions from corporates and individuals to fulfil our core objectives.”
Public cautioned over Listeriosis outbreak

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela

In the wake of the Listeriosis outbreak in South Africa, the health fraternity noted with concern when they discovered that of the 557 initially laboratory confirmed cases, 34% were from the private health facilities and 66% were from public health facilities.

Given that only 17% of South Africans use private health facilities; the Department of Health felt that the proportion of cases from private health facilities was too high. This indicated that the source of the outbreak was likely to be a food product that was widely distributed and consumed by people across all socio-economic groups. The age groups that were most affected were neonates meaning the first 28 days of life (37%) and the age group between 15 to 49 years (33%). These two groups comprised 70% of all cases.

Col (Dr) Libako Fosa, Senior Staff Officer Medicine Select at the office of Director Medicine, said Listeria monocytogenes is ubiquitous, and it is usually found in soil, water, and decaying vegetation.

Many farm animals and other domestic and wild animals can harbour the bacterium. Though many of these animals may be asymptomatic carriers of the bacterium, they can serve as a source to contaminate the foods produced from them, such as meat and dairy products. Listeria monocytogenes may also enter food-processing factories and contaminate food contact surfaces and non-food contact surfaces, for example floors or drains.

Listeria monocytogenes may contaminate various foods and dairy products such as raw vegetables and fruits, uncooked meats, packaged and processed meats (for example hot dogs or deli meats), smoked seafood, soft cheeses and unpasteurised milk/dairy products.

Col (Dr) Fosa indicated that Listeriosis is most often a food-borne illness that is transmitted to humans after they ingest foods or liquids contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes.

Human-to-human transmission occurs when an infected pregnant mother transmits the infection to her newborn via the placenta or during delivery.

Describing medical procedures of diagnosing Listeriosis, Col (Dr) Fosa said: “Diagnosing Listeriosis promptly can be challenging, as it can initially present clinically similar to many other gastrointestinal infections. The patient’s history can be critical, as it may provide information about exposure to certain food products known to harbor Listeria monocytogenes. Making a clinical diagnosis can be facilitated if there is a known outbreak of Listeriosis.

“The definitive diagnosis of infection with Listeria monocytogenes is confirmed by culturing and isolating the organism from blood, cerebrospinal fluid, amniotic fluid or the placenta on specialised laboratory media. Isolating the specimen from stool samples is unreliable, as is serologic testing. Imaging studies, such as a CT scan or MRI of the brain, may be ordered to detect a brain abscess, for example. A spinal tap (lumbar puncture) to obtain cerebrospinal fluid may also be performed if there is suspicion of central nervous system infection.”

In a recent update of the Listeriosis outbreak, the Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, proclaimed that as of 2 March 2018, a total of laboratory-confirmed cases have risen to 948, still counting from January 2017. Of these 948 a total 659 patients have been traced and 180 of them have unfortunately died. This constitutes 27% case fatality rate. In a constant search for the source of the outbreak and the treatment of people who
are affected, a team from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) Centre had interviewed 109 ill people to obtain details about foods they had eaten in the month before falling ill.

Ninety three (85%) people reported eating ready-to-eat processed meat products of which polony was the most common followed by viennas, sausages and then other cold meats. On 12 January, nine children under the age of five years were presented to Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital with febrile gastroenteritis. The paediatrician suspected foodborne disease, including Listeriosis, as a possible cause. The environmental health practitioners (EHPs) were informed and on the same day visited the crèche and obtained samples from two unrelated polony brands (manufactured by Enterprise and Rainbow Chicken Limited respectively) and submitted these to the laboratory for testing.

Listeria monocytogenes was isolated from stool collected from one of the ill children, and from both of the polony specimens collected from the crèche. These isolates were sent to the NICD Centre for Enteric Diseases, and underwent whole genome sequencing and genomic analysis. The ST6 sequence type was confirmed on all three isolates on 27 January.

Minister Motsoaledi said: “I wish to further remind you that we had then taken a decision to visit all food-processing sites, food packaging sites, as well as food production sites where possible. Following the lead from the tests performed on these children from Soweto and the food they had ingested, the EHPs, together with the NICD Centre and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries representatives, accompanied by three technical advisors from the World Health Organisation in Geneva, visited a food production site in Polokwane and conducted an extensive food product and environmental sampling.

“Listeria monocytogenes was isolated from over 30% of the environmental samples collected from this site, which happens to be the Enterprise factory in Polokwane. To conclude the investigation, whole genome sequencing analysis was performed from this Enterprise factory and the results became available. The outbreak strain, ST6, was confirmed in at least 16 environmental samples collected from this Enterprise facility.”

Environmental Health Practitioners in the SA National Defence Force were also urged to conduct investigations at all food preparation and handling facilities. Suppliers to these facilities where requested to issue a sworn affidavit that their products were not purchased from the affected retailers. Military EHPs continue to liaise with counterparts at local authority where suppliers are situated to obtain the results of foodstuffs sampling projects pertaining to the supplier’s ready-to-eat cold meat products.”

Affected products have since been recalled retail stores. Minister Motsoaledi said: “We advise members of the public to avoid all processed meat products that are sold as ready-to-eat. While we know that polony is definitely implicated, there is a risk of cross-contamination of other ready-to-eat processed meat products, either at production, distribution or retail. This is because Listeria on the exterior casing (packaging) of polony can be transferred to other products it comes into contact with, including viennas, russians, frankfurters, other sausages and other cold meat products that are typically not cooked before eating.

“The recall of these products does not mean that members of the public must now relax and stop the five food safety rules which we have recited many times have to be abandoned, i.e. washing your hands before handling food or when coming back from the bathroom; making sure that food is well cooked; isolating raw food from cooked food; making sure that food is at an appropriate temperature; and washing non-cooked food with clean running water; as well as using only pasteurised or boiled milk products.”

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**What you need to know about Listeriosis**

**What is it?**
Listeriosis is a serious, but treatable and preventable disease caused by the bacterium, *Listeria monocytogenes*.

**Symptoms**
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Vomiting
- Weakness
- Muscle aches
- Headache

**Who’s at risk?**
- Pregnant women
- Neonates
- Very young infants
- Elderly persons
- Anyone with a weakened immune system

**Five Safety tips**
- Keep hands, utensils and surfaces clean
- Separate raw and cooked food
- Cook food thoroughly
- Keep food at safe temperatures
- Use safe water and raw material

**Foods to avoid**
- Ready-to-eat cold meat products:
  - Polony
  - Viennas and other sausages
  - Cold meats

**Sources**
- Directly at origin e.g. farm
- Food processing plant
- Retail
- Food preparation at home

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What the public needs to know about Listeriosis. (Source: GCIS)
Living with an Autistic child

By Maj Rayline Nathan and Maj Tamlyn Jekels from the Mental Health Research and Development Department: Military Psychology Institute (MPI)

This article provides a basic overview to give advice to parents, family and friends on how to manage Autism. The whole of April is dedicated to the awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Parents or caregivers normally realise that the development of their child is different, often delayed, to that of children their age.

Autism affects boys four times more than girls and it is usually diagnosed by the age of three and continues through to adulthood. Some children’s symptoms are milder while others are more serious. These symptoms include difficulties in social contact, verbal and nonverbal communication, behaviour that is different to other children and sensory understanding. The following example is a case of Peter which will help you to understand Autism better.

“As a baby, little Peter did not like to be picked up or hugged by anyone. He never made eye contact with anyone nor smiled when happy. At the age of three Peter had still not spoken and would use hand signals to communicate yet his hearing was normal.

The explanation behind the international symbol of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Peter had no interest to play with other children and preferred sitting in the corner spinning the wheels of his car over and over. Whenever he was upset he would rock himself back and forth to help himself calm down. He really hated loud noises and bright flashing lights.

Peter only ate certain type of food and refused to add anything else in his diet. He does not like a disturbance in his routine. Whenever his routine is disrupted, it upsets him to the point of an anger outburst. Sometimes Peter will pull his skin and bang his head on objects which might lead to injury.”

Diagnosis

Before an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis can be made, developmental screening needs to be conducted with a medical doctor. Your child will then be referred for...
further evaluation with a medical team. Receiving a diagnosis of ASD can be a scary experience for parents, yet can also provide direction for appropriate interventions at home.

**Dealing with an Autistic child**

Parenting is often challenging, and not enough information is provided to prepare one to raise a child, let alone a child diagnosed of ASD. When you have a child with a developmental disorder like ASD, parenting becomes even more complicated. Developing a good social support system is vital to help parents along the journey of caring and raising a child diagnosed of ASD.

It is advised that you develop a longstanding relationship with a professional (e.g. medical doctor, psychologist or psychiatrist) who can monitor your child’s development over time and answer your questions as you go along.

**Tips for parents**

Helpful suggestions for parents will be to recognise that you are not alone, take care of yourself and seek guidance from other parents. Gather information about ASD and inform yourself about effective interventions. Early detection of Autism is the most effective way to reduce the impact of Autism on your child’s life.

Do not be scared of medical professionals, they are there to help and guide you. Stay positive and become an expert on your child. Take everything one day at a time, do not be afraid to show emotion and remember there are support groups to join and help you through this process.
Lupus causes the immune system to attack its own tissues and organs

What is lupus? Lupus is an auto-immune disease in which the body's immune system (the organs and processes your body use to fight against infections) becomes hyperactive and attacks the normal, healthy parts of the body. Usually the body's immune system creates proteins called antibodies, which are used to protect and fight against infections. However, lupus renders the immune system unable to tell the difference between infections and the healthy body. It therefore causes the immune system to attack its own tissues and organs.

Symptoms and complications of lupus

No two cases of lupus are exactly alike, but there is a wide range of symptoms that can lead to complications in several areas of the body. Sometimes these symptoms may develop slowly or they may appear suddenly. They can be mild, severe, temporary or permanent. Some of these symptoms include:

- Aching or swollen joints, especially in the wrists and small joints of the hands, elbows, knees and ankles.
- High temperature
- Prolonged and extreme fatigue (tiredness)
- Skin lesions (cuts) especially on the arms, hands, face, neck or back.
- Hair loss
- Sensitivity to the sun and bright lights
- Fingers turning white and/or blue in the cold
- Mouth or nose ulcers
- Weight loss or gain
- Dry eyes
- Easy bruising
- Anxiety and depression.

Even if lupus symptoms are mild, it is important to remember that it is a serious disease needing constant monitoring and treatment. If untreated, it can harm your organs and put your life at risk. For example, lupus can cause serious damage to the kidneys, which results in swelling of hands and feet. It can affect the central nervous system, causing headache, dizziness, memory problems, seizures and behavioural changes. It increases the risk of anaemia, bleeding, blood clotting and
inflammation of blood vessels, which can result in cardiovascular disease and heart attacks. It can also cause non-infectious pneumonia and difficulty in breathing due to inflammation of the lungs.

Treatment of lupus

There are treatments available to help ease the symptoms and minimise the effects the condition has on a person’s life. There are many people who live relatively normal lives with the disease as long as they take care of their bodies and take the correct medication. Because lupus symptoms vary from one person to another, a doctor will have to tailor treatment specifically and develop a treatment plan based on the age, symptoms, general health and lifestyle of a person who falls ill with this disease.

The goals of any treatment plan will be to reduce the inflammation caused by lupus, suppress the overactive immune system, prevent flare-ups of the disease, treat them when they occur and control symptoms such as joint pain and fatigue, and minimise damage to the organs.

There are many medicines that are used to treat lupus, for example:
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), which are painkilling medicines that reduce inflammation in the body.
- Corticosteroids, a type of medication that reduces inflammation quickly.
- Immunosuppressants: These suppress the immune system and help limit the damage the immune system causes when it attacks healthy parts of the body.
- Antimalarial medicines, which are usually used to treat malaria, but are also effective in treating some of the symptoms of lupus, such as skin rashes, joint and muscle pain and fatigue.
- Anticoagulants to prevent blood clots.
- Antihypertensive drugs for high blood pressure.
- Anticonvulsants for seizures.
- Antibiotics for infections.

Living with lupus

Just because a person has lupus does not mean that they should stop living their lives. If you have been diagnosed with the disease, there are several steps you can take to remain on top of it - education and bit of careful planning will go a long way in allowing you to live a relatively “normal” life. Try and do these small things to help you manage your illness:
- Quit smoking if you are a smoker - kicking the habit may have a greater impact on your lupus than any other lifestyle change you can make. While cigarettes are dangerous for everyone, they are especially dangerous for people with lupus, since they speed up and worsen the disease.
- Regular exercise is important for everyone, but it is even more beneficial for people with lupus. Low-impact activities such as swimming, walking and cycling can help you with some of your lupus-related conditions. Exercise can protect your heart, prevent osteoporosis, reduce muscle stiffness, boost muscle strength and relieve stress. Ask your doctor to help you create an exercise plan that is right just for you.
- Protect yourself from the sun - too much sun can cause lupus symptoms to flare up. Wear sunscreen that has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Try avoiding the sun between 10:00 and 16:00, when it is strongest. If possible, protect your skin with a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and a big hat.
- Rest - aim for at least seven hours of sleep each night. Rest reduces fatigue, but remember that too much sleep can sometimes make you feel even more tired.
It’s back to Basics for the SANDF’s leadership

By Mr Malose Malema
Photos by Mr Katiso Mabuza

The Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, recently led by example in his push for a healthy lifestyle with two respective walks, one in Cape Town on 7 March 2018 and the other in Soweto on 10 March. This example by the President did not only motivate, but went hand-in-hand with the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke’s recurrent call to prioritise fitness in the SANDF.

Apart from declaring Wednesdays a compulsory sports day in the SANDF, Gen Shoke went as far as making sure that he implements one of the guidelines in the Defence Act, which gives a clear provision for soldiers to maintain a healthy lifestyle and thus making them combat-ready.

Therefore, the long-awaited action to prioritise fitness and combat readiness propelled the SANDF to launch the Healthy Lifestyle Programme for the SANDF leadership. The launch, which also saw the participation of Sanlam, as sponsor, recently took place at the Armscor Sports Ground in Pretoria.

Although the launch leaned more towards the leadership of the SANDF, the overall consensus is that health and wellness of soldiers in the SANDF are of paramount importance. Therefore, the programme should not only be restricted to those in leadership positions, but it should also be adopted to cover the entire National Defence Force.

Members present at the launch had to go through a medical screening before participating in any exercise activity which included a two-kilometre walk. The purpose of the medical check-up was to avoid any incidents that might put lives at risk.

The Chief Human Resources, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, launched the Healthy Lifestyle Programme on behalf of the Chief of the SANDF.

The future success of the Healthy Lifestyle Programme now rests with the Chiefs of Services and Divisions. All the respective services and divisions are expected to design their own programmes to be evaluated quarterly. The subsequent reports from all services would serve as an indicator and a yardstick for battle readiness, fitness and the overall wellness of the SANDF.

Speaking in his capacity as the Coordinator of the programme, Senior Staff Officer (SSO) Operations, Physical Training Sport and Recreation (PTSR), Col William Maseyi Bangiso, added to the sentiments expressed by Lt Gen Yengeni. He said: “This is not different from the current fitness programme of the SANDF. However, this programme will be conducted every Thursday following this launch.” PTSR officers are the ones who are tasked to monitor and ensure the success of the Healthy Lifestyle Programme as they oversee all physical activities of the SANDF.

Col Bangiso added: “The implementation and success of this programme will rely heavily on the respective Services and Divisions in their own venues starting from 15 March 2018. However, the Directorate PTSR will maintain an advisory role.”

Lt Gen Vusi Masondo also put his stamp of approval on this much-needed wellness initiative for the SANDF leadership when he said: “A provision in the Defence Act clearly stipulates that members should be given time off to participate in sporting activities and overall exercise as part of force preparation since it is a requirement for soldiers to be combat ready at all times”.

He also thanked Sanlam for their continuous support to the SANDF. Lt Gen Masondo said: “We, the SANDF, are very grateful for Sanlam to come on board in support of this initiative because it is one of the companies whose large percentage of client-base comes from the SANDF.”

Ms Tsholofelo Makope, Field Manager of Sanlam sky Pretoria, said their presence at the launch was to maintain and uphold the long-standing financial relationship with the SANDF. She added: “It’s imperative for us as a company to nurture the long-standing relationship with the SANDF. After all, this is the men and women who make us thrive because they make use of our services, so we have to keep on rendering a helping hand, wherever we can.”

In endorsing the programme, Col Elria van der Westhuizen, SSO Diet at the SA Military Health Service Headquarters, reminded the members that: “You are what you eat”. She issued a stern warning to them to avoid sugary and fatty foods.

Col Van der Westhuizen said: “If we revert back to natural wholesome foods, we will lead a much healthier life since sugar and fats do not form the..."
Benefits of a healthy lifestyle

The road to positive change in one’s health does not have to come with expensive gym memberships and unreal expectations. The trick to make one’s lifestyle healthier is to make small, manageable health changes every day. Such as taking the stairs instead of the lifts; increase fruit intake by one more; drink a glass of water in between alcoholic drinks; spend more time with loved ones and quit smoking. This can result in numerous health benefits, to name but a few:

- Living a healthy lifestyle can help prevent chronic diseases and long-term illnesses.
- Taking care of one’s health is important for one’s self-esteem and self-image.
- Positive thinking and a positive self-esteem will lead to better handling of daily stressors.
- Spending quality time on relationships will improve social interactivities and create a sense of belonging.
- Quit bad habits such as alcohol abuse, cigarettes smoking and unsafe sex practices to ensure health risks related to these habits are prevented.

Seven tips for a healthier lifestyle

The fundamentals for a healthy lifestyle are regular exercise, nutritious food options and making good choices in daily aspects of one’s life such as to get enough sleep, practice safe sex and to go for regular medical check-ups.

1. **Maintain a healthy weight:**
   Determine whether one is overweight by checking one’s body mass index. Overweight can lead to a higher risk of chronic disease such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, strokes and certain cancers.

2. **Stick to healthy foods from each food group:** The experts all agree that our diets are too high in sugar and our portions are too big. A variety of wholesome natural foods should be eaten. This means staying away from food high in saturated fats, sodium and added sugars. Eat more whole grains, lean proteins such as chicken, fish or legumes and beans, low-fat or non-fat dairy and increase fruits and vegetables intake.

3. **Visit the clinic for an annual physical examination:** Depending on one’s age, certain lab tests and screenings, such as mammograms, colonoscopies and heart tests are necessary. It is also important to know one’s HIV-status. One should stay up to date with regular health screenings to identify whether there are medical problems to address or not.

4. **Relationships should be positive and healthy:** A person should make sure to surround him or herself with people who support them and with whom they feel good being around. There should be mutual respect between a person and the people one surround oneself, such as one’s life partner, friends and others. If a person finds himself or herself in an unhealthy relationship, then it is advisable to take steps to improve it or move on.

5. **Engage in physical activity for at least 30 minutes every day:** Take an exercise class, ride a bicycle or just take a brisk walk outside. Making the time for physical activity is a necessity and not a luxury.

6. **Know when and how to de-stress:** Taking care of one’s mental health is just as important as taking care of one’s physical health. Make sure that there are positive ways in place to deal with daily stressors. This might be exercising, meditating, yoga or just doing deep-breathing exercises. If stress becomes so severe that it interferes with one’s sleep or ability to cope, talk to a professional health care practitioner.

7. **Do not smoke:** The dangers of smoking tobacco are significant as it can cause lung cancer and other cancers. Stay away from second-hand smoke, since this can also be hazardous to one’s health. The best of it all is that health risks related to smoking can be prevented. To live a healthy lifestyle is within everyone’s ability.

This information is also available on: http://www.mhs.mil.za:8080/hifa/hifa2018/HIFA2018Ed02_Healthy_Lifestyle.pdf
Message of Hope

By Chaplain (Rev) Malamo Makola, Chaplain at Area Military Health Unit North West

Isaiah 45:22 - “Turn to me now and be saved, people all over the world! I am the only God there is.”

The prophetic books are laced with threats, warnings and predictions of dire judgments. However, there is also a persistent message of hope. In Isaiah 45:22, the prophet maintain that change is possible. The people have freedom to and ability to change themselves and their future.

Despite the tenacious grip of sin and its long stranglehold on people, sin is not invincible. The call to repentance attests that change is possible and that is built into people by God, the Creator.

For that reason the prophet admonish the people to repent, to turn from their sinful ways and return to the Lord. If people repent, then disaster and punishment will be averted. That means there is hope for salvation.

The possibility of human repentance and change and the belief that repentance can affect the future are an important counterbalance to the otherwise overwhelming message of judgment. People can indeed turn to God and in so doing they will be saved.

Human efforts cannot undo the effects of persistent and pernicious sin. Evil and wickedness are too much to be resisted by mere human effort. However, the prophet’s message of hope is that God will personally right the wrongs and bring out of the present chaos a future of bright promise and new beginning for the repentant.

People all over the world need to hear this message of hope. They need to know that God is there and ready to welcome them with love.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father help us, Your servants, to give people a message of hope. You are willing to help them overcome their moral and spiritual challenges. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.
ICT as a Military Capability

14 - 18 MAY 2018
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.

www.dod.mil.za