



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS  
Republic of South Africa**

**MEDIA INVITE**

**Date: 18 January 2010**

**NEW ERA MOOTED FOR MILITARY VETERANS**

The much awaited report on the plight and the state's obligations towards Military Veterans will be handed over to the Minister of Defence, Lindiwe Sisulu at the Defence HQ, (Armscor building) Erasmuskloof (Huvo Conference Room), tomorrow in Pretoria .

Military veterans are South Africans who were fighting in armed formations on the opposite sites during the war for or against liberation. Since the dawn of democracy, most soldiers, particularly from the liberations armies, have been facing a number of challenges with respect to their socio-economic situation.

Following the reconfiguration of the department of defence to include the aspect of military veterans as part of governments new service delivery responsibilities the Minister appointed a task team to advise her and cabinet on how the new administration can assist or empower this constituency as part of recognition for the sacrifices they have made to bring about democracy and freedom in our lifetime.

The report and policy recommendations were developed by a Ministerial Task Team set up in July last year. The task team consisted of, amongst other, Kebby Mphatsoe, Tony Yengeni, General Kenny Fihla, and Colonel Giles and was under the chairpersonship of the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Thabang Makwetla.

The Task Team undertook a desktop analysis of various post-conflict countries on how they successfully integrated former opposing military factions into the mainstream of society's development and civil life as former soldiers of different backgrounds. International visits to Algeria and Canada were also undertaken in order to contextualise the contrast between developing and developed nations with regard to benefits and support for Military Veterans.

Subsequently, an all-encompassing workshop of all former soldiers of liberation armies (MK, APLA and AZANLA), erstwhile TVBC states armies and the former SADF members was held to solicit inputs into the draft report.

The final report to be presented to the Minister by her Deputy consists of policy recommendations with regard to benefits such as empowerment, education/training, pension's benefits, housing, health support, among others. The report also

supports the decision for the creation of a separate budget vote and an accounting officer for Military Veterans affairs.

The report notes that there has been various fragmented support for Military Veterans and accordingly makes a case for a nationwide integrated policy framework for all levels of the state (national, provincial, municipal) to use as a guideline in the provision of benefits and, more importantly, the reconstruction role that Military Veterans can contribute in skills development, preservation of heritage, and promotion of national reconciliation.

Deputy Minister Thabang Makwetla will officially hand over a report to Minister Lindiwe Sisulu tomorrow (19/01/2010) at a ceremony to be held at the Defence HQ, (Armcor building) Erasmuskloof (Huvo Conference Room). Members of the Ministerial Task Team and Veterans Association will also be present.

Media is accordingly invited.

Details: 19/01/2010 (tomorrow)

Venue: Armcor building – Huvo Conference Room (Defence HQ, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

Time: 11H30 am

**END**

For attendance confirm with: Col. Motlhabane  
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**ISSUED BY:**

Ntime Skhosana (Spokesperson to the Deputy Minister)

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