



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

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### MEDIA INVITE

**DATE:** 26 May 2017

**EMBARGO:** None

**SUBJECT:** **MINISTER MAPISA-NQAKULA ATTENDS 2017 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF UN PEACEKEEPERS**

Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, will attend the 2017 International Day of UN Peacekeepers, to honour and pay tribute to South African National Defence Force (SANDF) members who died while serving under the United Nations (UN) flag. South Africa is revered for being a major contributor to the United Nations and African Union peacekeeping mission efforts, with annual contributions constantly fluctuating between 1,500 and 2,500 members. Subsequently, since September 2003 until December 2016, a total number of thirty nine (39) SANDF members have lost their lives while serving the UN.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/129, officially declared 29 May as the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers. This is a day set aside to “pay tribute to the professionalism, dedication and courage of all the men and women serving in UN peacekeeping operations, and honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.”

In light of the above, the South African National Defence Force has opted to commemorate the day in Bloemfontein. The commemoration will also coincide with the next rotation of SANDF troops deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as part of the UN Force Intervention Brigade.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula will lead a wreath-laying ceremony in honour of the 39 fallen heroes of the SANDF. She will be joined by the entire Apex leadership of the Ministry of Defence, SANDF and Military Veterans.

Members of the media are invited as follows:

Date: 29 May 2017

Time: 09h30

Venue: Paratroopers Monument at 44 Para Regiment, Bloemfontein

**For the purpose of transportation planning, members of the media based in Gauteng and interested in covering the memorial are requested to forward names and contact details to Captain (SAN) Jaco Theunissen at 083 633 3179 or email: [jaco.theunissen@gmail.com](mailto:jaco.theunissen@gmail.com). The South African Air Force (SAAF) aircraft will depart from Air Force Base Waterkloof (AFB Waterkloof) at 07h00 on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2017. However, members of the media must report to AFB Waterkloof no later than 06h30 on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2017.**

**Enquiries:**

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**ENDS.**

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