



MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS

Republic of South Africa

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MINISTER'S ADDRESS AT THE PASSING-OUT PARADE OF MSDS TROOPS AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY INFANTRY SCHOOL, OUDSHOORN, 08 JUNE 2018

"BEING A SOLDIER"

Chief of the South African Army, Lt. Gen. Yam

GoC Infantry Formation, Major General Maphwanyanya

Officer Commanding the SA Infantry School, Colonel Madie

The Directing Staff and Leader Group of the SA Infantry Formation

Officers, Non Commissioned Officers

Troops on Parade

Parents and Families of the Troops on Parade

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to officiate at this military passing out parade in this institution, reputed to be the biggest training unit of the SA Army and the SANDF. I need not tell you but for emphasis it is the unit producing the biggest numbers.

As you are gathered here on parade, you must hold your head high that you have been able to complete the grueling training you underwent in the last six months. It was necessary, and at the beginning you must have thought it will never end. Stand here proudly at the achievements and milestones you have achieved. This would not have been possible without your courage and determination to succeed, and also without the professionalism displayed by your instructors and leader group, who have ensured that you become men and women who have had the resilience to complete the course, which is the cause you came here for.

This you would not have achieved without discipline, discipline, discipline! Discipline is the mother of success, and you are here today because you maintained the discipline. But this must not lull you into believing that as you leave here having completed your training, you will let the standard and level of discipline go down. You will be at many different units throughout the Defence Force and the length and breadth of our country. Maintain that discipline, for even when you eventually deploy, it will stand you in good stead and ensure that you survive even the most difficult situations, which if not maintained may result in your and your comrades' fatalities.

Having said that, I am aware that there have been certain lapses in discipline. I am coming here for the third time and this time I am happy to witness you pass out, having been prepared in the pressure cooker of the SA Infantry formation. Your conduct during training will become the hallmark of the soldier that you are, well into your life within the Defence Force. This institution has produced many leaders in the SANDF, past and present. You must count yourselves amongst those leaders of the defence force of tomorrow.

I am particularly pleased that most of you have chosen to join the defence force and have made it a career of choice. This will afford you to have a full sense of the history of our country and what we have gone through and where we come from. This is very important because learning from the past must make us appreciate the sacrifices of our forebears, especially the first Commander-in-Chief of the

South African National Defence Force, uTata Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, whose centenary we are observing this year, together with uMama Albertina Sisulu.

As you pass out, you must have the honor to serve! To, when called upon, pay the supreme sacrifice, in defence of our people and our country! As we bestow to you the honor of “being a soldier”, know that you have rights, but these are limited even as we have the Bill of Rights. They are limited because you also have obligations, which in the extreme can mean preparedness to die, in service of your country. The military is one institution where the possibility of death is ever present. This is because the profession you are now starting is the profession of arms.

As you go out there into the various areas within the Defence Force, ensure that you remain disciplined, start off your career and go to greater paths. Your future is in your hands. You must take the opportunity afforded to you by the Defence Force, for greater professionalism and your own personal development. You will travel far and wide, rise through the ranks, and remain committed to your duties. The world is your oyster!

You have now been molded into soldiers, and this is your first giant step towards “being a soldier”! As your parents and siblings are here to witness the achievement of this milestone, make them proud. Make them proud, not just today as you pass out, but as you rise through your career in the defence force, an all-volunteer defence force.

I thank you