



**MINISTRY**

Defence and Military Veterans  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## **Opening Remarks by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans at the Castle of Good Hope**

Welcoming Remarks by the Host - Minister of Defence and Military Veterans of the Republic of South Africa

Program Director

Good Morning,

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm South African welcome to the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, Hon Gen John Kong Nyuon and the Chief of General Staff of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, Gen Mai.

I am happy that we have finally managed to convene this occasion for discussions aimed at formalising relations between the armed forces of our two countries.

Given the historical contribution and the general solidarity of South Africans in the liberation of Southern Sudan, our partnership at the level of defence cooperation, can only be regarded as a natural progression.

Given the common challenges to which we should find shared solutions within our continent, it has become even more necessary that mutual beneficial engagements are encouraged amongst ourselves, as Africans, if we are to succeed in bringing about peace and stability.

It is for this reason that we welcome this opportunity to advance this effort through our engagements here today.

I must however indicate, Minister that the signing of formalised agreements is a mere formality for our two countries.

We have, for a number of years now, established sound working relations with your people and your government, including in the area of Defence.

The SANDF and the Department of Defence, has played an active role in the capacity and institution building of the Government of South Sudan.



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Our relationship can be tracked back to 2005 in the build up to the independence of your country as attained in 2011.

We remain committed to expand this relationship into a meaningful partnership of exchanges at various levels, including training, information and technological advancements in the area of defence capabilities.

The signing of a declaration of intent in this regard will pave the way for us to clearly identify those areas, in specific terms that our cooperation will cover. I believe that such preparatory work is only awaiting finalisation before we can conclude a memorandum of understanding (MoU).

For South Africa, as you may be aware, we have decided, in the aftermath of the recent conflict in the Central Africa Republic, that lessons drawn from there, will now form an important part and serve to enhance our future cooperation agreements.

Allow me once more to express my gratitude for your visit and for this bilateral engagement, and assure you of our real commitment to grow our partnership and cooperation in the area of defence.

Thank you

NN Mapisa-Nqakula

Minister of Defence and Military Veterans

Republic of South Africa