

HONOUR

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WE CELEBRATE AND HONOUR WOMEN
MILITARY VETERANS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION



military veterans

Department:
Military Veterans
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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WE CELEBRATE AND HONOUR WOMEN M



Mr Tsepe Motumi

Military Veterans Taking Their Destiny into Their Own Hands

The Department of Military Veterans led by the Director General, Mr. Tsepe Motumi and working in concert with the South African National Military Veterans Association (SANMVA) as well as other various military associations is powering towards the establishment of the umbrella body for military veterans nationally. Between the 27th September and 1st October 2013 history will be made and a new chapter opened in the life of the military veterans community in SA. 600 delegates from across the military veterans spectrum will converge at the Birchwood Conference Centre in Boksburg, Ekurhuleni.

The Military Veterans Act 18, 2011 inter alia stipulates that:

(1) (a) The Director-General must as soon as possible after the commencement of this Act establish a body which is to be an association representing military veterans' organisations nationally.

(b) The Minister must publish the date of establishment by notice in the Gazette.

(2) The Director-General must in conjunction with military veterans' organisations create mechanisms to ensure that the association serves as an umbrella structure representing military veterans' organisations.

(3) The mechanisms contemplated in subsection (2) must at least result in the association-

- (a) representing military veterans' organisations in a fair manner;
- (b) conducting its business in a fair, transparent and accountable manner;
- (c) holding free, fair and regular elections; and
- (d) at least once a year reporting to the Minister on its activities.

(4) (a) A military veterans' organisation is not obliged to join the association.

Honour therefore looks forward to that watershed conference laying a solid basis for the realisation of the DMV vision, of "A dignified, unified, empowered and self sufficient military veterans community."

Malibongwe Igama lamakhosikazi!

There are those events which by their nature have such a profound impact on the course of a nation's history that their significance and importance often transcends the boundary of the time and space in which they occur. 9th August 1956, South African Women's Day is such an event. That day saw 20 000 women from all walks of life, led by amongst others struggle stalwarts such as the late Lilian Ngoyi, Bertha Gxowa, Hellen Joseph, Sophie de Bryn current member of parliament, marched and gathered at the Union Building in Pretoria to protest against the imposition of the obnoxious pass laws to women. Wathint' Abafazi Wathint' imbokodo uzakufa!!! (You touch a woman you strike a rock. You shall die.) was their rallying slogan.

That was a watershed indeed. It precipitated that henceforth South Africans from all walks of life celebrate August as Women's Month. Befitting indeed!! As Honour we challenge all to make everyday a Woman's Day in appreciation of the important role that women play in our families and everyday lives. We challenge all to act decisively day in day out by fighting that despicable scourge of rape and all forms of women abuse in homes, schools, work places and indeed all societal endeavours. We dare society to create that necessary enabling environment for women in general and women military veterans in particular to express themselves freely and to be given an opportunity to play a meaningful role in all societal endeavours socially, politically, culturally and economically. In this issue, on behalf of the Department of Military Veterans, Honour dedicates this edition to all women military veterans across the spectrum as we join the nation and the world in saying Malibongwe Igama Lamakhosikazi!! September being Heritage Month, we urge society to dare not forget that the military veterans and women military veterans are the greatest heritage of nation worthy of its salt. Let us all celebrate and honour them.



Mr Mbulelo Musi

Nelson Rolihlahla “Madiba” Mandela- A watermark of what is the best

Article by Mr Mbulelo Musi
Photos by Mr Mpho Nkosi

“Nelson Mandela is the watermark that represents the best of what South Africa can produce and offer in terms of leadership capability which is perhaps unprecedented anywhere else in the world.

He was always in the forefront of the liberation struggle throughout his illustrious history. He exemplified the fortitude of the human spirit in the fight for a just course.” Said the Deputy Minister (DM) of Defence and Military Veterans Mr Thabang Makwetla.

The DM was addressing the Day of Madiba’s 95th Birthday which had been declared by President Jacob Zuma in his State of the Nation Address of February 2009 as the Nelson Mandela Day. That Day was to be later that year, in November 2009, declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Nelson Mandela Day.

Henceforth, that Day has been celebrated across the length and breadth of the country and the globe by men and women, young and old joining hands to support a worthy course in honour of the immense contributions that Madiba has made to the course liberation, peace, reconciliation, justice, democracy and human solidarity.

This year in particular it was combined with millions of people including the government as a whole and the DMV in particular, wishing Madiba to get well



Planting Vegetable during Nelson Mandela Day



Nurses providing health tests

soon as he fights for his life at the Media Clinic in Pretoria. The DMV event for Madiba took place at the Lenasia Sick Bay that provides medical services to military veterans. The DM also went on to read the letter that he had read in the Sowetan which we have the pleasure to publish, for, as the DM said, “that letter says it all.”

On that Day the entire globe was witness to millions across the world putting their shoulders on the wheel in various forums, big and small, to contribute 67 minutes of their time to worthy courses in various sectors of human endeavour in honour of Madiba.

Be in the education, health and human solidarity front



Joy was expressed through singing unity songs during Mandela Day

they went on with the good act.

For the first time since its establishment by Presidential Proclamation on December 2009, the DMV became part of this history-making event in such a scale. So shall it do so in years to come, for indeed, Madiba is not only a statesman in a special league of his own, but most importantly he is also our very own, a military veteran par excellence.

On the Day the sun

Continued on page 6

2013 the year that marks the 50th Anniversary of the Raid on Liliesleaf

Article by: Ms Bon Bon Dimba

Photos by: GCIS

On 11 July 1963, apartheid police raided Liliesleaf Farm and captured the high command of MK in South Africa. Today you can walk around the farmstead and relive the events of a day that changed the course of the history of this country.

Military veterans gathered at the Liliesleaf farm with other invited guests to reflect on the meaning of Liliesleaf Farm and also on the meaning of the struggle and its impact on the people of our country. This special venue was used to give effect to the decision of people of SA to fight rather than submit to apartheid oppression and dehumanisation. The event was attended by the President of the Republic of South Africa Mr Jacob Zuma and other guests.

The event had various speakers of the day. Some were members arrested on the farm in 1963. The President had this to say about the veterans “We salute all the heroes and heroines of our revolution who were willing to pay the ultimate price for our freedom,”

Those arrested in the raid included Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Mlangeni, Dennis Goldberg, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Harold Wolpe, Elias Motsoaledi, Rusty Bernstein, Bob Hepple, Arthur Goldreich, and James Kantor.



The President of South Africa Jacob Zuma addressing guests at Lilies Leaf Farm

“They learnt their visionary leadership to ensure that a free, non-racial, democratic, just and non-sexist South Africa we have come to enjoy over the past 19 years does indeed become a reality,” said Zuma.

“These were times when just to be associated with the ANC and [Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)] was equivalent to either being brutally killed or to face long term imprisonment, banishment or exile.

To honour them “We have to ensure that all households have water, electricity, sanitation and that no child goes to bed hungry.” he further said.

President Zuma also spoke about former President Nelson Rolihlahla “Madiba” Mandela, who posed as a gardener while living on the Liliesleaf farm.



(Left) Deputy President Kgalema Motlante (Right) Ahmed Kathrada

“This is where Madiba hid for more than a year under the assumed name of David Motsamayi, when he planned underground activities.

“We are encouraged that he is responding to treatment in hospital. He remains as much of a fighter now as he was 50 years ago when incidents such as the raid on this farm took place.”



Deputy Minister Mr Thabang Makwetla with Mr Isaac Makopo cutting the cake for the former President and Patron in Chief of Military Veterans Nelson Rolihlahla “Madiba” Mandela.

brightened the blue skies. Yet there was a slight chilling wind in the air. Their faces were telling it all; they will do it for Madiba and no type of weather would have changed that.

Their spirits and morale were at the highest. Certainly they could feel that the time for the staff at DMV to make their mark in history had truly arrived. About 70 of them, dressed in green caps and t-shirts and together with about 100 military veterans community, like bees swarmed the Lenasia Sick Bay, West of Johannesburg.

They danced and sang “**Veteran ya sebeletswa. DMV halala ya sebeletswa**”, meaning. “**We are working for the veterans and the DMV.**”

They were joined by over 120 military veterans and

members of the South African Medical Health Services (SAMHS) who had also come to contribute 67 minutes of their time in honour of that national and international icon Dr. Nelson “Madiba” Mandela.

The DMV staff and the military veterans had gone to the Lenasia Sick Bay to amongst others clean and paint the centre which falls under the auspices of the SAMHS provides medical services to military veterans They also planted vegetable seeds which will be provided to needy military veterans when they visit the sick for medical consultations.

A noble act indeed! In that truly noble gesture there were also other dignitaries that were part of the occasion. These included amongst others the Head of the Ministry of Defence

and Military Veterans, Ms Ellen Molekane, Major General Marumo, Chief of Staff in the Office of the DM, Mr. Shadrack Ganda, Chief Director responsible for Health Services at the DMV, Ms. Xolisa Morolo, Chief Director responsible for Stakeholder Management at the DMV Mr. Mboweni, the General Officer Commanding Ms. Debbie Templehof and the Head of Communication at the DMV.

The Officer Commanding at the Lenasia Sick Bay Colonel Cleopatra Mkulise, commissioned and non-commissioned officers as well as men and women in uniform enjoyed the day. What a moment!!!

Happy 95 years Madiba!

The first Umzana Woman Military veterans' Re-union

Article and Photos by
Mr Mpho Nkosi

After 20 years of democracy, indeed it was the first re-union for the uMkhoto weSizwe Women Military Veterans (WMV). The event was held on 17 August 2013 at 9 South African Infantry Battalion (9SAI) in Khayelitsha Cape Town. The event also marked the celebration of Women's Month. It was a rainy and windy day but that couldn't stop the WMV from uniting after a long time since the liberation struggle.

Ms Agnes Lande Ncwane who is currently working at the Help Desk of the Department of Military Veterans (DMV) in the Western Province since 01 July 2013, expressed her gratitude after seeing her old friends uniting for the first time. She mentioned the love they've had as comrades in exile. "In tough times your comrade will be there by your side. In sick days he or she will take care of you till you recover. That indeed reflected remarkable love and shall never be forsaken".

Ms Nomfundo Kulati from the Eastern Province also a Military Veteran read a poem by Maya Angelo titled *Phenomenal Woman*. The poem was certainly befitting. It related to Women Military Veterans who through their diligence and courage during the struggle of apartheid, we see a rainbow nation.

Col Sindi Mbobo (ret) who attended the occasion on behalf of the DMV also expressed his joy of seeing women Military Veterans Re-uniting after a long time.

"Indeed, women were not bystanders in the struggle to free this country; they were active participants throughout the years. Thanks to the struggles of women, our country's Constitution recognises women as equal citizens, with equal rights and responsibilities. The democratic dispensation also continues to be driven by this sensitivity to rights of

women, recognising women's rights as human rights.

We acknowledge that there is still a lot of work which has to be done in order to achieve equality and also to improve the living conditions and status of women in both public and private sectors. However, a firm foundation has already been laid", said Col Sindi Mbobo (Ret).

Malibongwe Igama Lamakhosikazi!!

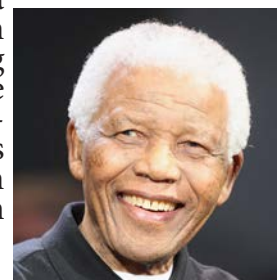


Ms Agnes Ncwane Welcoming Women Military Veterans and Guests



Umnzana Women Military Veterans

On behalf of the military veterans community to which Nelson Rolihlahla "Madiba" Mandela is an integral part, the DMV welcomes his discharge from the Pretoria Medi Clinic Heart Hospital on 2nd September 2013 after spending 85 days since his admission on the 8th June 2013. Honour once again joins the nation and the world in wishing him speedy recovery. As the DMV and military veterans community move towards establishing a new umbrella body this month, which is Iso Heritage Month, will continuously draw inspiration from you and other stalwarts in making sure that the umbrella association works in a fair, transparent, accountable manner in the interest of all military veterans.



DMV Housing Prog

The First Military Veterans Beneficiaries of DMV Housing Programme

Article and Photos by Mpho Nkosi

The change of military veterans lives has already begun. The official handing over of houses to two military veterans took place on 07 August 2013 in Kraaipan Skills Centre/Museum South West of Mafikeng in the North West Province. The event also marked the Department of Military Veterans (DMV) Housing Programme.

Two Military Veterans namely Jacob Modise aged 94 years and Phillip Neven Sebopela aged 97 years, who fought during the World War II (WWII) were provided with decent houses. The two Military veterans had been promised houses during the 2010 SANMVA Conference. They followed up on the matter with DMV. Almost three years later, the DMV cooperating with the Department of Human Settlements (DHS) Nationally and the North West Province, finally delivered the houses promised to the two WWII Military Veterans.

The building of two houses for Mr Phillip Neven Sebopelo and Mr Jacob Modise commenced on 08 January 2013 and was completed on 19 July 2013. They are the first beneficiaries of the DMV Housing Programme. The houses were built to specifications of a Military Veterans' house as outlined in the DMV Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the DHS.

The North West Premier Ms Thandi Modise said she was pleased with what the government is doing for Military Veterans. She also stated that the youth of today should also learn from heroes and heroines who volunteered to serve their country at the risk of their lives and their loved ones so that South Africa could be liberated from oppression.

She further mentioned that those who fell in the line of duty and those who are still alive should be acknowledged and the sacrifices they made should be cherished.

The event clearly demonstrated that the government was truly embarking on the journey of making the lives of Military Veterans better.

The Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans Thabang Makwetla said it was important that the two military veterans who fought during the WWII should be provided with houses.



North West Premier Ms Thandi Modise



Deputy Minister Mr Thabang Makwetla



Deputy Director General : Socio-economic Support Ms Mabel Rantla

Programme in Kraaipan

He further mentioned that the DMV Housing Programme is looking at constructing 38 houses in each province and an additional of 208 houses in Lukhanje in the Eastern Cape. This was part of government's recognition of the efforts of the military veterans, who fought to protect and preserve the country.

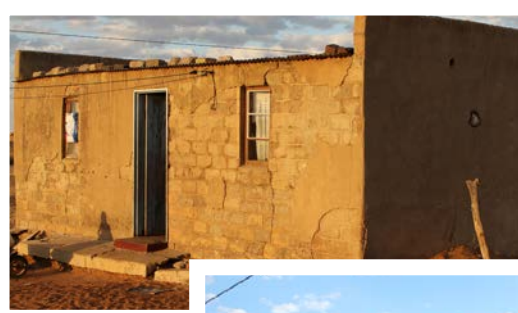
“We are here to correct the wrongs and injustices of the past. The few who are still around must be appreciated. They made huge sacrifices to protect and preserve humanity against fascism.

The partnership with the North West Provincial Government, the best performing provincial Department of Human Settlements and Ratlou Local Municipality that has made it possible for us to be here today for this historic launch must be duplicated throughout our communities to make sure that the Department of Military Veterans is successful in its effort,” Mr Thabang Makwetla said.

Working Together to Honour, Restore Dignity and Empower Military Veterans for Nation Building



Community members of Kraaipan



Cutting of Ribbon



First beneficiaries of DMV housing programme along with their family members

Mr Sebopelo and Mr Modise's houses before and after

Uniting Military Veterans for access to benefits

Deputy Director General: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management Nonkonzo Molai



Military Veterans in Limpopo



Military Veterans Voting at TDFMVA meeting



CDFMVA in East London (EL)



Military Veterans in Mafikeng North West



Director General Mr T Motumi addressing Military Veterans at the Transkei Defence Force Military Veterans Association (TDFMVA) in Umthata

Mr Qondi Jali in EL



Military Veterans Taking Their Destiny into Their Own Hands



Azanian National Liberation Army Military Veterans Association (AZANLAMVA) members



TDFMVA members discussing during election process in Umthata

Profiling Women Military Veterans

Dr. Ruth Mompoti



Dr. Ruth Mompoti is a military veteran par excellence who with courage, determination and dedication stood the test of time and conquered adversity. She is perhaps currently the oldest living woman military veteran. As part of celebrating Women's Month, the Honour publication and the Department of Military Veterans (DMV) therefore take this opportunity to say, Halala Mme Ruth!!

She is a military veteran who over the past 52 years as both a cadre of the armed struggle and a military veteran, showed consistent and tenacious commitment to the course of struggle for freedom, reconciliation, democracy, social cohesion and nation building. She gave true meaning to the spirit of voluntarism and selfless service to the people of South Africa.

It is for that very reason that on 2nd August 2012 her illustrious history, life and times reached a qualitatively new and higher level. On the day, at the Bloemspruit Airforce Base, in Bloemfontein, the Patron in Chief of the military veterans, President Jacob Zuma, honoured her with a high and

distinct medal, the Platinum Class III. The citation for that Medal states "The Military Veterans Decoration Medal in Platinum Class III, instituted by a warrant dated 28 July 2012 shall be awarded to members of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) who were in the first regional command structures in 1961, and those who subsequently served in the Regional Command authorities of MK in exile until the suspension of the armed struggle, in 1990.

These members distinguished themselves by their daring work indirectly in ensuring the execution of MK programmes and operations, thereby contributing to the organisational growth and fighting capacity of MK with total devotion, exemplary courage and self-sacrifice for freedom and democracy in SA" It's in that prestigious category and special league that Dr. Mompoti belongs.

Born in 1925 at Vryburg, she dedicated all her youth and adult life so that there can be a free, non-racial, democratic and non-sexist society that the nation enjoys today.

As we honour and salute the women veterans for their sacrifices, we say to her thank you for helping make us walk tall and proud as free citizens in the land of our birth. The national and international milestones of this military veteran include:

- Participating in the defiance of unjust laws campaign in 1952
- Joining the ANC in 1954 and being elected in the National Executive Committee of its Women's League
- Being a founder member of the Federation of South African Women in 1954
- Being one of the leaders of the the Women's March against pass laws in 1956
- Being the Head of the Board of religious affairs of the ANC
- Being Representative of the ANC in the United Kingdom in 1981 – 1982
- Being elected member of the first democratic parliament in 1994
- Being the SA Ambassador to Switzerland from 1996 to 2000
- Being the Mayor of Vryburg (Naledi) in North West.

The list goes on, and on and on.

**Mme Ruth With Honour, with Dignity, for the love of country you served with Pride.
We salute you and wish you good health and strength!!**

WOMEN MILITARY VETERANS

Ms Ellen Molekane DDG in the Office of the Minister of Defence (MOD) and Military Veterans.



Ms Ellen Molekane currently employed in the Department of Defence (DoD) as Head of the Office of the Minister of Defence (MOD) and Military Veterans. She does overall management of the offices of the Minister and Deputy Minister (DM) both in Pretoria and Cape Town. The Staff in the Offices of the Executing Authorities have the role playing responsibilities. She also manages the staff and the resources allocated to the Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans.

Defence Industry respectively. Minister and Deputy Minister are Cabinet members she also has to manage and facilitate their work in Cabinet and Cabinet Committees as well as any Safety and Security Cluster matters.

She also manages Minister and Deputy Ministers Parliament and Parliamentary Committees responsibilities. Minister and Deputy Minister are Members of Parliament (MP) of the ruling Party the African National Congress they have ANC Constituency Office responsibilities that her office also coordinates and facilitates. Ms Ellen Molekane attends decision making forums in the DoD namely the Defence Staff Council (DSC) and Plenary Defence Staff Council (PDSC) and she is an observer in the Council on Defence meetings or any other meetings that Minister or Deputy Minister invite her on.

“I guess as a woman and a soldier in the People’s Army Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) I learned that I have the same rights and responsibilities as my male counterparts. All opportunities in MK were available. There was no discrimination because I was a woman. I did exactly the same training as the male soldiers. I trained in the then German Democratic Republic (GDR) where I did a Commander’s course. I was the only woman in that group. I specialized in military engineering. So as a woman you worked harder so that you could earn the respect of your peers as there would be detractors that believed that women could not be soldiers or be involved in combat”, said Ms Ellen Molekane

Ms Ellen Molekane’s highlights on how the government is responding to issues of military veterans was, “we need to recall that the South African National Defence Force was formed on the 27 April 1994 by incorporating statutory and Non-Statutory Formations (NSF), namely South African Defence Force (SADF) and Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei Defence Forces on the one hand, MK and the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA) on the other. The statutory forces military veterans were better taken care of as they moved from a privileged position as opposed to the NSF that had no systems in place in the previous apartheid dispensation. For the NSF, a deliberate decision had to be taken by the new democratic state to look after those veterans.

I must say that from 1994 to 2008 the effort was halfhearted. The intention to deal with the socio-economic issues of military veterans took prominence in 2009 when a Ministry of Defence and

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VETERANS MAKE THEIR MARK

Military Veterans was proclaimed by the new administration under President Jacob Zuma.

The DMV was formed, policy was developed so as to deal with these issues. Now the government has committed resources for socio-economic benefits for military veterans. It is for us to accelerate that delivery and consolidate the limited benefits that are currently offered”, she said.

As women veterans in the defence environment we would like to wish all women in South Africa a happy Woman’s Month. We commit to work tirelessly to build a peaceful and stable environment in our country, Africa and the world, that will be conducive to integrated development where women will achieve their potential and consolidate gender equity.

Wathinta Abafazi Wathint ‘I Mbokodo

Ms Phumla Williams Acting CEO of Government Communication and Information Systems



Ms P Williams currently, the Acting CEO of the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS). She serves also as the Cabinet spokesperson. Some of her key responsibilities of this post are to ensure the government message is sent out to the public, utilising the various platforms.

She has various experiences in exile especially considering the number of years she has spent in various countries. The key and most important one that came to Ms P Williams’ mind is what laid her solid political foundation.

“When I left the country I thought the first thing I was to be taught would be how to use a gun so as to come back quickly to deal with the oppressive system which we experienced whilst students. How wrong I was! I had to deal with the rude awoken that you do not go and fight before you understand what you are fighting for politically.

We had to go through the political education – gaining a greater understanding of the system we were rebelling against. We had to be taught why the Apartheid System was wrong and if it was wrong, what is it that we want to replace it with. This was to form a solid foundation of my whole struggle which I still cherish to this day”, said Ms P Williams.

Regarding what the government is doing in supporting Military Veterans(MV’s) socially, Ms P Williams mentioned that “The government started late to set up a dedicated Department to deal with the plight of ex-military combatants. Setting up that Department marks the start of acknowledgement of our retired military combatants’s contribution. I do however hope that the MV’s will make a contribution in teaching our younger generation the role that was played by these veterans to bring about this democracy that we are today all enjoying. values and skills such as patriotism and discipline, which MV’s understand are critical to impart. to the youth ”, she said.

Her message to woman MV’s is “South Africa is certainly a better today for the women than prior to 1994. Today we celebrate the Women’s Day and Month with pride on the successes we have made in affirming the role of women in society and importantly in building our country for a better tomorrow. But whilst celebrating, let us also not lose sight of the challenges that we still face particularly on the abuse of women and children. Let us join hands to fight this scourge and continue to educate society about rights of women and children”, said Ms P Williams.

Col (Ret) Mokolanyane Patricia Moeti



Ms Moeti is a retired Army Col who resides in the North West. She is currently involved in community upliftment in her home village of Ratjiepan. She is also part of the negotiation on the land redistribution in Pfafung. Her main concern in her community is education.

“There are not enough schools in the Ratjiepan area, which results in the children not receiving the proper foundational education” said Moeti. Moeti believes that if the community works more closely together, they can improve the standard of living for all inhabitants in the area.

Moeti was in exile for many years and she had this to highlight to share about her experiences “Allow me to preface my experiences with the understanding that being in exile is a multi-faceted challenge of serious magnitude. When I left for exile I had already completed my General Nursing.

Fortunately, in Zambia, Lusaka, I became involved in a programme that aimed at assisting comrades in transit to Tanzania for military training. Among the various logistical matters that the programme involved, my area of focus was the arranging of travel documents and clearance certificates with immigration offices.

My function enabled comrades safe passage to Tanzania where they would be dispatched to training centres in various countries. A further addition to my duties was the co-ordination of educational scholarships for the children of the self-same comrades who had come into exile.

In time, I joined the Zambian Ministry of Health and worked as a nurse at the Government hospital which served the comrades well as I could ensure that they always received medical attention, as and when it was required. I served for about 8 years when I was fortunate enough to secure a scholarship in the United Kingdom (UK) for an Advanced Nursing Administration qualification. Upon my return from the UK, I relocated my family from Zambia to Botswana, Gaborone. It was too close to South Africa, which meant that the dangers were more eminent due to the fact that there were neither camps nearby nor sufficient accommodation for the comrades in transit.

There was a dire need to enable the transit of these comrades much more speedily, be it towards military camps or educational institutions. In the midst of the said activity, the environment in Gaborone proved hostile due to the intermittent raids of exile personnel by the then South African Defence Force (SADF). Most comrades were spared death by moving on to the only camp in Botswana, Francistown, the Dukwe Camp.

The comrades in transit often had weapons that were also in transit to either South Africa or other countries where we had training camps. As part of the struggle, it was important to equip our camps with training while ensuring our comrades at home had the weapons to fight the struggle from within. The weapons had to be stored in our homes in Gaborone, which necessitated frequent raids by the Botswana police services on our homes. The raids were demeaning and frustrating to our immediate families, neighbours and society in general. These hard times taught me perseverance in that I became more intent on fulfilling my goals of a free South Africa.”

When asked about the impression of government in dealing with Military Veterans socio-economic issues Moeti recalls what was said at the military veteran’s conference that was held in 2011 “I recall that in 2011, at a military veterans conference, the then Minister of Defence, Ms Lindiwe Sisulu committed to housing, education, medical and financial assistance of veterans by the government.

To date, I know of some military veterans that are receiving medical assistance from the South African Military Health Services. In terms of housing, education and financial assistance, I am yet to hear of any concrete developments. From my interactions with other military veterans, I know that we are ready, willing and able to make our country a better state, through working with government.

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We continue to trust that our government will both institute and implement programmes that will enable us to attain our mutual goals. Always remember that your past is gone, but not forgotten; your present is all you have, so face each day with vigour and be all that you can be. Your ultimate gift as a woman is your intuition, trust it.”

Programmes of the Department of Military Veterans

Building DMV capacity

One of the key activities of the DMV is giving attention to is the finalisation of the Regulations with the National Treasury so that the R300mil allocated for benefits in this financial year (2013/2014) can be released and roll out of benefits such as housing, education etc. can commence in earnest. The capacity of the DMV to deliver is also being accelerated as top priority. The process of filling critical posts such as the 9 provincial coordinators which will ensure that there is easy access by military veterans to the DMV is underway. The plan is to ensure that all vacant posts are filled by the end of the financial year.

Developing a credible database for military veterans and Verification process

Another preoccupation of the DMV work has been to develop and maintain a credible database that will help ensure that all bona fide military veterans are captured and possible fraud and corruption is prevented. So far, out of the DMV database of 57 000, about 14000 files have been updated and verified. Currently, the DMV are also in the process of verification of the bona fide status of military veterans. Since February to date 342 have been verified, 172 have been approved 168 are pending or rejected these mostly from AZANLAMVA. The DMV at this juncture is extremely concerned about the slow pace of this process. The DMV is thus consulting with the MV's formations to find ways of fast tracking this process. The DMV has thus put process of verification on hold to assess the progress made and challenges faced thus far. One of the critical areas the DMV wants to strengthen is prevention of fraud and corruption. In that regard the DG is interacting with the various law enforcement agencies such as the NIA, the Hawks and the SAPS to make sure that those who attempt to defraud as well as those who are accomplice to that, face the full might of the law.

Providing Socio -Economic Support Services

Provision of Houses

In the DMV Annual Performance Plan for 2013/14 the DMV had planned to deliver 1 500 houses to MV's. However due to shortage of funds the target had to be revised. Therefore in this financial year the target is to provide 505. In eight provinces, 38 houses will be delivered to MV's this financial year in partnership with the Department of Human Settlements (DHS). In the Eastern Cape 208 house will be delivered, which was a plan that had been put in place by the DHS long before.

Provision of Health Care Services

With regard to the provision of access to free health services, significant progress has been made. The DMV is proud to announce that in partnership with the South African Medical Health Services of the SANDF. The DMV target of providing access to free medical services to military veterans was exceeded by over 100% during this financial year. The target for this year was to provide access to free medical services to 2000 MV's. To date, almost 4853 military veterans have access to free medical services in the SAMHS.

Education

In the past financial year DMV provided 100 military veterans and their dependants with bursaries. The number have been increased to 200 for this financial year 2013/2014 and 400 over the MTEF period.

FEAR

Poem by Advocate Nandipha Ntsaluba

Fear I hate u!!!!
Fear of the unknown
What a powerful detractor
What a useless time waster

Those who love u they give u all types of good names
They call u risk averse
They call u aloofness
Oh what a shame

U think u have captured me
U think u can control me
No ways, forget it
No ways!!! u will never, I say never get me!!!

I am en route to my ancestors' Jerusalem
I am en route to discover space
I am en route to discover the best jewel of Africa
Africa's untiring desire to be trend setters

Have u not heard
That Africa is moving into uncharted worlds
Did u not hear
That Africa's worth has umbilically drawn back it's own
Were u ever in ur dreams , having Africa defining the Agenda of the
United Nations

In no time, UN seats will be a preserve of all with capability
Fear, u drive governments to stalemates
U drive innovativeness away
U drive creative ideas to the back seat

lovely ancestors of Africa
We declare to u that Nongqawuse came and confused us and died
But her scars remain with us
Gxebe we always want to blame the past, why,why why
Can't we move on

Major groundbreaking ideas cannot get approval because of fear
Major humanitarian projects cannot take off because of fear
Ethics cannot prevail because of Fear
Africa's heritage cannot be owned because of fear
Africa cannot take charge of its destiny because of fear

Trust departed our being ages ago
Our born desire to be different is gone
New ideas have returned to where they do not deserve to be
oh where are the 3Ms, where is Agility!!!!

Fear u are never bigger than our collective ambition
Why must we be bound by fear
Why should you enjoy so much part of who we Are!
I detest u!!!!
Please go, please go and never return!!!



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