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Department:  
Defence  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



## **THE 2014 SANDF RESERVE FORCE SYMPOSIUM HELD OVER THE PERIOD 11 -13 SEPTEMBER 2014, UNISA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS LEADERSHIP, MIDRAND IN JOHANNESBURG**

By: Brig Gen Debbie Molefe, Director Defence Reserves

The office of Chief Defence Reserves held its fourth bi-annual SANDF Reserve Force Symposium over the period 11-13 September 2014 at the UNISA Graduate School of Business Leadership in Midrand, Johannesburg. This fourth Session, which was approved by the Military Command Council, was a build-up from the 2012 Reserve Force Strategic Session. It was indeed an exciting event, and I can without any doubt state that the 2014 Reserve Force Symposium was presented at a very high standard and was rated by the conference delegates as highly successful.

The 2014 Symposium included both local and international participation. The international participation comprised representatives from the United Kingdom Defence Force; the New York National Guard (NYNG) from the United States of America; the Tanzanian People's Defence Forces; the Zimbabwean Defence Force and the Norwegian Defence Force. The local participants included some members from the Plenary Defence Staff Council (PDSC); the Defence Reserve Board (DRB); the Reserve Force Council (RFC); the Service and Divisional Strategic and HR Planners; members of the Defence Provincial Liaison Councils (DPLCs); a representative from the Portfolio Committee on Defence; some captains of industry from the private sector, parastatals, Non-Governmental Organisations, Academia as well as the Media.

The theme of the 2014 Symposium was **“Employer Support: Indispensable for Voluntary Reserve Force Service”**.

The Symposium was officially opened by the Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube. In his opening address, Dr Gulube stated the following: “I regard the Reserves as a strategic asset to the Department of Defence and the South African National Defence Force and the Reserve Force is an absolute requirement and must therefore be revitalised to be able to perform its designated roles”. Dr Gulube further indicated that the roles of the Reserves are critical and that they have been confirmed as such in the Defence Review of 2014 which is currently before Parliament.

Dr Gulube was followed by Chief defence Reserves, Maj Gen Andersen, who made a comprehensive presentation on the current status of the Reserves.

Since the Symposium was held at one of the UNISA premises, the School of Business Leadership in Midrand, Johannesburg, we had the opportunity to be addressed by the Vice Chancellor of UNISA, Professor Mandla Makhanya. The Professor indicated that he was delighted that UNISA could host the 2014 SANDF Reserve Force Symposium and stated that he views the DOD and the SANDF as a partner and friends of UNISA. Professor Makhanya, in his address amongst

other things talked about the URTP and the importance of grooming future leaders and he said “the test of good leadership is what we invest today for future leaders”.

The line-up for the presentations according to the programme and in relation to the theme was very interesting, obtaining practical views and real time information from both local and international perspective on Employer Support; Challenges and Successes; Reserve Force Utilisation and Management and opportunities available for the SANDF Reserves in the different sectors. This was very inspiring. We received presentations the USA New York National Guard (NYNG), the UK Defence Force and the representative from the Norway Defence Force.

We were fortunate enough to be graced by the attendance of and to hear from the Chief of the South African National Defence Force (CSANDF), General Shoke on the Friday as he could not be present on day one due to other commitments.

We had of our SANDF officers, who presented very relevant strategic papers on Employer Support and the SANDF Reserves. Commander Siweya who represented Chief Human Resources presented on “Alternative Employment and Job Opportunities for the Reserves”. Col Brian Molefe, the Group Chief Executive Officer of Transnet, deliberated on “The Relationship between Business and the SANDF: Utilisation and Management of Reserves” The Chief Executive Officer of the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA), Commander Tsietsi Mokhele presented a paper on “An Employer Perspective for Reserve Force Service: Possibilities in Maritime Sector”.

A reflection was also given on the “Roles and Responsibilities and Opportunities in support of the Reserves” by the Defence Provincial Council (DPLC) Gauteng and this presentation was done by Col Siphon Majombozi. Focus was to give an overview of the engagements that the Gauteng DPLC had with various companies and institutions in the province and the possibilities that exist for the SANDF Reserves. The Director SA Army Reserves, Brig Gen Gerhard Kamffer had a very interesting presentation on “A Conceptual Analysis of the Potential Contribution by the SANDF to the Government Strategic Imperative of Rural Development”, which also provided possible opportunities for the SANDF Reserves and their utilisation.

Chief Defence Reserves in the end concluded by proposing the way forward in terms of the deliberations over the 2 ½ days. General Andersen indicated the focus will be on implementing the Defence Review; Employer Support, Enhanced Legislation, Reserve HR Policies, Additional funds, the URTP and clarifying the roles of the Reserves in Rural Development, in the Maritime environment as well as in the National Youth Service (NYS).

The Symposium was officially closed by the Acting Chief Corporate Staff (A/CCS), Maj Gen Dzulane, relating the 2014 SANDF Reserve Force Symposium to “a potjie” involving planning, preparation, processes and implementation to achieve certain objectives. The Symposium was well planned and prepared for with a specific theme and a set of envisaged outcomes. The different perspectives that were deliberated upon will assist in the contribution of achieving the objective of having and “Employed Reserves” and having “Employer Support” properly legislated.

The 2014 SANDF Symposium ended off very successfully and on a very high note. On the evening of Friday the 12<sup>th</sup>, a gala dinner was presented at the Eskom Academy of Learning, which was also a prestigious event. The gala event was blessed with presence of the Speaker of the City of Johannesburg, Cllr Conny Bapela who presented a welcome address to the guests. The guests were warmly entertained by the melodious voices of the Joburg Metro Police Department (JMPD) as well the SANDF Entertainment band. Chief Defence Reserves used the opportunity to officially acknowledge the Military Skills Competition Team that won the “Experienced” category of the CIOR International Military Skills Competition in Hammelburg, Germany under the leadership of Lt Col Uys van der Westhuizen.



*The arrival of Dr Gulube*



*The Conference in Session*



*C SANDF and the Foreign Guests*

*The Speaker of the City of Johannesburg and other dignitaries at the Gala Dinner*

