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Department:
Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



REMEMBERING THOSE WHO PAID THE SUPREME SACRIFICE IN ALL WARS, BATTLES AND ARMED STRUGGLES FOR FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND PEACE IN SOUTH AFRICA

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The City of Johannesburg hosted the National Civic Remembrance Sunday Service and Wreath-laying Ceremony on 13 November 2016 at Johannesburg City Hall. His Worship the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Herman Mashaba, was the main functionary for the service.



Arrival of His Worship the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Herman Mashaba, the Speaker of Council of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Vasco da Gama and Lieutenant General Morris Moadira at the National Civic Remembrance Sunday Service.

Hundreds of Reserve Force members, Regular Force members, Military Veterans, Military Attachés, South African Police Services, Department of Correctional Services, Road Traffic Inspectorate, Fire Department, Provincial Ambulance Services, Veterans' Associations such

as the MOTHS and SA Legion as well as Scouts and their families attended the commemorate Remembrance Day at Johannesburg's Cenotaph on that day. The theme for the commemoration was the centenary of the Battle of Delville Wood, honouring all fallen heroes.

Reverend Gift Moerane officially opened the ceremony with a prayer which was followed by a scripture reading by the Speaker of Council of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Vasco da Gama.



Rev Gift Moerane, officially opening the ceremony with a prayer.

Rev Moerane in his sermon said; "We are here to remember what happened to our beloved brothers and sisters. Today I take pride in being a South African, to hear about our South African troops going around the world to reclaim peace."



The Speaker of Council of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Vasco da Gama reading the scripture.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Delville Wood, when 3 200 troops of the 1st South African Infantry Brigade arrived on the battlefield of Delville Wood in the region of the Somme, France with orders to hold the wood at all costs. In one of the bloodiest battles fought during World War 1, South African casualties amounted to 1 080 killed or missing and 1 735 wounded in July 1916.

Rev Moerane used the commemoration to call for peace in the world's war-torn regions, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan etc. "All that has happened in the name of injustices of the past cannot stand. The blood that has been spilled is enough."

Wreaths were laid and salutes given as the South African National anthem played



Salutes as the South African National anthem played.



Lieutenant General Morris Moadira, Chief of Logistics on his way to laying a wreath on behalf of General Solly Shoke, Chief of the South African National Defence Force.



Major General Lesley Charles Ford on his way to lay a wreath on behalf of the Surgeon General, Lieutenant General Aubrey Phegelelo Sedibe.

❖ **FALLEN REMEMBERED**

For those who served in Europe, the Western Front must have presented an awesome and forbidding contrast to their own land. It was a war of indescribable horror where the fighting was intense and the casualty lists soon outstripped those of any previous war. The experiences in 1916 of Delville Wood and the Butte de Warlencourt would, unfortunately, be repeated again and again as more such battles of attrition were fought before the war eventually came to an end.

After the end of the war, Delville Wood seared itself into the consciousness and national identity of South African with a small part of France becoming the site of a war memorial designed by Sir Herbert Baker, which was identified almost as an extension of South Africa. In the nearby war cemetery, lie buried men from all countries including South Africa, who fought and died at Delville Wood.

The Delville Wood Commemorative Museum, officially opened in 1986, is also located at Delville Wood. Earlier this year, in July 2016, during the Centenary Commemoration, a new intervention to transform that memorial was inaugurated by the South African Government, with the unveiling by the President Jacob Zuma of a Wall of Names between the Memorial and the Museum at Delville Wood. The wall features the names of 13 756 South Africans who fought in World Wars 1 and 2, regardless of race.

It is also here at the National Civic Remembrance Commemoration and Wreath- Laying event held one hundred years later that all who did not return were remembered.

❖ **Extract from the programme**