



**the sandf**

Department:  
Defence  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## **CHIEF OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE, GENERAL SOLLY SHOKE BIDS THE NEWLY APPOINTED SANDF CHIEF OF STAFF, LIEUTENANT GENERAL VUSIMUSI RAMAKALA MASONDO WELCOME AT AN OFFICIAL WELCOMING PARADE**

The parade took place on Friday 15 April 2016 at the Armscor Sports Ground in Erasmuskloof. Chief Defence Reserves, Maj Gen Andersen and staff together with many other SANDF staff members took time off their busy schedules to attend this important function. General Masondo began his duties as Chief of Staff on 1 February 2016 at Defence Headquarters in Erasmuskloof.

*Office of Chief Defence Reserves welcomes Lt Gen Masondo and is looking forward to a long and fruitful working relationship with Chief of Staff's office under his leadership.*

*Below see the speech by General Vusumuzi Ramakala Masondo during the parade, his abridged CV, as well as pictures of the parade.*

### **Speech by Lieutenant General Vusumuzi Ramakala Masondo during the welcome parade**

*The Chief of the South African National Defence Force Gen Solly Shoke,  
The Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube  
The Chiefs of Services and Divisions,  
Generals,  
Admirals  
Officers,  
The Sergeant Major of the SANDF,  
Warrant Officers,  
Non-Commissioned Officers,  
Our dedicated men and women in uniform, and  
Our committed civilian employees,  
Distinguished guests  
Ladies and gentlemen*

*I am humbled by this opportunity to formally voice my appreciation for the manner in which you warmly accepted me here at Defence Headquarters ever since our principals decided I would better serve our organization at this level. I have always wanted to put*

*my heartfelt appreciation for your friendly and professional reception in words but was yet to find an appropriate opportunity to do so. Therefore, I embrace this opportunity I have been afforded to say what I have always wanted to articulate.*

*While I was walking up the lectern, I saw numerous familiar faces and I am therefore comfortable to share my thoughts with you because I believe I am in good company - the company of the people with whom I have previously worked and also those I still work with in various capacities by virtue of us being servants of the people and loyal members of our country's armed forces.*

*I stand here before you today, humbled not only by the warm reception you have given since my appointment here, but also by the overwhelming confidence shown in me by the Chief of the SANDF to be his right hand man as Chief of Staff of our country's armed forces. Kindly indulge me with this one favour and allow me to express my heartfelt gratitude to General Shoke for the confidence and trust he put in me to support him in pursuance of his duty to lead our military. I solemnly pledge to never fall short of my constitutional obligations and disappoint him.*

*I am particularly honoured because I walk into an environment in which dedicated leaders of our military served previously - an office of Chief of Corporate Staff that is renowned for being the point of call whenever the Chief of the SANDF requires dedicated men and women to step up and support our noble mandate of ensuring that our peace-loving citizens are able to sleep at night, knowing full well that the man at the helm of our armed forces has all the support he needs to command the SANDF.*

*Through my experience as a former Chief of the SA Army and the extensive conversations I had with General Shoke, the Chief of the SANDF, I have come to internalize and appreciate the expectations and high hopes that my superiors have for me and the task that has been squarely put on my shoulders. I am well aware that this is not my task alone but one that I share with many of you, members of our defence force, who will stop at nothing to ensure that we rise to the occasion as a collective and do that which our constitution expects of us.*

*Our military constantly adapts to the changing environment in which we operate in order to improve efficiency and bring us closer to our constitutional obligations. To that end, the post of Chief of Corporate Staff that I occupy has been upgraded to that of Chief of Staff. And as I assume office, I am conscious of the additional responsibilities that it entails. I will exercise my leadership acumen to ensure that I rally all those who are determined to make our defence force a centre of excellence to collectively put shoulders to the wheel and advance our military's mandate. I will also make it my mission to make those who have been dragging their feet realize the error of their ways and accept that, if we stick together as a united force, we have the power of numbers to transform our differences into sources of energy to advance our organizational goals.*

*As Chief of Staff, supported by our colleagues from the Services and Divisions, our office's main thrust is to ensure optimal administration of the SANDF and present our principals in government with a well-oiled, disciplined, fit-for-purpose defence force ready to effortlessly execute any mission that comes its way.*

*As Chief of Staff, together with loyal members of our armed forces, my responsibility is to create an environment where Chief of the South African National Defence Force does*

*not have to struggle with anything else that can be better dealt with by other levels within our hierarchy, but focus solely on the demanding task of commanding our armed forces.*

*The success of the office of Chief of Staff largely depends on the unwavering support and co-operation of the Chiefs of Services and Divisions. Judging by the close rapport that we already enjoy with them, I believe the success that Chief of the SANDF expects us to achieve is within reach. Working together as we have done in the past, we shall strive to ensure that the SANDF remains a force to be reckoned with - a well-equipped and disciplined force that remains in touch with its constitutional mandate.*

*It is of critical importance to assist Chief of the SANDF in managing our military as a disciplined military force fit for its purpose. That responsibility should be uppermost in our minds and we shall strive to achieve that against all odds and never make failure an option.*

*Let me state unequivocally that the greatest challenge faced by my office, is the need to resuscitate our military aggressively by driving the implementation of the Defence Review and achieving all the milestones set for us in an environment plagued by diminishing budgetary allocations. You all know that we are operating in an environment of fiscal strain, but that should not discourage us and cause us to deviate from the need to bring our military on par with those of our contemporaries across the world. Our responsibilities remain and we need to manage what we have in such a manner that will still ensure that our military is suitably staffed by dedicated and loyal men and women in uniform equipped with fit-for-purpose state of the art military hardware to fulfil the mandate given to us by the constitution. Whatever the circumstances, we shall overcome and the SANDF will become the force we all aspire to realize.*

*When we work together to elevate the standards in our military as a united force, no input or contribution is too small. We need all hands on deck to help steer us to collective success for the benefit of the SANDF. We need each other's talents to elevate our military and ensure that it meets its domestic and continental obligations.*

*Allow me to conclude my address by reminding you that it was the unity that Chief Bambatha kaMancinza Zondi forged with local chiefs around his area that helped him muster the courage and gather gallant fighters to challenge the Poll Tax imposed on his people by the British Colonialists in 1906. Chief Bambatha bravely led what was to be later known as the Bambatha Rebellion from his base in Nkandla Forest because he had the support of his compatriots. He understood the true sense of unity and the power it has, once enmeshed into one's way of doing things, to inspire people to achieve the inconceivable. Our forebears taught us well. Let us take their fighting spirit forward for the benefit of the people of South Africa, united in their diversity.*

***I thank you.***

## **Abridged Curriculum Vitae of Lieutenant General Vusumuzi Ramakala Masondo**



Lieutenant General Vusumuzi Ramakala Masondo was born in Umtata in the former Transkei on 21 December 1957. He left South Africa to join the military wing of the African National Congress (ANC), Mkhonto we Sizwe, in 1976 whilst he was doing Standard 10 at Adams College in Amanzimtoti.

Lieutenant General Masondo underwent his basic military training in Angola in 1977 and did Air Defence Artillery training in the former Soviet Union in 1978. He served in the ranks of Mkhonto we Sizwe in various capacities until his return to South Africa in 1992 after the unbanning of the African National Congress. Whilst in exile he completed his matric and diploma courses in secretarial and computer studies.

Before integration into the SANDF in 1994, Lieutenant General Masondo served in the Joint Military Coordinating Council (JMCC) as the co-chairperson of the Inspection Workgroup. Upon integration, he was appointed Staff Officer Class II Personnel at the Army Logistics Command in 1995. In 1996 he was transferred to 3 Electronic Workshop in Wonderboom as a Personnel Officer of the unit. After serving as a personnel officer for nearly a year, Lieutenant General Masondo was transferred to the Signal Formation Headquarters as Staff Officer Class II Personnel.

On 1 January 1999, Lieutenant General Masondo was appointed Staff Officer Class 1 Personnel at the SA Army Armour Formation and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was instrumental in setting up the Personnel Section of the SA Armour Formation as this was a newly established formation. He served the SA Army Armour Formation until 31 May 2002.

Lieutenant General Masondo was appointed Senior Staff Officer in charge of staffing at the SA Army Headquarters on 1 June 2002 and promoted to the rank of Colonel. On 1 January 2003 he was transferred to the Human Resource Support Centre (Directorate Personnel Maintenance) where he was appointed as Senior Staff Officer in charge of remuneration.

On 1 May 2004 Lieutenant General Masondo was appointed as Director Corporate Communication and promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. He served in that post for only one month and on 1 June 2004 was appointed as the Personal Staff Officer to the then Chief of the SANDF, General S. Nyanda. On 1 March 2006 he was appointed Acting Director Human Resource Maintenance, a post in which he was confirmed as Director on 1 March 2006. On 1 December 2007, Lieutenant General Masondo was promoted to the rank of major general and appointed Chief Army Force Preparation.

One of the highlights of Lieutenant General Masondo's career was his appointment as Director Exercise GOLFINHO, a SADC peace support operation exercise intended to confirm the operational readiness of the SADC Standby Force Brigade.

Lieutenant General Masondo has completed all the required Military Courses up to the Executive National Security Programme. He also pursued his academic studies and holds a Certificate in Defence Management from the University of Witwatersrand, a Certificate in Labour Relations from the Pretoria University and a B Com degree from the University of South Africa.

Lieutenant General Masondo was married to the late Dinah Masondo and has been blessed with two daughters and a son. He has two grand children.

Lieutenant General Masondo has been appointed as Chief of Staff at Defence Headquarters, Erasmuskloof, with effect from 1 February 2016



*The arrival of Chief SANDF, Gen Shoke and Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Masondo*



*Gen Shoke handing over the symbol of office*



*Address by Lt Gen Masondo*



*Functionaries marching during the parade inspection by Lt Gen Masaondo*



*Senior military personnel who attended the parade*



*Senior military personnel came to grace the event in their numbers*



*Guard of honor from the SANDF National Ceremonial Guard*



*Fly past by two Augusta helicopters*