

Submission to SA Defence Review

6th February 2015

The focus of this submission is on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, the SADC Gender Protocol, and particularly on Chapter 9, 'Defence Strategic Trajectory' of the Defence Review

Introduction

The Constitution (1996) mandates the Defence Force as responsible for:

the protection and defence of the Republic, its sovereignty, freedoms, territorial integrity, national interests, people and values. Furthermore, certain defence functions are carried across from the interim Constitution (1993). These include service in: compliance with the international obligations of the Republic; the preservation of life, health or property; the provision or maintenance of essential services; upholding of law and order in support of the Police Service; and support of any department of state for the purpose of socio economic development (South African Defence Review 2014: page vi)

Gender responsive peace and security provisioning needs to be seen as an imperative within the South African Defence Force. There can be no development, sustainable or otherwise, when conflict occurs, and women have a major role in contributing to the prevention of conflict, and to peace-building and peacekeeping. This Defence Review needs to encompass progress towards a more peaceful world in which gender equality is an essential component.

There is recognition in the report that we live in a rapidly changing world which is more interconnected and interdependent. There are new threats emerging and South Africa has important commitments in provision of security contributions through the UN, AU and SADC. We support the emphasis in the Review on ensuring human security, and South Africa's role in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building. In Chapter 7, 'Regional and Continental Peace and Security', the only mention of gender is with regard to 'gender rights violations' with reference to challenges in the twenty-first century. We are pleased to see in Chapter 11 on 'Future Military Leaders', that there are several specific references to 'men and women'. However, it must be emphasised that there is no mention of progress with regard to the implementation of UN SCR 1325 in Chapter 7.

Indeed, overall there is little mention in the Review of the importance of gender equity within the South African Defence Force, and no reference to the provision of appropriate facilities and accommodation for women, nor to the essential gender-sensitive training and development for all personnel. Where are the budgets for these aspects of the Defence Strategy? At the beginning of the report in the Chairperson's Overview, there are two references to gender: firstly, point 45a, is about the recruitment of officers and refers to 'woman' - we assume this is

meant to be in the plural. And secondly, point 45b, 'The Defence Force will be an equitable, broadly representative and gender-aligned national asset'. We assume that 'gender-aligned' supports the SADC Gender Protocol principles of a 50/50 balance of men and women in all ranks and classification of work. We would like to see clear steps towards progress in this regard reflected in the wording of the Review.

The following section suggests where, in **Chapter 9**, there needs to be additional wording:

Point 74 d: 'which encompasses gender equity'

Point 76 c and f: ensure reference to gender balance of 50:50 in all areas of recruitment, including officer recruitment. Consider steps to be taken to attract women into the Defence Force

Point 78: include reference to 50 percent of personnel will be women

Point 79 b ii: reference to be made to the adaptation of warships to take female personnel

Point 81 e, g, h, and i: reference in each of these sub-points to include 'on a gender equitable basis'

Point 83: 'with a gender balance of 50 percent of men and women in each of the categories'

Point 84: reference to the Defence Academy needs to have an equal split between men and women

Point 89: with a gender balance of 50 percent of men and women

Point 90: again, with a gender balance of 50:50 men and women

Point 91 b i and ii: ensure gender-sensitive facilities

Point 95: again, ensure 50:50 gender balance

Point 105: include a gender perspective. The Force Design Process – all steps need to ensure a gender parity approach

Point 111 a: Force structure – which includes equal numbers of men and women

Point 117: The Defence Accounting Officer must ensure gender sensitive planning in Force design, structure and facilities

Point 124a and 128a: Ensure appropriate facilities for women

The following suggests where in the **Introduction** to the Review there should be additional wording:

Point 10, adding 'the need to take account also of the SADC Gender Protocol'

Point 20 d adding 'always recognising gender parity in personnel involved'

Point 28 f: adding: 'A gender policy is proposed'

We are pleased to note that the overarching Defence Principles outlined in Section 29 e, Principle 5, is 'The Defence Force will strive to be seen as a representative, equitable and **gender-aligned national asset**'. The above proposals flesh out this already committed Principle 5.

Conclusion

The issues in the Review in relation to gender can be rectified with the adoption of the proposed changes outlined in this submission. In this respect, the Defence Review will take into consideration the requirements of UNSCR 1325 and the SADC Gender Protocol.

There is a lack of perspective of the role of the South African National Development Plan (NDP) which stipulates that the path towards a democratic developmental state needs to be more representative, fully encompassing gender equity.

References

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