**INFORMATION BRIEF TO THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE ON THE SANDF OPERATION MISTRAL: 1 APRIL 2021 TO 31 MARCH 2022**

**AIM**

To brief the Joint Standing Committee on Defence wrt the SANDF deployment in Op MISTRAL over the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2021.

**BACKGROUND**

The Republic of South Africa (RSA) is a Non-Permanent Member State of the United Nations (UN) Security Council. A political decision was made that the RSA will become involved in UN Peace Support operations as a Troop Contributing Country.

This led to the RSAs involvement in the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). MONUSCO is a long term UN peace mission deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The UN has pronounced themselves on downscaling the footprint in the DRC. There is however still an expectation from the RSA to provide forces to MONUSCO during this process. The RSA has to honour this expectation as one of its international obligations. The SANDF contribution to this UN mission is code named Operation MISTRAL. The Employment of forces in Op MISTRAL started in 1999 and the mandate has been renewed annually ever since.

**MANDATE**

Section 200 to 204 in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa addresses Defence matters. The mandate to deploy in MONUSCO and more specifically Op MISTRAL is derived from Section 201(2)(c) of the Constitution

“***Only the President, as head of the national executive, may authorise the employment of the defence force***—

(a) in co-operation with the police service;

(b) in defence of the Republic; or

(c) ***in fulfilment of an international obligation.”***

The President's Minute no 64/2020 extends the mandate to the SANDF for the deployment no more than 957 members and associated equipment in the DRC from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

**FORCE EMPLOYMENT**

The current operation, Op MISTRAL, as approved by Cabinet consists of the following units and with a total of 957 members as per the Memorandum of Understanding with the UN:

Command and Support Unit 26 members

Tactical Intelligence Unit 40 members

Composite Helicopter Unit (Aviation) 155 members

Airfield Crash and Rescue 14 members

Medevac (Medical Task Group - AMET) 12 members

Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) 708 members

External Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM) 2 members

**ESTIMATED BUDGET**

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| ESTIMATED BUDGET: 01 APRIL 2021 – 31 MARCH 2022 | |
| STRENGTH: 957 | TOTALS |
| HR COSTS | R 474 931 979 |
| GOOD AND SERVICES | R 342 290 049 |
| CAPITAL ASSETS | R 1 282 360 |
| OP MISTRAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE | **R 818 504 388** |

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