**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**JOINT DEFENCE COMMITTEE REQUESTS CLARITY ON MANDATES AND OPERATIONS OF THE DEFENCE FORCE SERVICE COMMISSION AND MILITARY BARGAINING COUNCIL**  
   
**Parliament, Friday, 3 June 2022 –** The Joint Standing Committee on Defence has called on the Department of Defence and Military Veterans (DDMV) to clarify the roles and functions of both the Defence Force Service Commission (DFSC) and the Military Bargaining Council (MBC) to ensure that there is no duplication of roles that might impact on the achievement of better conditions of service for members of the DDMV.  
   
The committee is of the view that clarification of the mandates of the two structures will ensure that there is no overlap or duplication of mandates that might cause dual expenses on both structures.  
   
The committee noted that there is a planned retreat between the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans and the DFSC aimed at streamlining the implementation of recommendations made by the DFSC and unpacking the mandate of the DFSC. The committee is hopeful that the retreat will deliver a clear programme with a timeframe for the implementation of the recommendations of the DFSC.  
   
“The committee has previously highlighted the need for the Department of Defence (DoD) to find mechanisms to implement the recommendations of the DFSC as it relates to conditions of service to ensure that conditions of service of members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) are improved. The committee has, as a result, requested that the department provides it with a detailed plan, highlighting how the recommendations will be implemented in the short, medium and long term,” said Mr Cyril Xaba, the Co-Chairperson of the committee.    
   
While the committee acknowledges that some recommendations of the DFSC require funding that might not be available in the short to medium term, but recommendations that do not require funding or which are funded must be implemented urgently.  
   
Regarding the 2021/22 annual performance of the South African Military Ombud, the committee appreciates the 83% rate at which the Ombud resolves the reported cases as that contributes significantly in the improvement of conditions of service of members of the SANDF. Furthermore, the committee welcomed the clearance of the backlog of cases that had accumulated previously and their expeditious finalisation.  
   
The committee raised a concern about the reported disjuncture between recommendations being made by the Ombud and their implementation by the department. Despite this, however, the committee welcomed the bilateral engagement between the Military Ombud and the Chief of the SANDF which has been cited as improving the implementation of recommendations by the SANDF.      
   
**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, MR CYRIL XABA AND MR MAMAGASE NCHABELENG**

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