

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE & MILITARY VETERANS**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**1466. Mr M L Shelembe (DA) to ask the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans:**

(1) Whether she has been informed of the complaint against the members of the SA National Defence Force by members of the community at Phongolo in KwaZulu-Natal (details furnished); if so, what action does she intend to take; if not,

(2) whether she intends to institute an internal investigation; if not, why not; if so, (a) how and (b) on what date will the investigation take place? NW2732E

**REPLY**

(1) The SANDF received a report of complaints from some community members of Phongolo in KZN with allegations of illegal house raids and searches that were conducted by members of the SANDF. The allegations central issue was the fact that the SANDF conducted the house raids illegally without the SAPS and or search warrants and are also alleged to have ill-treated some community members during the raids. The affected community members opened criminal cases at the local Police Station and laid charges of illegal conduct, theft and assault by these SANDF members.

(a) The **SANDF duly responded by conducting an internal investigation and verifying these allegations and community complaints**. The internal investigation found the allegations to be true and the complaints of the community members to be genuine.

(b) The SANDF will allow the legal process to take its course as per the criminal cases currently in the hands of the SAPS. The **SANDF has already commenced with the internal Military Disciplinary processes on those involved and those found responsible will be dealt with accordingly** and to ensure that such unbecoming conduct does not happen again.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, and the SANDF, unreservedly condemns this unbecoming conduct by these members and condemns it in the strongest terms. This is not how we conduct our business and, we as the organisation charged with the responsibility to protect and defend the people of South Africa, tender our sincere apologies to the affected community members as well as to the entire community of the area of Phongola.

We can assure the citizens of this country that the SANDF members deployed to conduct operations are given the necessary training on all aspects relevant to their tasks during the conduct of operations. Furthermore, continuous training is conducted on the conduct and discipline expected of all members of the SANDF. We will not allow a few members to tarnish the good work done by the bulk of our dedicated and disciplined members.

As a consequence of this incident, the Minister of Defence has directed the CSANDF to ensure that effective disciplinary actions are undertaken against those found to have been responsible. Furthermore, the CSANDF is to ensure that effective measures are put in place to prevent similar incidents in future.