

MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY/NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

QUESTION PAPER 15 FOR WRITTEN REPLY - 2022

QUESTION NO: 1509

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 29 APRIL 2022

REPLY RECOMMENDED BY
MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: MP

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Mr M G E Hendricks (Al Jamah-Ah) to ask the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans:

1. Whether, with reference to a recent report on the situation in Mozambique (details furnished), wherein the Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), General Rudzani Maphwanya, refers to rebels in the region as jihadists and Islamic insurgents, which is simplistic and offensive to Muslim citizens in the Republic and in other parts of the world, it is her position that by the SA National Defence Force using such simplistic terms which emanate from a unidimensional construct of terrorist violence is intended by the SANDF to stereotype Muslims in a similar way that 70% of US security policies after 9/11 targeted Arabs and Muslims as they were seen to be associated with adherents of extremist movements; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;
2. Whether she will consider a ruling by the House Chairperson of the National Assembly, Ms M G Boroto (details furnished), calling for wisdom and not to be hurtful in referring to persons and implement for all media spokespersons of the SANDF to avoid using hurtful and offensive terms such as jihadists and Islamic insurgents which engenders negative stereotypes toward particular groups of religious persons among the public and policymakers, when in fact the persons are terrorists; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

REPLY:

1. The SANDF is always conscious of the diversity of the South African society and its adherence to religious tolerance, as witnessed by continued acknowledgment of all faiths in all its functions. The SANDF consists of members of all faiths within South Africa, including those of the Islamic faith. The SANDF and C SANDF has always received and enjoyed messages of support and solidarity from all faiths including from our Muslim brethren. The SANDF will continue to pursue the policy of religious inclusiveness in its pursuit of a united and disciplined National Defence Force. Having watched the C SANDF's Mozambique deployment media briefing several times, we can confirm that we could not find any utterance made by General Rudzani Maphwanya that referred to the rebels in Mozambique as jihadists nor Islamic insurgents. Reference to C SANDF media brief aired on the 13 April 2022, SABC News. Furthermore, the SANDF's participation in efforts to restore stability in the Cabo Delgado province is also driven by the need to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of both Muslim and non-Muslim communities, largely consisting of displaced women, children and the elderly, who are bearing the brunt of attacks by the non-state armed group locally identified as Al-Shabab or Al-Sunna wa Jama'a.
2. The Muslim community of South Africa has always prayed for a united and strong SANDF. There has never been any form of malice or conscious insinuation used by C SANDF, of inflammatory language that engenders stereotypes of any kind towards a particular religious person or group. The operations conducted by the SANDF in the

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region are not aimed at any religious grouping but are purely based on the invitation by the host country, Mozambique, in line with international law and respect to all religions, to have her neighbours contribute towards restoring peace and stability in its northern most province of Cabo Delgado. Note should also be taken that the SANDF operates in concert with other nations, within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and that the security operations in the region are governed by both the universal guidelines for peace and security architecture of the United Nations, African Union and SADC.

T.R. Modise

(T.R. MODISE)

MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: MP

DATE: *10.05.2022*
