**MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA)**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 459**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 25 FEBRUARY 2022**

**REPLY RECOMMENDED BY:**

**MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS:MP**

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**Mr S J F Marais (DA) to ask the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans:**

(1) Whether, with reference to the approximately 250 members of the SA National

Defence Force (SANDF) who were flown to Cuba for training at the end of August

2021, she has found that the training offered in Cuba is the best and most cost-

effective training available, given the budgetary constraints and similar training

opportunities available in the United Kingdom, Sweden, United States of America and

the Republic's BRICS partners; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are

the relevant details;

(2) whether she has found that this was the best possible training available to equip

the next generation of SANDF pilots and Defence force leaders; if not, what is the

position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

**REPLY:**

(1.) From the SANDF appreciation with specific reference to medical expertise and

their ongoing assistance to the Department of Health, Cuba was the obvious choice

to train and qualify medical specialists. Through Project Thusano, the Cubans also

demonstrated their skills and knowledge in terms of the maintenance and repair of

various technical capabilities. Cuba was the only country that has opened its training

opportunities in bigger numbers to the SANDF and that could tailor make training

programmes according to the SANDF's unique training requirements which is the most

cost-effective way to train and qualify large numbers of military personnel.

(2) Based on the above motivation, the training provided to the SANDF by Cuba is

currently the best possible training intervention available based on the unique SANDF

training requirements.

