



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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18 October 2010

The Honourable Mynamezeli Boo MP

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans

Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

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Dear Nyami:

REQUEST FOR GENERAL GODFREY NGWENYA, CHIEF OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE, TOGETHER WITH THE SERVICE CHIEFS, TO ATTEND HEARINGS OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS ON THE DEFENCE DEPARTMENT'S ANNUAL REPORTS

I am writing to express my concern that the Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Godfrey Ngwenya, together with the service chiefs, will not be appearing before the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans during the hearings on the Department of Defence's annual reports for the 2008/09 and 2009/10 Financial Years.

My concern is compounded by the fact that General Godfrey Ngwenya, together with the service chiefs, have never appeared before the portfolio committee in the fourth democratic Parliament.

The Secretary of Defence, Mpumi Mpofu, and the Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Godfrey Ngwenya, have *equal status under the minister and separate functions* which are set out in the Defence Act (No. 42 of 2002).

The defence force chief is therefore directly accountable, through the minister of defence and military veterans, to Parliament.

Most importantly, the defence force chief is directly responsible for the functioning and operations of the defence force, which is the "epicentre" of the crisis in the South African National Defence Force.

Of course, there is no suggestion on my part that General Godfrey Ngwenya, or any of the service chiefs, are resisting being accountable to Parliament.

On the contrary, I would suspect that they would welcome the opportunity to "tell it like it is" in Parliament.

We do the defence force no favours by allowing the minister to keep General Godfrey Ngwenya, as well as the service chiefs, in "the barracks" beyond the scrutiny of Parliament.

I am also concerned that the portfolio committee programme is too compressed and will not allow sufficient time to properly scrutinize the defence department's annual reports.

For that reason, I would suggest that the portfolio committee devotes a hearing per defence department programme, much like the current programme of the Portfolio Committee on Police.

I therefore propose that the Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Ngwenya, together with the service chiefs, be present to account to the portfolio committee on defence and military veterans as follows:

- *Programme 2: Landward Defence* – Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Godfrey Ngwenya, supported by General Solly Shoke, Chief of the South African Army;
- *Programme 3: Air Defence* – Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Godfrey Ngwenya, supported by General Carlo Gagiano, Chief of the South African Air Force;
- *Programme 4: Maritime Defence* - Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Godfrey Ngwenya, supported by Admiral Refiloe Mudimu, Chief of the South African Navy;
- *Programme 5: South African Military Health Service* - Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Godfrey Ngwenya, supported by Surgeon General Vejaynand Ramlakan;
- *Programme 8: Force Employment* - Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Godfrey Ngwenya, supported by General Themba Matanzima, Chief of Joint Operations.

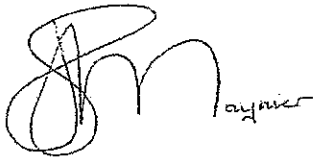
Moreover, I would suggest that General Godfrey Ngwenya, supported by the defence intelligence head, should also appear to account to the portfolio committee on the programme for Defence Intelligence.

We must be very careful of creating a democratically dangerous impression that senior military officers are beyond scrutiny and above appearing at portfolio committee hearings in Parliament.

Please note that I intend to make the contents of this letter available to the media on or about 24 October 2010.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to call me on (021) 403 3337 or 0715346398.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'DM' followed by the name 'Maynier' written in a cursive script.

DAVID MAYNIER MP

DA SHADOW MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS

cc. Obed Bapela MP, House Chairperson of the National Assembly, Parliament