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National Treasury
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MEDIA STATEMENT

HEAD OF THE NAVY, ADMIRAL MONDE LOBESE'S REMARKS ON THE BUDGET OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE (SANDF)

The National Treasury notes, with concern, the remarks made by the Head of the Navy, Admiral Monde Lobese on the budget of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) at the Joint Standing Committee on Defence meeting in Parliament on Friday, 18 July 2025.

In line with the Constitution, withdrawing funds from the National Revenue Fund can only be done through an Act of Parliament. The Constitution also requires that the Bill appropriating funds is tabled by the Minister of Finance. Like other proposed legislation, this is approved by Cabinet. In terms of section 6(1)(c) and (d) of the Public Finance Management Act, the National Treasury is responsible for managing the budget process and exercising control over the implementation of the national budget.

In other words, the National Treasury is responsible for the planning process that results in a Cabinet decision reflecting trade-offs between various policy priorities. Final approval is by Parliament, and the National Treasury is then entrusted to ensure the implementation of Parliament's decisions. It is therefore incorrect to suggest that the National Treasury is responsible for any budget challenges experienced by the SANDF.

Furthermore, the 2025/26 proposed allocation of R57.2 billion in the Appropriation Bill is informed by government's broader fiscal strategy, which aims to stabilise public finances, reduce debt-service costs, and create space to invest in critical infrastructure and frontline services in support of higher growth.

Within this constrained fiscal environment, the Department of Defence has been allocated an additional R4.3 billion over the 2025 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) to support priority needs—most notably, the orderly and safe withdrawal of troops and mission equipment from the Democratic Republic of Congo, alongside other essential operational requirements.



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In addition, the 2025 MTEF fiscal framework contains R5.5 billion for early retirement in 2025/26 and 2026/27, most of which will be used by the SANDF to realign their personnel structure with their compensation budget, which is currently unsustainable.

Internal resource allocation in the Department of Defence is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer and if a particular division believes they are underfunded, it is a matter that should be addressed internally.

For any media queries, please contact Media@treasury.gov.za.

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