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SMART DEFENCE ACQUISITION KEY IN ACHIEVING REGIONAL STABILITY-ARMSCOR

Maintaining peace, safety and security in the East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) emerged as a key message at the Land Forces East Africa and Maritime & Coastal Security Africa 2014 held on **15-16 July 2014** in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

In his opening address, the Minister of Defence and National Services, Dr Hussein Mwinyi called for African states to cooperate to create stability in the continent. Whilst he acknowledged that the region has already agreed on the need to combat instability, he indicated that more efforts are still needed from other African states to achieve, which is key to economic growth and human development.

As an acquisition agency for the Department of Defence, Armscor presented a collaborative approach on how the region and the continent can collaborate and leverage on the power of smartly acquiring defence systems that would benefit countries within the region.

“Identifying common requirements from countries within the region will create an opportunity for joint defence acquisition programs that will not only facilitate establishment of capabilities and capacity but also technology transfer, standardization, interoperability and economies of scale”, said the Acting General Manager for Acquisition at Armscor, Mr Dawie Griesel.

Griesel further highlighted Defence Industrial Participation (DIP) and local manufacturing under license as one of the enablers to achieve these benefits. DIP refers to the obligation placed on a foreign company to reciprocate business to the receiving country.

Welcoming guests at the gala dinner, Ms Lulu Mzili, the General Manager Marketing and Business Development said the land and maritime security of the region is profoundly linked to the economic development of the region and the continent at large, it is therefore imperative that African states take the lead in addressing these instability challenges through collaboration and cooperation. In this regard, she said the South African government has signed various bilateral and multilateral agreements with other African countries in the continent to promote peace, safety and security in the continent.

Armcor is committed to drive creativity and innovation on all its technology acquisition programs with its strategic partners. Under the auspices of Armcor, about ten South African Defence Industry companies exhibited at the conference to showcase their defence capabilities.

Armcor's expertise in acquiring defence materiel spans over six decades. Armcor was instrumental in the acquisition of the Rooivalk helicopter which is one of the few helicopters of its class in the world. The deployment of the Rooivalk helicopters to the Eastern DRC in November 2013 was a great success and clearly changed the balance of the conflict in that area. The New Generation Infantry Combat Vehicle – the Badger - which Armcor recently awarded the contract to Denel Land Systems for production is also a leader in its class with state of the art technology, specified and developed to meet the functional and environmental requirements of the SANDF (www.armcor.co.za).

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