



ADDRESS BY MAIN SPONSOR

ON PARTNERSHIP WITH SANDF EDUCATION TRUST

GIVEN BY VICE ADMIRAL (Ret) J MUDIMU ON 06 OCTOBER

2016

Programme Director,

Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa –
Nqakula,

Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini

Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube

Chief of the South African National Defence Force, Gen. Shoke,

Generals and Admirals,

All other ranks present here this evening,

Captains of industries whose contribution has made this event
possible,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Fellow South Africans,

We meet at a time when the people of Haiti, whose revolution inspired so many others in the Afro-Caribbean world, are under severe attack from hurricane Matthew. We pray that they may one day enjoy the freedom they heralded upon us as a people joined by our common ancestry; the freedom that gave us so much hope; that inspired so many to seek their rightful place in the sun.

We hope that one day they may find peace from the hurricanes, earthquakes and political instability that have beset their country for so long. We hope that they will finally be at one with all of us who owe our freedom to their courage to lead the freedom of the oppressed people the world over, if only by showing all of us early on, that we can also be free.

For us in South Africa, our hearts also go out to the people of the Republic of Cuba, who took the inspiration of the Haitian Revolution even further by fighting side by side, trench by trench, as brothers and sisters with many of us here this evening, for the liberation of this very country we proudly call home. Just as they were about to take a sigh of relief from the many years of sanctions imposed on them and the meagre life they have had to lead, they too are starring hurricane Matthew in the face; gritting their teeth for the inevitable onslaught.

Programme Director, it is in this spirit of love and compassion that we are assembled here this evening.

We remain inspired by the education levels that the people of Cuba have achieved under the oppressive circumstances that they have had to battle with. The fact that we as a country lean on the strength of their human capital in the areas of health and more recently in the maintenance of our military vehicles testifies to the value of education.

In the words of our first democratic President, Dr R N Mandela and we quote:

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.

This then forms the basis upon which Armscor responded to the clarion call made by the Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Shoke, to sponsor this important event. We are impressed by the importance that the Defence Force has attached to education.

We are inspired by the fact that this importance for education is not limited to the SANDF's own personnel, many of whom are now leaders in Armscor, Denel and industry generally, but also the dependents of all its fallen soldiers, our national heroes and heroines.

Through the SANDF Education Trust, we say: the service that our men and women in uniform have so selflessly given to our people shall not be forgotten. We are saying, every child, no matter their background, whatever their family circumstance, has a right to education.

It was the King of pop, Michael Jackson who gave us hope during the dark days of apartheid by his song and here we only quote the chorus that made the world headlines and captured the imagination of all peace loving people and he says:

"We are the world, we are the children,

We are the ones, who make a brighter day,

So let's start giving"

Through the medium of this gathering, we are providing a platform for the children of our fallen heroes and heroines to one day swell the ranks of the people's armed forces, not merely as foot soldiers, but as scientists, doctors, engineers and strategists. We are confident that by so doing, we would have gone some way in repaying the struggles that many have sustained on our behalf so that we may one day be free.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are not oblivious to the pain and contradiction that our campuses of higher learning experience today. As we gather to raise funds for the dependents of our fallen heroes and heroines, let us pray that a lasting solution is quickly found for normal teaching and learning to resume on our campuses.

We do not wish for the efforts of the SANDF Education Trust to be in vain. We hope that the education that we all seek for all South Africans shall be available for the good of the country; for the good of humanity.

To conclude Programme Director, Hon. Minister, Colleagues and Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen, let us once again remember the seminal words of our first democratic President, Dr R N Mandela and we quote:

“A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue and pen, then you have something very special”.

It is against this background that I call upon all of you present here this evening to dig deep into your pockets and make South Africa great through the facility of education. Let everyone remember the SANDF as a place where hope is given to the hopeless; where love is given to the seemingly unloved; where confidence is built out of insecurity.

Let this day be remembered as one where we all understood that in a world of takers, of “what’s in it for me”, of scepticism and dejection, there is still some goodness left in all of us which, in the right circumstance, can be grown exponentially for the benefit of our country.

We have time and again shown ourselves capable of doing good for its own sake. Let us not shirk that responsibility now.

As the American Civil Rights Leader, Dr Martin Luther King, who also inspired many beyond the confines of his inherited country stated and we quote:

“The time to do right is always right”.

So dear friends, tonight we appeal to your most powerful weapon on earth, a soul on fire. Ours this evening therefore is a calling that demands that our souls be aflame with our collective intention to give the children a better tomorrow. It is this which must form the deepest mark of our identity and it is this which must frame the narrative we write in South Africa today.

I thank you.