



MEDIA STATEMENT

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MINISTER OF DEFENCE HANDS OVER MOBILE LABORATORIES TO RURAL SCHOOLS

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms. Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula in partnership with Armscor and the University of Fort Hare (UFH) officially handed over mobile science experiments laboratories to empower learners to reach their full potential.

Since the advent of democracy, the Department of Education has put a lot of effort into addressing challenges faced by students and teachers, particularly from low socioeconomic status and previously disadvantaged schools. Nevertheless, teaching and learning subjects such as maths and science remain a solemn challenge in South Africa.

It is against this backdrop that Armscor embarked on a nationwide partnership with schools and institutions of higher learning to explore sustainable ways of assisting teachers and learners, mainly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

In July 2016, Armscor collaborated with UFH to educate and create awareness about maintenance and development of defence capability. To further stimulate and maintain interest in learning STEM subjects, students were offered extra lessons every Saturday, as part of the Learner Intervention Programme (LIP). Resultantly, a total of 520 learners from 40 schools around Bisho and Alice have thus far benefitted from the programme.

Throughout his life, former President Nelson Mandela held education close to his heart. As a contribution to keeping his legacy alive, Minister Mapisa-Nqakula officially handed over mobile labs to rural Eastern Cape schools associated with LIP on Mandela Day.

“I am happy that I have partnered with Armscor to reach out to rural schools in this programme, we are encouraging young learners with mathematics to meet the needs of the defence force of today – engineers, doctors in the military health service, scientists, etc.” said the Minister.

“This is not a donation, but an investment for our future leaders,” said Mr Kevin Wakeford, the CEO of Armscor. The total investment from Armscor to the UFH Programmes amounts to over R7 Million.”

According to the Minister, this programme will ensure that every learner will have a solid education and an equal opportunity to be empowered to reach their full potential. Based on the success of this initiative, it is envisaged that it will be rolled-out to benefit other provinces in the future.

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Minister of Defence, Ms. Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula and CEO of Armscor, Mr Kevin Wakeford, officially hands over the mobile laboratories to rural learners.



Minister of Defence, Ms. Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula delivers her keynote address at the handover event