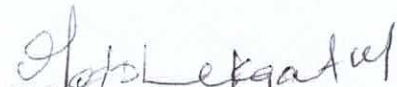


- (4) The current severe crisis within the SA Navy is due to capacity challenges of the Armscor Dockyard that has led to annual Maintenance Upkeep Programme as well as the Hull Available Programme not being executed as is required. Additionally, the SA Navy has in presentations and correspondence to the Portfolio Committee of Defence and National Council of Province's reported that the underfunding of the SA Navy's Refit and Mid Life Upgrade Programme of its Strategic Defence Acquisition Programme Vessel(s) will result in the SA Navy not having the required operational vessels available at the Directed Level of Capability. The planned deployment to Cuba will add much needed long range blue water deployment experience to the SAS DRAKENSBERG's crew members of which will benefit the SA Navy in the immediate short term as well as in the medium and long term. To reiterate, the SA Navy utilised a number of different Force Preparation methods to prepare South African naval ships to be at the Directed Level of Capability to be deployed on Border Safeguarding and Piracy Patrol(s) / Deployment(s). One such method is South African naval ships been deployed under Internal / External Continental Deployment(s) East or West, as part of Internationally Recognised Naval Diplomatic Deployments to show the Republic of South Africa's national flag in foreign ports, also gain much needed blue water sailing experience, when a ship transit through international waters to and from foreign ports, much needed operational experiences are obtained for the duration of the deployment. When the ship arrives in a foreign port, multi-national joint exercises normally forms part of the deployment with the operational benefits thereof being extremely beneficial for the ships company as well as the South African Navy because SA Navy members will on return reinvest the experience and knowledge gained during the deployment back in to the SA Navy "community / family".

Approved/Not Approved

  
(A.M. MOTSHEKGA)

MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: MS

Date: 02.10.2024