



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Hon. A. T. Didiza
Speaker of the National Assembly
Houses of Parliament
CAPE TOWN

Hon. R. Mtshweni-Tsipane
Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces
Houses of Parliament
CAPE TOWN

By e-mail

Dear Madam Speaker,

MILITARY PARADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

With reference to the upcoming State of the Nation Address (SONA) and the related military parade and display, scheduled for 6 February 2025.

We understand that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) plans on proceeding with the traditional military parade, display, and fly-over in the run-up to the President's address.

Given the nature of the current tragedy unfolding in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and out of respect for our troops on the front lines, we strongly urge a significant scaling-down of the plans to display South Africa's military power at the SONA celebrations. Indeed, we would request that the intended fly-over by the South African Air Force be cancelled in its entirety, to curb the use of critical military resources in a time crisis for the SANDF.

It cannot be that while our soldiers are dying on foreign soil, woefully lacking in critical support and resources, ill-prepared, and unequipped for their mission, dignitaries at home are entertained by displays of futile military ceremony. This is not a time for celebration, but for reflection and introspection, and South Africans deserve better.

The current situation among our soldiers in the DRC simply does not warrant a pompous presentation of our military capabilities and the continuation thereof would be nothing less than grossly disrespectful to our soldiers facing senseless hardship abroad.

We look forward to your response hereto.

Sincerely,

Mr G Michalakis MP
Chief Whip of the Democratic Alliance