



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS

Republic of South Africa

22 January 2023

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS ON THE NAVAL EXERCISE TO BE HOSTED BY SOUTH AFRICA

The Republic of South Africa will host the People's Liberation Army Navy from China and the Russian Federal Navy during the multilateral maritime exercise scheduled to take place from the 17th to the 27th February 2023. Known as Exercise Mosi II (Two), this maritime exercise will take place in Durban and Richards Bay in KwaZulu-Natal.

This will be the second time such an exercise will be taking place involving the three naval forces with the first one held in November 2019 in Cape Town. This year's Exercise MOSI II will see over 350 SANDF personnel from various Arms of Services and Divisions participating alongside their Russian and Chinese counterparts.

Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Thandi Modise, is confident that Exercise MOSI II will benefit all three participating nations. "The envisaged exercise will benefit all countries involved through Interoperability of the naval systems, joint disaster systems management enhancement, maritime cooperation and anti-piracy exercises". In addition, Exercise MOSI II will serve as a platform for the three nations to share operational skills, expertise and experience.

The Republic of South Africa enjoys diplomatic relations with all member states of BRICS (Brazil, Russia and China) at a bilateral level, in addition to the multilateral levels. We also enjoy defence diplomatic relations with several countries across all the continents of the world since we have become an integral part of the community of nations and no longer a pariah state.

In recent months, we have had engagements with counterparts in the United Kingdom, the People's Republic of China, Nigeria, Cote d'Voire and Ghana, to mention but a few. There was no hype about any of these countries, especially with regard to the USA wherein we held an even longer exercise, known as Exercise Shared ACCORD in KwaZulu-Natal last year regarding our military health capabilities.

The SANDF plans and budgets for military exercises with other nations across the globe, both at bilateral and multilateral levels. Exercise MOSI II is no exception, including the Exercise Shared ACCORD we held with our USA armed forces counterparts. In addition, the biennial maritime Exercise Oxide between South Africa and France took place in November last year at the Simon's Town Naval Base.

We wish to state categorically that South Africa, like any independent and sovereign state, has a right to conduct its foreign relations in line with its own diplomatic relations and national interests. South Africa sees Exercise MOSI II as an opportunity to contribute towards further strengthening the strong bonds that exist between South Africa, Russia and China.

Contrary to the assertions by our critics, South Africa is not abandoning its neutral position on the Russian-Ukraine conflict. We remain firm in our view that multilateralism and dialogue are keys to unlock sustainable international peace. We continue to urge both parties to engage in dialogue as a solution to the current conflict.

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