



the sandf

Department:
Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: Saturday, 25 January 2025

EMBARGO: For Immediate Release

SUBJECT: **THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE AND COUNTERPARTS PUSH BACK THE M23 ADVANCE TOWARDS GOMA IN THE EASTERN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

After two days of fierce fighting with the M23 rebel group in the eastern DRC, the South African contingent and its counterparts were able to halt the advancement of the rebel group towards Goma, the provincial capital of the eastern DRC. The M23 hostile forces had launched a full-scale attack on our troops with the intention of taking over Goma but were unable to advance due to the heroic resistance put up by our gallant fighters. Our forces were not only able to halt the M23 advancement but were able to push them back. The intention of the M23, amongst others, is also to take over the city of Goma, but it met with heavy resistance from the SANDF contingent, which managed to prevent them from proceeding into Goma.

In the course of this gallant resistance against M23 rebels, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) lost nine (9) members by Friday, 24 January 2025, after two days of fierce fighting. Seven (7) of these members were part of the South African contingent deployed in the eastern DRC in December 2023 as part of the 16-member regional bloc SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (SAMIDRC) and two (2) members were from MONUSCO. The number of injured is still to be confirmed, however a few suffered various degrees of injuries. The members put up a brave fight to prevent the rebels from proceeding to Goma as was their intention and were pushed back by the RSA contingent.

The process of informing families of the deceased members is currently underway.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Angie Motshekga, the Deputy Ministers of Defence and Military Veterans, Maj Gen (ret) Bantu Holomisa and Mr Richard Hlophe, together with the Acting Secretary for Defence, Dr Thobekile Gamede and the Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Rudzani Maphwanya send their heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and the entire defence family.

ENDS.

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