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CHAIRPERSON: Good morning. Advocate Mphaga, Ms Ramagaga, Advocate Zondi, it's your turn today to present the evidence or to lead the witness to present evidence. Can I ask you to tell you who the witness is going to be and thereafter
5 the witness will have to take an oath.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Chair, the witness that our team will be leading today is General Shoke, he is the Chief of the South African National Defence Force and General Shoke is ready to proceed. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON: Can the General take the oath?

(Witness is sworn in.)

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Chairperson. The evidence of this witness is going to be led from bundle P and that bundle is
15 before the Commissioners. There will be no other document or bundle that the Chair would have to refer to during the presentation of evidence and during the course of evidence there will come a time when a video and some clips will have to be presented in the form of evidence and when that time comes
20 we shall indicate to the Commission and perhaps ask for a short adjournment so that we may be able to set up properly for the presentation of that evidence.

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CHIEF OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE

WITNESS : GENERAL SOLLY ZACHARIA SHOKE (Hereinafter referred to as "GENL SHOKE"), GIVES EVIDENCE UNDER OATH

5 **EXAMINATION IN CHIEF:**

MS RAMAGAGA: General Shoke, you are the Chief of the South African National Defence Force of South Africa.

GENL SHOKE: Yes.

10 MS RAMAGAGA: And you have made a written statement to the Commission in order to assist the Commission in execution of its mandate.

GENL SHOKE: That's correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: And it is correct that you have voluntarily attended this hearing in order to assist the Commission?

15 GENL SHOKE: That's correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now there is your CV which is attached to your statement. Is it correct Sir?

GENL SHOKE: That's correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: And that ...

20 CHAIRPERSON: I'm sorry Ms Ramagaga, just in passing, I think this is one of the shortest CV's that I've ever seen.

MS RAMAGAGA: Yes Chair, in actual fact the general is quite modest and has, much as even those that presented evidence before him wanted to keep their CV as brief as possible we were able to twist their arms and make them

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present those CV's in the manner that they have. With the Chief Chair, we could not succeed and the Chief has seriously indicated that he would rather spend time doing work related to the Defence Force elsewhere and much as he has volunteered to present evidence but he has said with regard to the *Curriculum Vitae* he prefers that he doesn't talk a lot about himself, maybe that is the training or what have you but that is his preference Chair.

CHAIRPERSON: I agree, you have failed to persuade him because I see the CV has got only nine lines.

MS RAMAGAGA: May I proceed then Chair? Chief, I'd like to focus your attention to page 7 of bundle P where you find your *Curriculum Vitae*. It is correct Sir that you were born in Alexandra township where you were raised?

GENL SHOKE: That's correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: And you joined the Liberation Movement after the Soweto Uprisings and when I talk about the Soweto Uprisings we are talking about the uprisings that took place during or around 1976.

GENL SHOKE: That's correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: And you received your general training in Angola and the USSR and you completed your Intermediate Staff Course in Zimbabwe.

GENL SHOKE: That's correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: You attended the Senior Command and

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Staff Duties Course and Joint Command and Staff Course at the South African Army College.

GENL SHOKE: Army College and Defence College.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Sir. And you have also served
5 in the South African Army as the Director Personnel Planning,
the Director Integration, the Director Personnel Acquisition, the
Chief Director Human Resources Support and then the Chief of
the South African Army which position you are currently
holding.

10 GENL SHOKE: No let me just correct you, I'm the Chief of
National Defence Force. I was Chief of the Army before I
became Chief of the National Defence Force.

MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you Sir and sorry about that,
my apologies. Now will you please explain to the Commission
15 as to what the duties of the Director Personnel Planning entail?

GENL SHOKE: The duties by then they entailed total human
resource planning, that is in terms of acquisition and then the
numbers, the attrition and so forth and that you link that in fact
to the budgetary requirement.

20 MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you. And then will you also
inform the Commission as to what your position as a Director
Integration was concerned with?

GENL SHOKE: At that time you'll recall that in South Africa we
had to integrate seven opposing forces, so I was responsible
25 for that in the South African Army, to bring all the former

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forces together to form one national Army, Defence Force that we have today.

MS RAMAGAGA: So the presently integrated army which has now become one army can no longer be referred to as the integrated army, was done under your directorship?

GENL SHOKE: In the Army yes, I was part of a collective that was responsible in bringing all forces together.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Sir. Shall you then please also inform the Commission as to what your position as the Director Personnel Acquisition entailed?

GENL SHOKE: Well, as Director Personnel Acquisition it entailed really recruiting personnel that's appropriate for the South African National Defence Force, at that point in time we were doing recruitment for all four arms of the service, that is the Army, the Air Force, the Navy and the Medics.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you. And as Chief Director Human Resources Support, will you please inform the Commission as to what your responsibilities were?

GENL SHOKE: At that time I can say I was the key staff officer or advisor to the then-Chief of the National Defence Force on human resource matters, particularly in the execution of the human resource.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Sir, and you also held the position of the Chief of the South African Army, will you please explain to the Commission as to what position entailed?

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GENL SHOKE: Well, that position, if I simplify it is that I was a commander of all ground forces. It entailed that actually I've got to train the personnel appropriately, equip it appropriately and provide the forces for operations.

5 MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you. And on the 1st day of June 2011 you were promoted to the rank of general and the Chief of the South African National Defence Force which position you also currently hold. Can you just explain to the Commission as to what your responsibilities are in that
10 position?

GENL SHOKE: Well, in the position that I hold I can say I'm the commander of the entire force that is responsible for the defence of RSA. I'm the principal advisor to the Minister as far as military policy are concerned with the responsibility to issue
15 out directives to my subordinate commanders, I'm responsible for the air, ground, maritime and health services of the Defence Force and I execute those functions through the respective chiefs of services, that is Chief of the Army who is responsible for the ground forces, Chief of the Air Force who is responsible
20 to ensure that our airspace is protected, Chief of the Navy who is responsible for our maritime security and chief, sorry the Surgeon-General who is responsible for the wellbeing of our soldiers and also to ensure that South Africans are protected from chemical and biological chemical attacks.

25 MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Sir. It is correct that as Chief

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of the South African National Defence Force you exercise the military executive command of the SANDF subject to the directions of the Minister of Defence and during a state of national defence under the President.

5 GENL SHOKE: That is correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: It is also correct that you are a member of Council for Defence?

GENL SHOKE: That is correct.

10 MS RAMAGAGA: Will you inform the Commission about other, or positions that you hold in other councils and also indicate as to what position you hold.

GENL SHOKE: Well, I can start by saying that I am a member of the Council of Defence which is a statutory body that is chaired by the Minister of Defence, it consists of the Minister of Defence, the Deputy Minister of Defence, the Secretary of Defence and myself. That council is the council that advises the Minister on matters of policy and also how to oversee the Department of Defence.

20 And then we've got the Plenary Defence Staff Council which actually I co-chair with the Secretary for Defence and mainly the Plenary Defence Staff Council, that's where we coordinate policies of the Department of Defence. Then we do also have a Daily Defence Staff Council which meet every Monday but mainly that one is for the purpose of coordinating our activities between myself and the Secretary for Defence.

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Then I've got the Military Command Council which I chair and that's where I exercise command on the South African National Defence Force, it consists of the four service chiefs and then other divisional chiefs as well, that is Chief of actually Operations, Chief of Logistics, Chief of Human
5 Resource and the Chief of Corporate Services.

MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you. And General, would you like to inform the Commission about the medals and/or awards that have been conferred to you?

10 GENL SHOKE: Normally I don't like to talk about the awards but it's alright. OMBG is an Order of Mendi, Bravery in Gold. SBS is Star of Bravery in Silver. MMS is Military Merit in Silver and then OMS is a decoration that I was given by the Brazilian Defence Force when I visit Brazil, that's the highest
15 order that they give to a visiting chief if they recognise him or acknowledge him.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you General. I'd now like to take you back to page 1 of your statement. Now it is correct that the South African National Defence Force was established in
20 terms of Section 199(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, that is the, and which states that the security services of the Republic of South Africa should consist of a single defence force.

GENL SHOKE: That is correct.

25 MS RAMAGAGA: And can you inform the Commission about

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the mandate as to where does the South African Defence Force derive its mandate, I'm asking this question well aware of the fact that some of the witnesses that you have testified have touched on the subject but you are required to present information by virtue of the position that you hold.

GENL SHOKE: Well, we derive our mandate from the Constitution of South Africa, Section 202 of 1996. The primary objective of the Defence Force is to protect the Republic of South Africa, its territorial integrity, its people in accordance with the Constitution of South Africa.

MS RAMAGAGA: And will you further inform the Commission about your appointment as the Chief of the South African National Defence Force? Chief, ...

GENL SHOKE: Sorry.

MS RAMAGAGA: Yes, thank you. Will you also inform the Commission about your appointment as the Chief of the Defence Force, as to what statutory provisions enable your appointment as such.

GENL SHOKE: Well, I am appointed in the terms of Section 2(2) of the Constitution of The Republic of South Africa.

MS RAMAGAGA: Sir, it is correct that the Constitution also provides for a legislation in terms of which the South African Defence Force should be established and you as the Chief of the Defence Force you derive your functions from Section 14 of the Defence Act 42/2002. Can you independently just indicate

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to this court, to this Commission as to what your functions are.

GENL SHOKE: Like I said earlier on I'm the principal advisor to the Minister of Defence on military, operational and (indistinct) matters within my competency as the Chief of the South African Defence Force. I should also comply with directives from the Ministry of Defence under the authority of the President. I'm responsible for formulating military policy. I'm responsible for giving orders, directives and instructions to my subordinate commanders, I'm responsible to ensure that members of the Defence Force are appropriately trained and equipped. Well, there's a whole range of activities, I think those are the primary ones and of course which is of fundamental importance I'm responsible to ensure that we've got a disciplined defence force that all South Africans can have confidence in.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you General. The South African National Defence Force is required to perform its functions and exercise its powers solely in the national interest, can you elaborate on that requirement of exercise of powers solely in the national interest?

GENL SHOKE: Well, in short when you exercise powers solely in the national interest that implies that we cannot do anything that is outside, that is unconstitutional, we should abide by the law and ensure that we are respected and the citizens of this country are protected.

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MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you. Will you inform the Commission as to how would you be able to ensure that the Defence Force fulfills its primary mandate, what is required for you to be able to fulfill that mandate?

5 GENL SHOKE: In order for us to be able to fulfill our mandate I can say we must first be appropriately and adequately trained, have enough manpower to execute a function and as well ensure that we are adequately equipped to maintain, to fulfill our mandate as required by the Constitution
10 of South Africa.

MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you. You have indicated amongst others that the, one of the elements required for you to be able to execute your mandate, that is the mandate of the SANDF appropriately is equipment, you have to be properly and
15 adequately equipped. Now the Government of South African acquired certain armaments through the SDPP process and you being the Chief of the Defence Force, are you able to indicate as to whether the equipment that has been since purchased through the SDPP's is necessary equipment or not and please
20 when you answer to this question elaborate adequately so that the Commission can have a clear picture especially with regard to the need or otherwise of that equipment.

GENL SHOKE: Well that question I'll answer it, first I will say no, I will answer it not as the Chief of the Defence Force but
25 as a professional soldier, that actually any soldier in order for

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him or her to be able to be effective he need to have confidence in the equipment that is at his disposal because these are men and women who sometimes, should the need arise, they pay the supreme sacrifice. From that point of view
5 I would like to say yes, this equipment in fact that was bought was necessary and it's still necessary for us as soldiers to be able to execute our tasks because we need to have state of the art equipment and have confidence in the equipment that we use.

10 And then I must also maybe clarify this issue that the equipment, I'm assuming that the equipment that they are talking about, we are talking about the equipment that was bought for the Air Force and the Navy?

MS RAMAGAGA: That is correct Sir, I'm talking about that
15 equipment that was purchased for the two arms of service.

GENL SHOKE: It is unfortunate that maybe we only talk about the Navy and the Air Force, we also have the workhorse of this Defence Force which is the South African Army which in my own opinion still needs to be equipped. Then we've got the
20 medical service SAMS, which in my own opinion as well still need to be equipped. When we go to operations, that is peace support operations, border protection and so on, at the forefront it is the SA Army and I can say to this Commission they need equipment.

25 MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Sir, you have indicated that the

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armament was actually necessary. You are aware or you should be aware of the fact that there are allegations of wrongdoing in the process of acquisition of that armament, those armaments. Do you have any comment especially in relation to your statement that look at the equipment, talking as a professional soldier you are of the view that the equipment was and is necessary?

GENL SHOKE: I think as South Africans we should begin to make a distinction between wrongdoing and the need of the Defence Force. If there are allegations that there's wrongdoing in the acquisition of armaments okay good enough, let those in fact who believe that there is something wrong bring it to the fore and I'm glad that there's this Commission, but that does not nullify the fact that we need to be armed as a defence force in order for us to be able to execute our constitutional mandate, so there must be that distinction and then I think also I would like maybe also to put clear before this Commission that we should not put the lives of our own soldiers solely based in fact that this thing that there was wrongdoing that other side, not taking into consideration that this equipment, military hardware is like a pen to a clerk in an office, when you go to your office use a pen, I will use guns, warships, name them, those are our implements of work and that is what people must understand that if you want to have an army, a defence force you must also equip it, and to run a defence force does

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not come cheap.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you General. The evidence that has been presented before the Commission thus far relates to the equipment that was purchased for the Air Force as well as the Navy respectively and the evidence is to the effect that at the time of acquisition there was a need either to replace the existing equipment or to beef up in relation to the existing equipment and in particular we were told about the submarines, the Corvette's, the different aircraft and further information that the Commission has been given is to the effect that even prior to the SDPP acquisition or the establishment of this process that we commonly refer to as the SDPP a need to replace armament had already been identified. Do you have any comment in relation to that evidence that has been presented?

GENL SHOKE: Well, the only thing that I can point out that at the time when the SDP's, a decision was taken to equip the Air Force it was decided that the Army will follow later, so hence actually earlier on I did mention the fact that we in this country, we've got a workhorse which is the Army, so we did get equipment, in my own opinion it is still yet enough particularly if you look at the responsibility that we have as the South African National Defence Force. I think I did submit in my evidence the map to demonstrate the level of responsibility that we have in ensuring that we protect the citizens of this

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country and the economic wealth of this country.

MS RAMAGAGA: Chief, what would happen if the South African Defence Force were to lose their capabilities, in fact the equipment that it acquired through the South African, through the SDPP's?

GENL SHOKE: I think it is unthinkable because the consequences will be too ghastly for me to contemplate, but what I can tell this country is that if we are to lose what we have it means we'll have lost capabilities to ensure that we protect this country adequately and then we will be failing in the execution of our constitutional mandate and then this country will be vulnerable to act as a deterrent for would-be, mischievous elements both externally and internally.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now you have made reference to the responsibilities of, the area of responsibility of the South African National Defence Force and you also mentioned that there is a map that forms part of your pack, and we shall come to the map later but for now can you explain to this Commission as to whether the responsibilities of the South African Defence Force does, do go as further as dealing with the criminal activities relating to the marine, such as piracy and so forth, there are several different other criminal activities that could be performed, could be committed and also indicate to this Commission as to whether the armaments have any meaning, meaningful use especially in relation to the marine economy of

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South Africa.

GENL SHOKE: I don't think maybe I'll delve much into that thing because I assume that my colleagues in the Navy did touch on the subject, we are heavily involved at sea, it was not
5 a secret that we participate in the Mozambican Channel to ensure that we prevent piracy from coming down to our shores, we are involved in (indistinct) but we patrol the sea to ensure that there is no illegal activity at sea, we do get involved in sea rescue operations and a whole range of other activities at
10 sea, my colleagues have covered that at length.

MS RAMAGAGA: General will you please inform the Commission about the geostrategic importance of South Africa.

GENL SHOKE: On the geostrategic importance of South Africa I think you can trace it back to the time when Jan Van Riebeeck
15 and Vasco Da Gama came in into the continent, that's when in fact it was realised but we've got both the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean and South Africa is at that route, it's an economic route to the rest of the world and particularly more especially that now given the fact that in the Gulf of Eden there's a lot of
20 piracy happening, more ships are now using the Cape sea route to do economy with the rest of the world or to trade, that's the appropriate word.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you General. Now will you please inform the Commission as to what would have been the
25 consequences if South Africa had not acquired these assets

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that is particularly the equipment that was acquired through the SDPP's?

GENL SHOKE: Well, if we did not acquire this equipment it means we wouldn't be having the capability that we have to ensure that we keep our shores safer.

MS RAMAGAGA: Talking about safety General we are informed, in fact I think it's in the public domain that many out there are criticising the acquisition through the SDPP's on amongst others the basis that there is no threat of war and as a result it was not necessary for South Africa to acquire the equipment that it acquired through the SDPP's and another reason that is advanced is that there are dire socioeconomic ills that should have been prioritised as against the security of the country by way of acquisition of this armament.

GENL SHOKE: I think I would like to say I don't subscribe to the theory that there's no threat because you know this world is fluid, today you've got a friend, tomorrow a friend can become your enemy. And threats, they come in different ways, maybe we can say there's no threat, immediate threat to South Africa but that cannot, we cannot guarantee that there will never be a threat to South Africa in the future and then coming from the military in military you prepare yourself for the future.

You know I can say the military is like your insurance, when you go to an insurance company and you take an insurance to ensure your health, you won't want to die, you

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take insurance, you die. You take insurance to protect yourself so that should anything happen that you are protected, so when you buy equipment you take that equipment as an insurance, actually this is an insurance for the people of South Africa so
5 that should there be any threat we should be able to repel such a threat.

Then when you've got equipment as well it acts as a deterrent, actually if truth is to be told we don't want war and then if you don't want war you must be able to deter would-be
10 enemies from attacking you. That's a simple concept, I'm sure most of you here in your houses, either you've got a dog, an alarm or a (indistinct) that is in to deter would-be criminals to come and break into your house, so we are the watchdogs of this country.

15 MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you General. Among the critics there are those that are also advocating for the option of concluding military pacts with other countries and thus having the Republic of South Africa depending on other countries in the event, in the event of war. Can you comment on that
20 criticism?

GENL SHOKE: Maybe if you could repeat your question properly so that I can understand it. Do you imply that we must ask other countries to come and defend us?

25 MS RAMAGAGA: Yes General, there are those that believe that it is actually not even necessary for South Africa to have a

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defence force and that is where the suggestion of the conclusion of military packs come into play and to simplify it I would say the suggestion is that whilst is that South Africa can do without the Defence Force and in the event of a need of assistance by a Defence Force the agreement with any particular chosen country or countries should be invoked so that those countries or country can assist South Africa. Do you have a comment on that?

GENL SHOKE: You know Ma'am, maybe my comment will be that you know Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland were former British protectorates, they had to go to the British to ask for independence. So, by implication that will imply that we'll be saying as South Africa please come and colonise us, I think that is unthinkable.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now at the time when we were talking about the claim that there is no need for the equipment because there is no threat of military attack you indicated that amongst others the responsibilities of the Defence Force is that there should be the capabilities to deal with any threat that may eventualise and you are not even sure as to whether that statement is correct. Now you did in the beginning also talk about your responsibility to ensure that the forces are ready, that is your responsibility relating to the force readiness. Can you inform this Commission as to on average how long does it take to train the soldiers to a point that you can see they are

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now ready for employment as soldiers. I am cognisant of the fact that you operate a higher level as the Chief of the Defence Force but, however, I also believe that you can be able to assist this Commission about the information relying on estimates.

GENL SHOKE: If you talk of the training of a soldier, how long it takes to train a soldier I'll say that it depends because we groom our own team, we don't recruit people from outside, we start them from scratch. If you are a troop you will be ready after two years and then as you go through the ranks actually now there are building blocks. To become a colonel in the Defence Force also you should have at least spent almost 20 years of service or so and then of course a number of courses that you have to undertake because each and every level there are certain competency requirements that you have to comply with before you can go to the next rank and then you should be able also to operate the equipment at different levels that we use within the Defence Force and it is how you grow in rank usually the more now complicated it becomes because you should be able to integrate the systems, so it will operate, I can say defence actually at what level does a person operate.

And then coming to equipment as well is the same, acquiring equipment there are a lot of studies that are involved until you come to the decision whether you buy commercially off the shelf or you go the production route. So average really

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I can say when it comes to equipment if you are to bring your equipment in service it's between 7 to 15 years. Maybe a typical example is what, the matter that we are discussing right now, the final delivery of the equipment that we are discussing
5 about was delivered towards the end of 2010 and then a decision was taken around 1999.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now from the explanation that you have given General does it mean that if South Africa did not have the capabilities that we have now and in the event of the
10 military threat arising it would mean that a lot of time would be required for the training and making the forces ready to attack or to defend the Republic of South Africa.

GENL SHOKE: You know, our philosophy in the military is that you train hard during peace time so that you should bleed less
15 in times of war. So, if war comes and then you can give me any equipment and what have you, that will be too late because when you acquire you just don't get into an equipment and operate it, you must train with that equipment and make it be part of your doctrine, so that will be a terrible mistake if we
20 say that we'll buy military hardware once actually we've got a threat. And the best way to do actually is to deter any possible threat so that there should not be any threat.

MS RAMAGAGA: We have heard through the witnesses that have presented evidence before you were called General that
25 South Africa has adopted the approach of operating within

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balanced force. Now you have already indicated to the Commission that there are four arms of service within the South African National Defence Force and the evidence presented thus far is that the equipment that was acquired was
5 acquired for the Air Force and the Navy respectively. Can you comment as to how the Defence Force would be able to achieve the concept or could be able to put the concept of a balanced force in operation in the circumstances.

GENL SHOKE: Sorry, can you repeat the question Madam?

10 MS RAMAGAGA: We have heard through evidence that has already been presented that South Africa has adopted the approach of maintaining a balanced force, now a balanced force will be a balanced force in relation to the four arms of service, and we have also heard that through the SDPP's, the
15 equipment that was acquired was acquired for the Air Force as well as the Navy only and maybe I should add on to say from the Force Design that was presented the need to also arm the other arms of service was identified and articulated through the Force Design. Now bearing in mind that the acquisition was
20 done only for the two arms of service the question that I'm asking is how are you able to achieve the implementation of the balanced force approach that has been adopted?

GENL SHOKE: Well, like I said earlier on that we've got an Army which is the workhorse of this Defence Force and also
25 ties with the Military Health Services which also need to be

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equipped. At the time when this equipment was acquired it was envisaged that the Army will be equipped later and then as I speak to you this is a matter really that we are working on and it is a matter that we also, we gave inputs on, on the current
5 Defence Review that is being worked on.

MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you. Earlier on General you have made mention of the fact that the area of responsibility of South Africa is better captured in the map that is attached in your statement and that map does appear on page 8 of your
10 statement. Shall you please turn over to that page, page 8 of the bundle. Now is it correct that the map that is attached to the statement indicates the borders of South Africa with the neighbouring countries?

GENL SHOKE: That is correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now it does show the distances of the respective borders in relation to the land and the coast, is it correct?

GENL SHOKE: Correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: Sir, will you please take the Commission
20 through this map with specific reference to the borders as this map relates to the borders and including even the islands in respect of which South Africa does have responsibility?

GENL SHOKE: Well, I attached this map first of all to demonstrate the level of responsibility that we have as the
25 South African National Defence Force. First of all I

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demonstrated the land borders and also the coastline of South Africa, the land border is 4 471 kilometres. By implication is that is the area where the South African Army since as you are all aware that we are now going back to borders to ensure that we protect our borders is the level of the area that we'll have to ensure that they patrol and ensure that it's secured.

Then when it comes to the coastal line also it's close to 3 000 kilometres, 2 900-plus, it stretches from the border with Namibia to the border of Mozambique which includes actually both the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean and then that actually also it was to indicate to this Commission the level of responsibility that our Navy has, then you also, beyond that we also have now what we call an exclusive economic zone which I think my colleagues have touched on and it's an area that we should ensure that we protect because that's where our marine economy thrive on.

And then as South Africa, I know that many South Africans are not aware that South Africa has some islands, we've got the Marion Islands which are part of South Africa that we also have the responsibility to protect.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now is it correct Sir that the acquired equipment does also assist in protecting the borders of South Africa extending even to the islands that belong to South Africa?

GENL SHOKE: That is correct but I will also go beyond and

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tell you that like I said earlier on that as I speak to you right now the South African Navy is deployed somewhere in the Mozambican Channel so as to ensure that piracy that is happening in the east coast does not come down on our region, so we are helping the Mozambican, we are patrolling the Mozambican and the Tanzanian Navy and then also have the west coast that we have to ensure that we patrol as well.

MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you Sir. Shall you then go back to page 4 of the statement. Now the responsibilities of the South African Air Force relate to the land, the air as well as the seas, can you just take us through that, inform the Commission about the responsibilities of the South African Air Force in respect of the three, the sea, the land and the air.

GENL SHOKE: Well, the South African Air Force has a responsibility first of all to help, to protect our air space, they've got to monitor that and be able to challenge any threat that we may experience in the air, but they also have the responsibility to support the South African Army in terms of projecting the Army over distances and also to give them air support as and when it is necessary. At sea they have got also now to act as a force multiplier to support the South African Navy to be able to detect any possible threat or wrongdoing over a long distance.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now focusing our attention on the equipment that was acquired through the SDPP's would you say

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whether that equipment is actually being used to execute these functions of protecting the air space, the land as well as the waters of South Africa?

GENL SHOKE: I think that equipment is being effectively used
5 and that in fact can be demonstrated by major events that have taken place in this country, they were able to take place because we were able to protect South Africa effectively. I think the people have touched on the 2010 World Cup, the World Economic Forums, there are many events that have taken
10 place and that are still to take place that where in fact this Defence Force plays a major role, first of all as a deterrent and actively also in showing, executing their task sometimes in conjunction with the Police to ensure that the citizens of this country are safe.

15 MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you General. Now I'd like you to focus your attention on the obligations arising from the international relations that South Africa has with other countries, as well as the obligations arising from the United Nations in relation to the responsibilities of the South African
20 National Defence Force.

GENL SHOKE: First of all I think I must start by saying the Defence Force is subordinated to the political authority of this country and this country is part of SADC, is part of the AU, is part of the United Nations, it belongs to the (indistinct) and the
25 other international forums, so as a result of that from the

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military point of view we are also now part of SADC, we are part of the AU and we are part of the United Nations. In SADC we work jointly with our SADC defence forces, we work jointly actually with the African defence forces through the AU and then we are part of AU through the UN peace missions and then we do participate as and when we are ordered by the political authority to participate in some of these international operations.

And bilaterally we have relationships with a number of countries and then we do from time to time conduct joint exercises with such defence forces. Like recently the Air Force was involved in Angola with other air forces in the region, they were participating in an air force exercise and I'm sure you are aware that this continent is divided according to the (indistinct) and SADC is one of them and then we are required by the (indistinct) to have the SADC standby force ready, so from time to time as SADC we do participate in joint exercises and as I speak to you right now there's also an exercise of the Special Forces of the region taking place in Namibia, we do that so that together what is required by the AU we should be able to act as one and be able to execute any mission that the AU may give to SADC.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Sir. Can you indicate to the Commission as to whether in your discharge of obligations towards the international community the equipment acquired

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through the SDPP's is ever used or not?

GENL SHOKE: Can you repeat your question Ma'am?

MS RAMAGAGA: Can you indicate to the Commission as to whether in execution of your duties and discharge of your obligations towards the international community in terms of the treaties that you might have concluded and the charters that you might have signed, can you indicate as to whether in execution of those duties whether the equipment acquired through the SDPP's is ever used?

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GENL SHOKE: Maybe let me just clarify the issue of usage of equipment. You see, when we say now we use fully the equipment that we have at our disposal the implication of that, it means there's war, that's when the full use of that equipment will be utilised and I don't think we'd love or like to be at that stage, but we do use equipment when we train joint exercise like I indicated to you right now that recently the Air Force was in Angola and Special Forces are in Namibia to do joint exercise. We do use equipment for training but full utilisation of this equipment that means there's war and that's the wrong way.

MS RAMAGAGA: So my understanding from the response is that the equipment would be used not necessarily optimally because it could only be used optimally if there is war.

GENL SHOKE: No well, we use it optimally during training.
25 That's optimal use of equipment and that's how defence forces

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operate internationally. You use it for training because the main purpose of this equipment like your insurance policy, it kicks in when you've got an accident, with us our equipment kicks in, we take it all out when there's war.

5 MS RAMAGAGA: Right.

GENL SHOKE: Or operations like you might have, I think there's a video clip in that I submitted to you. You will recall that in Mozambique and even in Limpopo when there were floods we had to, we were making collateral usage of our
10 equipment.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you General. Shall we then now proceed to deal with the Defence Review generally and actually also taking into consideration the Defence Review that was adopted in 1998. Evidence has been presented before the
15 Commission that the 1998 Defence Review adoption was preceded by extensive consultative process and as a result of that Defence Review the force designs and so forth were then developed. Now it is quite some time that this Defence Review was adopted and can you indicate to this Commission as to
20 whether since the adoption of that Defence Review, whether there are any developments, especially in relation to looking at the needs of the capabilities of the Defence Force.

GENL SHOKE: Yes, I can indicate to you that there are the developments since the 1998 Defence Review, the situation has
25 changed drastically, the review of 1998 I'm of the opinion that

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it need to be reviewed and there's a team that was appointed by the department to drive that process, the team is led by Mr Roelf Meyer because we believe that now the conditions have changed drastically and we need a Defence Review that will be now relevant to the changed environment and as a Defence Force we have also made our inputs with regard to the Defence Review because the situation has changed and that document is there for the public to comment and then we'll take it from there.

10 MS RAMAGAGA: General, one of the Terms of Reference of the Commission is cancellation of the contracts that were concluded in procurement of the equipment that was acquired through the SDPP's. Now can you inform the Commission as to what would happen if the contracts were to be cancelled and
15 I'm asking you this because if the contracts were to be cancelled that would involve returning the equipment to the suppliers and claiming the refund from the suppliers amongst other things.

GENL SHOKE: Well, the cancellation of contracts I think will
20 have a number of implications for this country and for the Defence Force, first of all it means we'll lose the capabilities that we have and secondly we should take into consideration that South Africa plays a very important role within the international community and then if we go that route I'm of the
25 opinion that actually there can be a breakdown of trust between

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South Africa and the affected countries and other defence forces because we'll be sending a message that we are unreliable and that in itself can take South Africa back to some form of isolation because there's nobody who would like to enter into any contract with someone who is unreliable.

MS RAMAGAGA: Right, now if the contracts were to be cancelled what implications would it have to the skill that has since been acquired by the Defence Force? Chief, the skill that has been acquired by the Defence Force, that is through training of the soldiers and so forth.

GENL SHOKE: Well, if contracts are cancelled I don't see it will impact negatively on the skills because nobody can take knowledge from you but the fact of the matter is we'll lose the capability, that will mean you will have an engineer who will sit and do nothing and that in fact might have some demoralising effects on men and women in uniform.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now the responsibility to protect and defend South Africans is a responsibility that is derived from the Constitution of the country, now if the contracts were to be cancelled what impact would it have towards the South African National Defence Force discharging its mandate that is prescribed by the Constitution?

GENL SHOKE: Well, I think the implication of that is that if it is cancelled we'd be not able to fulfill our mandate because we need equipment to be able to execute our tasks.

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MS RAMAGAGA: Now we have been informed by witnesses that testified before you came General that when this equipment was acquired it was not just acquired over the shelf or from the shelf, there are specifications that had to be done
5 by the South African National Defence Force with main contributions coming from the different arms of service. Now bearing that in mind if the contracts were to be cancelled and the equipment were to be returned to the suppliers how would, or what route would South Africa have to take in order to
10 reequip itself with the armaments?

GENL SHOKE: Well I'm not sure really what route South Africa will take to reequip itself with the armaments but what I can say to acquire military hardware it is a long process, you have touched in fact on user requirement specifications, that will
15 mean that we will have to go back to the drawing board and start the whole process from afresh which actually takes years because we've got to conduct research and so on and then I doubt if ever there will be any other country that will entertain us if we may cancel this thing because how will they know that
20 we will not cancel again. So the implications will be that we will be vulnerable as a nation.

MS RAMAGAGA: Now General, you have indicated that it would take some time before South Africa could be ready to actually acquire because that should be preceded by the
25 process which includes the studies, we have been informed that

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there would be some feasibility studies, there would be project studies, there would be those documents, the user requirement documents and so forth and from the evidence that has been presented to the Commission it has become clear that it does
5 take quite some time only dealing with the approvals of the documents before even the real acquisition is done, identifying the required capabilities and so forth, and on average one would say looking at the study, the documents, approvals and so forth, that in itself seems to be taking in or around five to
10 six years from the evidence that has been presented. Can you give us an indication of the estimated period that would then, that it would then take to finalise acquisition from the point where the user requirements have been approved?

GENL SHOKE: Well, like I said earlier on it would be very
15 difficult to give you the exact timing that it would take, so much, because as you have correctly said we will be informed by the speed at which we complete the process. Sometimes in fact if you take the decision, the route of going commercially off the shelf of course which is (indistinct) might be quicker
20 than when you go for a development because when you go for development you've got test your equipment, (indistinct), there are a lot of things that are involved.

So, normally average to get military hardware is anything from seven years upwards because it's also dependent
25 on the manufacturer that now what capability do they have on

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the factory floor because for example sometimes in fact if you, if there are companies who, when they build a ship it takes literally, it takes a year. When you look at this thing the aircraft from what in fact I've been told, both in fact Boeing
5 and Airbus you find that when you try to get aircraft that you will be on the queue and then maybe production may come, if now it's 2013 you may get your aircraft in 2018, 2019, 2020. So, it depends where you stand on the queue and which entity you are dealing with.

10 MS RAMAGAGA: We are also informed that the military equipment that has been procured as well as any other military equipment that is in possession of the South African National Defence Force is used for different purposes including rescue missions. Is it correct so Sir?

15 GENL SHOKE: That is correct.

MS RAMAGAGA: And it is also correct that there is a video clip that has been made in order to can, in order for the South African National Defence Force to be able to illustrate the collateral value of the defence equipment.

20 GENL SHOKE: That is correct because I can say with certainty that almost every year there are floods in this country and even in Mozambique and the Defence Force is always there to rescue the people. Sometimes you find that particularly in the Eastern Cape that you find that the bridges get washed away and we
25 have to come to the rescue of the people when there's no ... In

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the (indistinct) area we have to go and rescue people, sometimes you have to clear the roads, even to get our engineers to clear the roads so that there can be traffic.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Chair. I notice that it is now
5 11h40, I had actually indicated in the beginning that the evidence would be presented to a point where we would now transit to the showing of the video, so we are at a point where I would like to request for an adjournment and when we resume we shall be then going ahead to present the video that I spoke
10 about.

CHAIRPERSON: We'll adjourn for about 20 minutes. Thank you.

(Commission adjourns)

(Commission resumes)

15 CHAIRPERSON: Can the general ... Can the general confirm that he's still under oath?

GENL SHOKE: I do.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Thank you.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Chair. The video that is now
20 going to be shown, it will be shown in order to illustrate or to show the collateral capabilities of the South African national Defence Force and we are going to have the video as well as the slideshow only for the (indistinct) around at most 20 minutes.

25 CHAIRPERSON: Thanks.

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MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you.

NOTE: Video shown.

MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Chair, that actually concludes the show. You would have noticed that the first two was a
5 video shown where an explanation is made of what is happening and where that was happening, that was in Mozambique, and the second show was the slideshow of the disaster that happened in Limpopo. Now before I give the Chief of the Defence Force an opportunity to comment and
10 present that evidence, in order for the commissioners to be able to make a record and if their bundles are on the bench I would request that the Chairperson, the commissioners go back to bench.

CHAIRPERSON: Ms Ramagaga, I think because we are coming
15 towards the end of the presentation if you don't mind that you continue whilst we are sitting.

MS RAMAGAGA: Right, thank you Chair. The indication is that the general can proceed with the balance of the evidence. Sir, remember that you are still under oath. Now can you then
20 maybe make a comment or comments relating or regarding the two shows that we have just seen?

GENL SHOKE: Honourable Commissioners, I felt that I should just submit this video clipping to be able to demonstrate that as much as we buy military hardware to defend this country
25 against any foreign invasion we also make use of this

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equipment to save lives. This equipment can be used for any other purpose in support of the people of South Africa, so this actually, it is a demonstration that it is not a waste for this country to have purchased those aircraft including helicopters because they play a multirole as you might have seen that how many people we have saved and then we do this almost every year, year after year in this country there are floods, there are people that we save at sea and so on. So, and I would also like to indicate, maybe to remind the Commissioners and the public that you will recall that in New Orleans in the United States when there were floods and people were in dire straits, it is only where now those 8x8 military vehicles moving in that people's lives were saved.

So, this might be in fact the equipment of the South African National Defence Force but in reality it is your equipment as South Africans because it is not for the Defence Force but for the people of South Africa. We in uniform, we are there as volunteers to serve you and therefore this equipment, we need it to be able to do or perform our duties diligently so that you as South Africans you can prosper. It is important that we acquire more equipment and then, however, I must further say that we need to make a distinction between wrongdoing and acquiring equipment, I cannot talk about wrongdoing or the alleged wrongdoing, if there's any wrongdoing of course people have to take action but that will

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require this equipment is a reality because this, our sons and daughters who, should a need arise, they are prepared to pay a supreme sacrifice, therefore they've got to get equipment that is high-tech equipment so that we should not risk their lives.

5 As you might have seen with those helicopters if those helicopters were not up to standard those people might have also lost their live, they were able to save lives because they care and they had equipment to do so, and we don't plan for disasters, we don't know when national disaster may strike
10 and should it strike we are there as our Defence Force to serve you and where possible save lives. That, those are my concluding remarks Commissioners, and then I will appeal once more to South Africans to take care of us, we are your children, we are your defence force, we serve you.

15 MS RAMAGAGA: Thank you Chair, that concludes the evidence of the General Shoke.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Is there any person who wants to cross-examine the General? Dr Madima, any re-examination?

DR MADIMA: Thank you Chair, none.

20 CHAIRPERSON: General, thanks a lot for the evidence that you have given and I'm sure it will help us a very great deal in making us to carry out our mandate properly. Thanks a lot for the evidence.

GENL SHOKE: Thank you Sir.

25 MS RAMAGAGA: That ...

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CHAIRPERSON: I'm sorry, you are excused, you are excused.

Thank you.

MS RAMAGAGA: Mr Chairperson, the general was the last witness to be called for the Defence, the Department of Defence. If there are any developments in due course there is a possibility that we'll call other witnesses, but thus far these are all, he's the last witness to be called for the Department of Defence.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I think at this stage I should mention that we'll not be sitting during the course of next week, the whole of next week we'll not be sitting because our Evidence Leaders are still trying to finalise operations or consultations with ARMSCOR witnesses, so our next sitting will be on the 30th of September. Thank you, we will all adjourn.

(COMMISSION ADJOURNS)