



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **SADC to launch deployment into the Kingdom of Lesotho on November 28**

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Contingent Force will start deployment into the Kingdom of Lesotho between the 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017 for an initial period of six months. The deployment will be officially launched on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, at Press Conference in Maseru, Lesotho.

The objective is to facilitate a secure, stable and peaceful environment conducive for the Rule of Law necessary for the implementation of SADC decisions, including the Security Sector Reforms.

The Contingent Force is in accordance with the SADC Standby Force Roster, pledged by contributing Member States, and will be headed by the Republic of Angola, as the Chairperson of SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security.

The Contingent Force will comprise a total of 269 personnel from the Military, Intelligence, Police and Civilian components from 7 SADC Member States, namely: Angola, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Each of the components will provide the necessary support to the Kingdom of Lesotho according to its area of expertise.

The mission will operate guided by principles of specific Legal Framework such as, among others: The Charter of the United Nations, 1945; The African Charter on Human & People's Rights, 1981 and article 7 (2) of the SADC Mutual Force Defense Pact, 2003.

Following the assassination of the former Commander of the Lesotho Defence Force, Lieutenant General Khoantlhe Motšomotšo on 5th September 2017, the SADC Double Troika Summit met on 15 September 2017 in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, considered the report from the Ministerial Fact Finding Mission sent to the Kingdom of Lesotho on 7th September and took the decision to deploy a Contingent Force.

Since the SADC Double Troika decision to deploy a Contingent Force, several interventions to operationalize the deployment have been undertaken, including a Technical Assessment Mission that was deployed from the 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September, followed by a meeting of joint Chiefs of Defence, Intelligence, Police and Civilian Components held in Gaborone on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> November, and a deployment planning meeting in Maseru, on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November

**Gaborone 15 November 2017**

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