

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON MILITARY CHAPLAINCY SERVICES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE (SANDF), 1998 – 2012

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Abstract

This study provides a review of the structure, policy and nature of military chaplaincy within the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) from 1998, when the first black Chaplain General in South Africa, Maj. Gen. (Rev.) FFS Gqiba, took office, until 2012. Since 1994, the SANDF underwent a process of transformation in line with the new democratic dispensation in South Africa. The question arises whether the new democratic military order that was arrived at in 1998 simply entailed a substitution of faces and names superimposed onto an old dispensation, or whether it succeeded in establishing a new structure, ethos and policy, as was envisaged in the original planning of the transformation process. To determine the extent of transformation that was effectuated in military chaplaincy after 1998, the structure, character and policies of the old order is traced, and, against this background, the new dispensation is evaluated. This also indicates that transformation and change are not unique occurrences, but part and parcel of the course of history.

Keywords: Military chaplaincy; history; transformation; South African Defence Force (SADF); South African National Defence Force (SANDF); Maj. Gen. (Rev.) FFS Gqiba; Brig. Gen. (Rev.) M Cornelissen; Chaplain General's Value-based Programme (CHATSEC); African outreaches.

Slutelwoorde: Militêre kapelaanskap; geskiedenis; transformasie; Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag (SAW); Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag (SANW); genl.-maj. (ds.) FFS Gqiba; brig.-genl. (ds.) M Cornelissen; Kapelaangeneraal se Waardegebaseerde Program (CHATSEC); Afrika-uitreike.

1. INTRODUCTION

At midnight on 26-27 April 1994, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was constituted from the statutory forces of the South African Defence Force (SADF) and the former “independent” homelands (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei; also referred to as the TBVC countries) and the non-statutory³

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3 The terms “statutory” and “non-statutory” refer to the organisation of the forces according to an acknowledged code of law.

forces, consisting of the military wing of the African National Congress (ANC), namely uMkhonto weSizwe (MK), and the military wing of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), namely the Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA).⁴ The formation of the SANDF was hailed as one of the major outcomes of the transformation of South Africa.

Transformation implies change and alteration and, in essence, history as a discipline can be defined as the history of transformation. Arthur Marwick refers to the historian's field of study as the movement of events through time, their causation and their consequences. He states: "The historian [...] is so conscious of the way in which the past is different from the present, [...] and in which] the future will be different from the present."⁵ This implies that change and transformation are part and parcel of the nature of history; and thus, the history of South Africa, in all its subdivisions of knowledge, has always been subjected to change and transformation.

The preoccupation of South Africans with transformation as a phenomenon of the last decade of the twentieth century, can be attributed to the fact that transformation in the South African context acquired a very specific meaning, namely that of a national strategy to move away from racial discrimination.⁶ The founding of the SANDF in 1994 therefore signified more than the end result of a strenuous negotiation process between former enemies and the beginning of a new institution that still had to establish its own structures, policies and character. It envisaged a military institution with a specific demographic profile. In June 1998, the Deputy Minister of Defence, R Kasrils, commented that, since the SANDF could be regarded as a microcosm of South Africa, the change of faces, images and names served as a catalyst of transformation, and the handing over of the SANDF command to black members symbolised the progress made in this regard.⁷

Military transformation officially started in April 1994 and consisted of three phases: integration, demobilisation and rationalisation. However, these phases were not clearly demarcated in terms of their ambit and extent, and when Maj. Gen. (Rev.) FFS Gqiba of the Anglican Church took office as the first black

4 TT Matanzima, "Human resources challenges" in J Cilliers (ed.), *Continuity in change: the SA Army in transition* (Monograph Series 26, Halfway House, 1998), p. 56; T Motumi and P McKenzie, "After the war: demobilisation in South Africa" in J Cock and P McKenzie (eds), *From defence to development: redirecting military resources in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1998), p. 189. The former Inkatha Freedom Party Self-Protection Units, also referred to as the KwaZulu Self-Protection Force (KZSPF), were also incorporated into the SANDF, but they enlisted as new recruits during 1996 and were not part of the integration process.

5 A Marwick, *The nature of history* (London, 1970), p. 146. Also see *ibid.*, pp. 20, 23, 112.

6 Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, <<http://oald8.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/dictionary/transformation>>, accessed 10 October 2011.

7 R Kasrils, "Progress in transformation" in Cilliers (ed.), pp. 15, 17. For example, the command of the Defence Medical Services was handed over by Lt Gen. N Knobel to Lt Gen. D Masuku in 1997. In 1998, the SANDF command was handed over by Gen. G Meiring to Gen. S Nyanda, and the Army command passed from Lt Gen. R Otto to Lt Gen. G Ramano.

Chaplain General in South Africa on 1 October 1998, the first two phases had still not been finalised. Each phase brought its own problems and challenges. Progress was hampered by conservative attitudes regarding the pre-1994 South African military order, which was embedded in nearly a century of military customs that had evolved under pressure of various cultural, socio-political and economic influences. Although the constitution of the SANDF was meant to comprise an equal integration of the different armed forces, members of the non-statutory and the TBVC forces perceived it, in many respects, as the mere absorption of these forces into the former SADF, leaving the latter's ethos untransformed.⁸

The purpose of this article is to highlight the particular structure, policy and nature of military chaplaincy during the years 1998 to 2012. The question that needs to be answered is that of whether the new democratic military order that was arrived at in 1998 simply entailed a substitution of faces and names superimposed onto an old dispensation, or whether it succeeded in establishing a new structure, ethos and policy, as envisaged in the original planning of the transformation process.⁹ In order to determine the extent of transformation that was effectuated in military chaplaincy after 1998, it is necessary to trace the structure, character and policies of the old order. This will also highlight the fact that the transformation and changes that took place during the last decade of the twentieth century were not a unique occurrence, but part and parcel of the course of history.

2. A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE STRUCTURE, CHARACTER AND POLICIES OF SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY CHAPLAINCY UNTIL 1998

Military chaplaincy originated during the Middle Ages in Europe as part of the Christian state enterprise, but the professional structure of military chaplaincy, as currently encountered in most countries, was established during the First World War (1914-1918).¹⁰ Although South Africa's first national military force was established in 1912, in the form of the Union Defence Forces (UDF), no provision was made for chaplains; and until 1916, civilian clergy ministered to the military troops falling within their congregational boundaries.¹¹ This was in line with the traditions

8 Motumi and McKenzie, pp. 193-194; Kasrils, pp. 16-17. Also see G Wood, "South Africa's unfinished business: organisational change and continuity within the South African National Defence Force" in *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 38(2), July 2000, p. 90.

9 J Cilliers, "Introduction" in Cilliers (ed.), p. 4.

10 JF Potgieter, *Die militêre kapelaan: die ontstaan en ontwikkeling van die amp, taak en organisering van militêre kapelane in die geskiedenis van die Christelike kerk, met besondere verwysing na Suid-Afrika* (unpublished D.Div. thesis, University of Pretoria, 1971), pp. 68, 84-85.

11 Potgieter, pp. 179, 181-182; SG van Niekerk, *The history, role and influence of the South African military chaplaincy: 1914-2002* (unpublished D.Th. thesis, University of South Africa, 2002), p. 3; L Brits, "The Chaplain General", *Militaria* 12(2), 1982, p.75.

of the Afrikaans sector of South African society,¹² but it created controversy with regard to the legitimacy of military chaplaincy as part of the military structures of South Africa.

South Africa joined the Allied forces against Germany at the outbreak of the First World War, and various denominations requested the appointment of military chaplains to serve the South African troops. On 16 August 1916, chaplains were appointed to the military community of Simon's Town; and this date marks the official founding of military chaplaincy in South Africa.¹³

No formal chaplaincy structure was created. Chaplains resorted directly under the Ministry of Defence. The intention was that they would return to their civilian duties when hostilities ended. On demobilisation, the number of troops at the military base of Roberts Heights necessitated the retention of two chaplaincy positions.¹⁴ Chaplaincy became a feature of the South African military scene; but for the next thirty years, it was in a continual struggle to shed the image of a mere temporary addition to the armed forces. In September 1938, the endeavours of Cpln AGO Coertse resulted in Permanent Force appointments for chaplains, but their conditions of service were only brought in line with those of the other military sectors during the early 1950s. Even as late as the Second World War (1939-1945), the UDF command still regarded military chaplains "as of sentimental value only," and chaplains received little or no support with regard to logistics such as vehicles. The South African Government Proclamation 204 of 18 October 1946 established the South African Corps of Chaplains, thereby acknowledging military chaplaincy's right to existence; but full autonomy and their own headquarters was only granted in April 1973.¹⁵

The nature of ministry in the South African chaplaincy services was similar to that of other chaplaincies in the Allied forces, and British customs determined the

12 During the nineteenth century two forms of military ministry existed in South Africa. In the former British colonies of the Cape and Natal, ordained chaplains (both local and imperial) ministered to the troops according to the customs and norms of the British Chaplaincy Service. In the former Afrikaner or Boer republics (the Orange Free State and the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR), also known as the Transvaal), the concept of a structured army and chaplaincy service did not exist. Local ministers served the citizen forces, but not as chaplains; they could also serve as combatants. For a historical exposition of these customs, see Potgieter, pp. 101-162.

13 Van Niekerk, pp. 3, 7-8; Potgieter, pp. 182-183.

14 Brits, p. 75; Potgieter, pp. 195-197; Van Niekerk, pp. 108-110; Die Kapelaansvrou SAW, *Die kapelaansvrou* (Pretoria, 1982), p. 110. The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) and the Anglican Church, as the largest Afrikaans and English denominations, held the positions at Roberts Heights, which was renamed Voortrekkerhoogte, and which is currently known as Thaba Tswane.

15 Potgieter, pp. 205-206, 210-211, 225-226, 237; Van Niekerk, pp. 106, 121-122, 135-136, 171, 187; Brits, p. 76; JA van Zyl, "Die kapelaansdiens in die SA Weermag", *Paratus* 25(2), February 1974, p. 3; "Genl-maj (ds.) JA van Zyl", *In Hoc Signo* 9(1), June 1983, pp. 4-5; "Die Korps van Kapelane", *Paratus* 22(10), October 1970, p. 71.

designation, insignia and remuneration of chaplains.¹⁶ From 1950 to 1953, South Africa supported the United Nations' operations in Korea and the quality of the South African chaplains' ministry was acknowledged by means of various decorations.¹⁷ Ministry took place in a denominational context¹⁸ and no proselytism was allowed. During the Namibian War of Independence (1966-1989, also known as the Bush War or the Border War), logistics sometimes necessitated inter-communal ministry; and on such occasions, there was an unwritten rule that no reference should be made to any specific denominational practices. Chaplains had to be ordained ministers, and appointments depended on the number of enlistments in each denomination. Those who were not well represented made use of part-time chaplains. Attendance of church services and chaplains' hours was compulsory.¹⁹ A new policy, formulated in the *Defence White Paper* (1996) and the *Defence Review* (1997), was implemented after 1994. It entailed freedom of religion and religious association. Chaplains were assigned to units; and ministry and religious observances were conducted on an equitable and interdenominational basis. Such observances were voluntary, although attendance of chaplains' hours remained compulsory.²⁰

Chaplains in the UDF (later the SADF) represented most South African Christian denominations, as well as the Jewish faith. The first Muslim chaplain, Mawlana AK Aziz, was appointed on 1 October 1976, and the first Hindu chaplain, Swami Saradanada, served those from the Hindu community as from 1995. The establishment of the SANDF resulted in greater religious diversity, especially with regard to the African churches; and on 1 July 1997, MJ (Josiah) Mtshali of the East Star Church in Sabbath became the first chaplain to serve this religious community.²¹

16 Van Niekerk, p. 378.

17 Two of the four South African chaplains who served during this time, MDV Cloete and JA Olivier, received the American Bronze Star Medal, while Cpln Cloete was also honoured with the American Legion of Merit (Officer) award and the Korean Ulchi Decoration. Die Kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 110; Potgieter, pp. 227-228; Van Niekerk, pp. 175-178.

18 The principle was that each member of the armed forces had the right to religious ministry according to the values and beliefs of his/her denomination. See Van Zyl, p. 3.

19 Potgieter, pp. 320-322; Van Niekerk, pp. 188-189; "Kapelane vir 92 gelowe", *Paratus* 29(7), July 1978, p. 52. For more information on the status of chaplains, see Die Kapelaansvroue SAW, pp. 112-114; Brits, pp. 77-78; G Kruger, "Hy bring die evangelie in wonderlike eenvoud", *Die Kerkbode* 136(5), 1 February 1984, p. 6.

20 Van Niekerk, pp. 212-213; *Beeld*, 21 July 1994, p. 6; DI Maasdrop, 'n *Missiologiese perspektief op kapelaansdiens aan "gerepatrieerde magte"* ("non-statutory forces") (unpublished M.Th. thesis, University of South Africa, 1998), p. 32. For a review of the *Defence White Paper* and the *Defence Review*, see, for instance, J Winkates, "The transformation of the South African National Defence Force: a good beginning", *Armed Forces & Society* 26(3), Spring 2000, pp. 455-469; L Nathan, "The 1996 Defence White Paper: an agenda for state demilitarisation?", Cock and Mckenzie (eds), pp. 41-57; G Shelton and C Alden, "Brave new world: the transformation of the South African military", *Comparative Strategy* 17, 1998, p. 346 *et seq.*; Kasrils, pp. 18-22.

21 Brits, p. 7; Van Zyl, p. 3; Potgieter, pp. 190-191; Van Niekerk, p. 214; Winkates, p. 454. The

The initial lack of a chaplaincy structure and of proper communication lines hampered the effective organisation of chaplaincy services, especially during the two World Wars. The tardiness regarding the establishment of a proper command structure may be attributed to official viewpoints on the temporary nature of chaplaincy, but the Calvinist principles underlying the Afrikaans Reformed Churches (ARC)²² also influenced decisions. All ministers of religion were regarded as equal before God, and during the First World War, the DRC did not appoint Senior Chaplains while serving under the structure of the British Chaplaincy Department. Although Senior (later Principal) Chaplains were appointed to each of the five major denominations during the Second World War, they were equal in status and none could make statements or formulate policy on behalf of all the chaplains in the UDF.²³ In June 1949, a committee of inquiry into matters related to chaplaincy highlighted the lack of a command structure and, in December 1949, Senator (Rev.) Cecil Frank Miles-Cadman, OBE, was appointed as Deputy Chaplain General. Owing to financial constraints, the position was abolished on his retirement in May 1954.²⁴

Restructuring of the armed forces placed the Corps under a Directorate: Physical and Spiritual Welfare in July 1966, with Cpln JA van Zyl as Senior Staff Officer (SSO) Chaplains and Welfare. Through his endeavours, chaplaincy was seceded from welfare in January 1968 and acknowledged as a separate directorate under the Chief of the Defence Force Administration. During the Namibian War of Independence, Cpln Van Zyl prepared a memorandum on the role of the church in the SADF, which resulted in the formation of the South African Chaplain Service (SACHS) on 17 September 1970, with Cpln Van Zyl as the first Chaplain General. His position was upgraded to that of Major General on 1 April 1973, and on 25 November 1975, he received full membership of the Supreme Command.²⁵

The establishment of a command structure did not result in the abolishment of the Calvinist principle of equality. In 1966, a decision was made to dispose of ranks for chaplains. This ensured that there were no barriers between the chaplain and the troops, and that commanders could not use chaplains as regimental officers. Chaplains started wearing a distinctive badge and, although they were entitled to the protocol status of colonels, they were addressed by their respective religious titles.

Jewish, Muslim and Hindu faiths were allocated part-time appointments, owing to the low numbers of persons of these faiths serving in the military.

22 The Afrikaans Reformed Churches are Calvinist in principle and include the DRC, the Nederduitsch Hervormde Church of South Africa (HC) and the Gereformeerde Kerke in South Africa (GC).

23 Potgieter, pp. 188, 216-218; Van Niekerk, pp. 38, 123, 168-169.

24 Brits, p. 76; Potgieter, p. 227; Van Niekerk, pp. 171-174; Die Kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 110.

25 Van Zyl, p. 3; Brits, pp. 76-77; Potgieter, pp. 230-238; Van Niekerk, pp. 185-187; "Genl-maj (ds.) JA van Zyl", p. 4; Die Kapelaansvroue SAW, pp. 110-112; "Die Korps van kapelane", p. 71.

This custom is still in force. Chaplains wear an insignia on the shoulder-strap to indicate whether they are Christian, Hindu, Jewish or Muslim.²⁶

In 1978 the SACHS was decreed to be the only institution responsible for the spiritual ministry to the armed forces and their dependants, but the struggle for recognition as an integral part of the military forces of South Africa was far from over. In the pre-1994 years, during the negotiations on a new democratic dispensation, military chaplains again had to convince the authorities of their imperative role in South Africa. Most of the non-statutory forces had received their training in Communist-orientated countries where religion was frowned upon, and they had received little, if any, exposure to the work of chaplains. Many were of the opinion that military chaplaincy was dispensable. This was a period filled with uncertainty and insecurity; but chaplaincy was able to overcome the obstacles of ideology. The *Defence White Paper* acknowledged the statutory status of military chaplaincy, and in 2010 Cpln MA Jamangile stated: "There is no way in which you can deploy soldiers without the chaplain [...] they need [...] spiritual, moral and ethical support [...] that is why the Chaplain Service forms an integral part within the SANDF."²⁷

From the outset, prevailing socio-political and cultural forces influenced the structure, ethos and ministry of the SACHS. WR Keylor regarded imperialism as the most salient feature of international relations at the turn of the nineteenth century,²⁸ and the clash between British imperialism and Afrikaner nationalism affected socio-political relations in South Africa for most of the twentieth century. Military chaplaincy did not escape the consequences, as is evident from the appointment of a separate SSO for Afrikaans and English chaplaincy matters respectively in 1970. This also resulted in a situation where chaplains and troops were grouped according to cultural preferences, i.e. English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking. Afrikaner animosity towards all things English or British also impacted on the number of Afrikaans ministers who enlisted as chaplains during the two World Wars. This state of affairs was aggravated by the Calvinist principle that ministers of religion are servants to God only, and not state officials in uniform. The shortage of chaplains to cater for the Afrikaans section of the South African forces impaired the effectiveness of ministry during both wars.²⁹

26 Van Niekerk, pp. 181-182; Die Kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 133; Potgieter, pp. 229, 233-235; "The rank of chaplain", *Paratus* 23(3), March 1991, p. 81; Department of Defence, <<http://www.dod.mil.za/ranks.htm>>, accessed 20 October 2011.

27 Interview: I Bredenkamp – Col. (Rev.) MA Jamangile, Pretoria, 17 November 2008; Interview: I Bredenkamp – Maj. Gen. (Rev.) RP Jordaan, Pretoria, 17 November 2008; Interview: I Bredenkamp – Maj. Gen. (Rev.) JHJ de Witt, Pretoria, 30 September 2010 and 23 May 2011; Van Niekerk, pp. 208-209.

28 WR Keylor, *The twentieth century: an international history* (2nd edition, Oxford, 1992), p. 3.

29 Van Niekerk, pp. 6-7, 162, 182; Potgieter, pp. 188, 223, 236.

Cultural differences were not limited to the difference regarding language. Observers often described the Afrikaans population group as stringently conservative and nationalistic, displaying attitudes shaped by Calvinism and by their political leaders, while the English population group was perceived as liberal, with a functional approach towards the social reality, although they were sometimes accused of maintaining their British ties with a sense of imperial haughtiness.³⁰ The National Party victory at the polls in 1948 placed Afrikaner Nationalism in full control of the government structures, and a national policy of disassociation from Britain followed. Senior English-speaking military officers were passed over for promotion or encouraged to take early retirement, and were then replaced by Afrikaans-speaking officers. Changes of names, symbols and rank structures took place; for example, the UDF became known as the SADF in 1957. In the same year, South Africa took over the command of the naval base at Simon's Town, thereby symbolically ending an era of British domination in the military structures of South Africa.³¹ Since the characteristics of organisations reflect the nature and prejudices of their members, the overwhelming numbers of Afrikaans-speaking and DRC chaplains changed the SACHS into a predominantly Afrikaans, Calvinist institution. Until 1998, the Chaplain General and most of the appointments at the Chaplain General's office were members of the DRC.³²

At the turn of the nineteenth century, most Western societies did not regard their colonial subjects as equals in civilisation. In South Africa, this attitude affected relations between the Afrikaans and English populations, but it had an even greater effect on relations with the black societies. It was only after the Second World War that black nationalism succeeded in changing perceptions regarding the standing of blacks in the international community.³³ In his research on the history of military chaplaincy in South Africa, SG van Niekerk referred to the controversy that was sparked by the subordinate position of black chaplains during both World Wars.³⁴ The first coloured South African Permanent Force chaplain, Rev. PJJ Williams, was appointed to the SA Cape Corps Service Battalion at Eerste River on 1 October 1976, and the first black chaplain, Rev. LS Booysen, was ordained on

30 See *Rapport*, 20 July 1980, p. 16; *The Star*, 14 November 1988, p. 13; *The Star*, 26 May 2005, p. 20; M Streak, *The Afrikaner as viewed by the English, 1795-1854* (Cape Town, 1974), *passim*; C Dalcanton, *The Afrikaners of South Africa: a case study of identity formation and change* (unpublished Ph.D. University of Pittsburg, 1973), *passim*.

31 Potgieter, pp. 228-230, 233-236; Wood, p. 90; BJ Liebenberg, "Die Nasionale Party aan bewind, 1948-1961" in CFJ Muller, *500 Jaar Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis* (2nd edition, Pretoria, 1984), pp. 518-519; P Steyn, "Address delivered on 19 October 1995 at the SA Army seminar" in Institute for Defence Policy (IDF), *Preparing the SA Army for the 21st century: a new army for a new challenge* (Halfway House, 1995), p. 2.

32 Van Niekerk, p. 358. Also see Cilliers, p. 2; Shelton and Alden, p. 347.

33 LH Gann and P Duignan (eds), *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960* 2 (London, 1970), pp. 450-453.

34 Van Niekerk, pp. 80-94, 140-143.

1 January 1979 to serve 21 Battalion at Lenz.³⁵ Black viewpoints did not influence South African military chaplaincy until well into the 1970s; and it was only on the implementation of the transformation strategies after 1994 that these viewpoints played a role in determining the character and ethos of military chaplaincy in South Africa.

During the 1980s, military chaplaincy came under constant attack from liberal church circles for allegedly being supportive of the political system of apartheid; and a call was made for the demilitarisation of chaplaincy services. Military chaplaincy lost credibility in the eyes of civil society, and English chaplains, in particular, experienced a flood of animosity and hostility from their own denominations. The debate on demilitarisation affected Afrikaans denominations during the late 1980s and served as the forerunner to negotiations on a new democratic dispensation, culminating in the elections of 1994.³⁶ Tension and distrust prevailed while the details of a new democratic dispensation were hammered out amongst former sworn enemies.³⁷ Black nationalism was the main driving force, and Maj. Gen. (Rev.) RP Jordaan, Chaplain General from 1990 to 1994, realised that the SACHS had to position itself for a multi-cultural socio-political environment. Through his endeavours, the SACHS was able to restructure itself for transformation and to regain credibility with regard to its civil image with the establishment of the Christian Chaplains' Service Board in October 1993.³⁸

Maj. Gen. (Rev.) JHH de Witt, Chaplain General from 1994 to 1998, had to oversee the integration of the statutory and the non-statutory forces. Amalgamation was not easy. Each negotiating party had its own military structure, ethos and characteristics, and its own expectations in respect of the framework, principles and values set out in the *Defence White Paper* and the *Defence Review*. Many were of the opinion that the SADF still dominated the character of the SANDF, and the process followed to attain a new institutional character included new management and administration structures, a new code of conduct, name changes and affirmative action. Advisory Boards were constituted for all the religions in the

35 "First coloured chaplain", Supplement, *Paratus* 27(11), November 1976, p. iv; *Beeld*, 22 November 1978, p. 3; *Die Volksblad*, 22 November 1978, p. 3; *The Friend*, 23 November 1978, p. 14.

36 See, for instance, *The Daily News*, 8 October 1983, p. 2; *Sunday Mirror*, 14 July 1985, p. 3; *The Cape Times*, 9 July 1985, p. 2; *Die Burger*, 7 November 1985, p. 2; *Rapport*, 24 June 1990, p. 3; *Vrye Weekblad*, 6 July 1990, p. 3; *The Citizen*, 24 June 1997, p. 8.

37 See N Stott, "From the SADF to the SANDF: safeguarding South Africa for a better life for all?", *Violence and Transition Series* 7, 2002, <<http://www.csvr.org.za/wits/papers/papt7.htm>>, accessed 21 March 2011; "New defence force the work of old foes", *Negotiation News* 13, 15 December 1993, p. 11.

38 Van Niekerk, p. 210; Maasdorp, p. 13; "Security Services Christian Advisory Board (SSCAB) gets new leadership", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, p. 13. In 1994, the name of the Christian Chaplains' Service Board was changed to the Security Services Christian Advisory Board, with the incorporation of Correctional Services and the South African Police.

SANDF,³⁹ thus ensuring civilian participation, legitimacy, equality and religious freedom in chaplaincy matters. The Advisory Boards received statutory status in terms of the *Defence White Paper*; and they monitor ministry, appointments and communication in their respective religious fields.⁴⁰ Cpln Jamangile noted that military chaplaincy set the pace for integration and transformation in the SANDF. He ascribed this to the fact that chaplains preach the love of the Gospel, which gives them common ground to accept and embrace each other.⁴¹

During December 1995, Col (Rev.) Gqiba, the former Head of the Religious Desk of MK in Zambia, joined the SANDF as the next designated Chaplain General. On 1 February 1996 he received the rank of Brigadier and took office as the Director, Ministry. For the next two years he worked in close association with Maj. Gen. (Rev.) De Witt. On 1 July 1997 he became Deputy Chaplain General. The Chaplains Service now consisted of 139 Permanent Force chaplains, of whom 93 were white, 37 black, eight coloured and one Asian. Two of the appointments were females.⁴² Integration changed military chaplaincy from a predominantly Afrikaans Calvinist institution to one with a more comprehensive religious outlook.

3. MAJ. GEN. (REV.) FFS GQIBA,⁴³ 1998-2004

Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba took office as Chaplain General on 1 October 1998. He was not only the first black, but also the first non-DRC, Chaplain General. On taking office, Father Fumie (as he was called) reassured the ARC that he would not embark on a dismissal campaign with regard to their chaplains and that he intended

39 Maasdorp, p. 13; Van Niekerk, pp. 214-215; *Sunday Tribune*, 7 April 1996, p. 18. An Islamic Advisory Board was constituted on 5 September 1995 and a Hindu Advisory Board on 17 May 1996, followed by an African Independent/Indigenous Advisory Board. The latter religious grouping later resorted under the Security Services Christian Advisory Board. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies had represented the Jewish Faith since the Second World War.

40 Van Niekerk, pp. 213-215; "Security Services Christian Advisory Board (SSCAB) gets new leadership", p. 13; M Cornelissen, "Chaplain General's Corner", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 3; Interview: I Bredenkamp – Brig. Gen. (Rev.) M Cornelissen, Pretoria, 17 November 2008.

41 Interview: Bredenkamp – Jamangile.

42 Motumi and Mckenzie, p. 192; Interview: Bredenkamp – De Witt; Van Niekerk, pp. 211, 217.

43 Fumanekile Fumie Samuel Gqiba was born on 6 May 1951 in Cape Town. He matriculated from St Mary's Educational Centre, Langa and obtained a Diploma in Theology (St Bede's College), a BA (University of Transkei), BA Hons (University of Cape Town), an MSc Political Sociology (The London School of Economics and Political Sciences) and an MSc Urban Development Planning (University College of London). He served as an Anglican priest at St John's Church, Cape Town, before being politically exiled to Lesotho. In Lusaka, Zambia, he served in ANC diplomatic missions and became a founder member of the ANC's Department of Religious Affairs and editor of the magazine, *Phakamani*. He returned to South Africa in 1993 and helped in the formulation of the National Housing and Local Government policies (1994-1995). See Van Niekerk, pp. 215-217; *Beeld*, 15 August 1998, p. 1.

to appoint Afrikaans chaplains in leadership positions.⁴⁴ DRC representation in the SANDF had dropped from approximately 34 000 before 1994 to 17 000 in 1998, with a concomitant drop in the number of DRC chaplains from 85 to 64. Other denominations had grown in numbers and the Methodist Church's chaplains increased from seven to 14, while those from the Anglican Church increased from two to eight and those from the Apostolic Faith Mission from one to six.⁴⁵ The reassurance to the ARC shows that cultural and traditional apprehension still prevailed, despite a successful chaplaincy integration process.⁴⁶

Even before integration commenced, it was clear that the combined SANDF would far exceed future military needs and that a process of downsizing was inevitable. The last two phases of transformation, namely demobilisation and rationalisation, had to address this issue. When Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba took office, it was his task to complete transformation in the Chaplains Service and to ensure that the latter reflected the demographic profile of South Africa.⁴⁷

The SANDF initiated a restructuring process during 1998/1999, and this presented an opportunity for Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba to fast-track the promotion of black chaplains to senior positions, thereby implementing the strategy of transformation. A four-tier organisational framework was implemented. The Chaplain General formed part of the first tier, which consisted of the Minister and the Deputy Minister of Defence, the Secretary for Defence, the Chief of the SANDF and the Plenary Defence Staff Council. The Deputy Chaplain General and the Senior Staff Officers at the Chaplain General's Headquarters, Arms of Service and Chief Joint Operations, were on the second level, while chaplains formed part of the third level. The fourth level included 25 general support bases and 80 units and military hospitals. During the restructuring, black chaplains were promoted, while some of

44 *Beeld*, 15 August 1998, p. 1.

45 *Ibid.*, 15 July 1998, p. 6. SANDF members who belonged to the Methodist Church numbered 7 300, while 6 300 members were Roman Catholics, 3 400 Anglicans and 2 800 members of the Apostolic Faith Mission.

46 For information on apprehension in the SANDF see, amongst others, Kasrils, pp. 16-24; Shelton and Alden, p. 349; Stott; Motumi and Mckenzie, pp. 188-203.

47 Winkates, pp. 455, 462-467; Shelton and Alden, pp. 348-349; G Ramano, "The SA Army's strategic intent" in Cilliers, pp. 80-88. The *Defence Review* envisaged a small Regular Force of approximately 36 000 members, aided by a Reserve Force of approximately 70 000 members. This would ensure that South Africa's neighbours would not perceive the SANDF as a threat; and it was also in line with the priority of resource allocation to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). There are slight variations in the statistics given by different writers, but the SANDF had grown from 84 000 members to more than 99 000 by 1998, and a last MK intake was scheduled for September 2001. This, despite the demobilisation of approximately 3 770 non-statutory force members by February 1997, and the rationalisation of a further 4 403 former SADF members through severance packages by May 1997. The South African demographic profile at the end of the twentieth century was 75% black, 13% white, 9% coloured and 3% Indian.

the previous structure's command chaplains became unit chaplains again. A policy of affirmative action was implemented, along with equal gender opportunities; and, through natural attrition and voluntary severance packages, the percentage of white chaplains decreased from 86% in 1994 to 33% in 2002, while the percentage of black chaplains rose from 10% to 56%. The overall number of chaplains increased from 121 in 1994 to 136 in 2003. Nine of these were female appointments, attesting to the fact that the Chaplains Service was able to overcome the deeply entrenched stereotyping of women's participation in military matters. In 2003, the Minister of Defence, Mr Mosiuoa Lekota, stated that the Chaplains Service was far ahead in the fulfilment of the transformation requirements of the *Defence Review*, with 60% blacks, 32% whites, 7% coloureds and 1% Asians.⁴⁸

In line with the transformation strategy and the long-term vision of a core Regular Force and a much larger Reserve Force, the SANDF implemented a flexible service system. It resembled the American model of employment, where a career in the military was regarded as an interim period of not more than ten years, and not as a lifetime occupation. The system provided three choices of human resource deployment, and during 1998 the conditions of service for chaplains were amended accordingly. The options were an appointment in the Regular or the Reserve Force for a period of one year (short-term service, STS), appointment for a maximum of ten years (medium-term service, MTS), or an appointment on a permanent long-term service (LTS) contract. Contracts could either be terminated or renewed at the end of the service period, or a change to another period of service could be made. The aim was that only those earmarked for senior command and staff positions should be employed on an LTS contract. It was anticipated that the constant turnover of staff at the junior and middle-rank levels would ensure a competent Reserve Force, while the expertise gained by the staff could also serve them well in a civilian working environment. Most chaplains were appointed on the medium-term contracts, ranging from three to ten years.⁴⁹

Training in the SANDF followed a dynamic adult-learning approach. Instead of functional training, the emphasis fell on individual development and equipping identified members for specific positions. It was the task of the SANDF to ensure development opportunities, but individuals had to take responsibility for their own competency development, and this necessitated a greater degree of individual career planning. Opportunities for tertiary education were subject to budget constraints;

48 Van Niekerk, pp. 216-219; M Lekota, "Special word from the Minister of Defence, on value-adding ministry for military chaplains", *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, p. 3; "SANDF Chaplains Service and transformation", *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, p. 22.

49 Van Niekerk, p. 217; Stott. For a discussion on the complexities associated with this system, see M Malan, "Peacebuilding in post-conflict South Africa: the need for a comprehensive demobilisation and remobilisation programme", *African Security Review* 5(4), 1996, <<http://www.issafrika.org/Pubs/ASR/5No4/Peacebuilding.htm>>, accessed 12 July 2011.

and members from the SADC received priority when vacancies for foreign students arose. In 1999, English became the *lingua franca* in communication, with the other ten languages serving as “link” languages. In practice, this meant that the dominant local language in a particular region could serve, alongside of English, as a means of communication.⁵⁰

After 1994, South Africa’s domestic and international strategies revolved around socio-economic matters. Non-traditional factors, such as poverty alleviation, were included in the national military strategy. The objectives of the government’s Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) were written into the *Defence White Paper*, and it was clearly indicated that state resources would in future be allocated to RDP issues, rather than being employed for purely military spending. In line with the viewpoints of African leaders such as Brig. Gen. D Mwamunyange, Head of Military Intelligence in Tanzania, the *Defence Review* identified socio-economic issues as the greatest threat to internal and regional stability.⁵¹ In 2003, Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba stated at a SADC conference that “Mother Africa is at the crossroads, because of the socio-economic crisis she finds herself in – Africa is bleeding”.⁵² This so-called “guns and butter” debate also influenced the mission and strategy of the Chaplains Service. The core function of the Chaplains Service was identified as the provision of ethical, spiritual and moral support and guidance to members of the Department of Defence (DOD); but, according to the Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Mluleki George, this could not happen in a vacuum. He urged the Chaplains Service to become involved in meeting basic human needs such as proper nutrition, health facilities, proper clothing, equity and ethnic sensitivity; not only by providing a counselling service, but also by serving as a proactive lobby to ensure that these issues would be attended to.⁵³

Social problems and ethical issues became the major work-field for chaplains. This tied in with the SANDF’s policy regarding a Civic Education Programme for the military. The programme is based on the values of the Constitution and designed to instill cohesion, pride and confidence in the SANDF. Aspects covered in training include, amongst others, human rights, the rights and duties of soldiers,

50 Matanzima, pp. 66-72; Winkates, p. 464.

51 Winkates, p. 466; D Mwamunyanga, “Building regional security in Southern Africa”, in Cilliers, pp. 8-14.

52 Editorial Staff, “Conferences and Workshops”, *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, pp. 18-20.

53 Nathan, pp. 44-46; Winkates, p. 455; M George, “Address at the SANDF Chaplains Annual Conference, Drakensberg, 21 February 2006”, issued by the Ministry of Defence, <<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2006/06022216151001.htm>>, accessed 23 July 2011. Some writers argue that it is neither cost-effective, nor in the interests of civil society to involve the military in economic upliftment projects. For more on these arguments, see J Cock, “Introduction” in Cock and Mckenzie, pp. 1-24; G Cawthra, “Guns or butter? Growth, development and security” in Cock and Mckenzie, pp. 25-40; Shelton and Alden, pp. 353-356.

the rule of law, non-discrimination and civil supremacy over the armed forces.⁵⁴ On 15 February 2000, the Minister of Defence, Mr Lekota, expanded this programme with the introduction of a Code of Conduct that must be signed by each individual member of the SANDF. The Code was introduced during a dedication service in the Garrison Church on Robben Island. More than a hundred chaplains signed it at this occasion, committing themselves to, *inter alia*, respect for democracy and civil control of the SANDF and regard for human rights, irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, culture, language or sexual orientation. Some of the dignitaries who attended the function included Lt Col (Rev.) ESK Haikali (Chaplain General from Namibia), Maj. (Rev.) G Ngwira (Chaplain General from Zambia) and Capt. (Rev.) DT Mapiitse (Chaplain General from Botswana). According to Van Niekerk, the occasion furthered a spirit of fraternity amongst chaplains, committing them to a shared vision of the future.⁵⁵

In 2001 the DOD launched the Masibambisane Project to fight HIV/AIDS. The pandemic held grave consequences for the SANDF's combat readiness; and the Chaplains Service decided to make HIV/AIDS a strategic issue. In partnership with the Surgeon General and in collaboration with the Masibambisane Project, the Chaplains Service devised a strategy with a spiritual, ethical and moral basis in order to address the issue of HIV/AIDS in the DOD. Funds, allocated by the Masibambisane Project and the United States Defence Force HIV/AIDS Prevention Programme, were used to constitute a workgroup, consisting of chaplains, civilian clergy and research experts. The workgroup devised a programme, *Fighting HIV/AIDS through spiritual and ethical conduct*, focusing on preventative measures through the awareness of ethical values. The programme also aims to empower chaplains to render pastoral care and support to infected members during all the stages of their illness. The launch of the programme by the then Deputy Minister of Defence, Ms Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, took place in Pretoria on 27 November 2002. Representatives from various state departments, as well as from 18 different countries, attended the proceedings. The programme became known as the Chaplain General's Value-based Programme (later also referred to as CHATSEC), and Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba expressed the hope that 5 000 members of the SANDF would be reached within two years. Since it was a basic human right of each member of the SANDF to choose his/her own ethical values and not to be patronised by any religious framework, the project had to be spiritually inclusive and acceptable to all members of the SANDF.⁵⁶

54 Matanzima, pp. 69-70; Nathan, pp. 51-53.

55 Van Niekerk, p. 221.

56 FFS Gqiba, "Chaplain General's Corner: what time is it for, in the Chaplains Service?", *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, p. 3; J Dill, "Combating HIV/AIDS in the DOD through spiritual, moral and ethical conduct", *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, pp. 28-31.

In 2003 the programme was extended to other regions in Africa as part of the Spiritual & Moral Support Services Workgroup of the Interstate Defence and Security Committee of the SADC. The workgroup was chaired by Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba. In July 2003, during a conference at Sun City, most SADC countries indicated that they wanted their chaplains to be trained in the programme.⁵⁷

In 2001, Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba outlined the three functional levels of chaplains in a twenty-first-century defence force, namely the tactical, operational and strategic levels. The tactical level denotes the chaplain's relations with individual soldiers, where the latter discuss personal problems in confidentiality with the chaplain. Chaplains should not only be able to understand the military environment and the stress occasioned by deployment and separation from support systems, but should also have the competencies that are needed to prevent suicide attempts and to combat drug and alcohol abuse. Although a chaplain is not expected to be conversant with all religions in the SANDF, he/she should be aware of the burial rituals and calendar events of the different religions, and be able to inform the commander of the special needs connected to holy days and religious observances.

The operational level deals with units and their specific customs and traditions. Without violating the trust of confidentiality placed in him/her by the individual soldier, the chaplain should be able to communicate unit problems to the commander. On deployment, the chaplain takes responsibility for the transportation of religious supplies, the identification of resources at the deployed location, as well as for informing the commander about religious practices in the deployment area. If the chaplain is not deployed with the unit, a visiting schedule should be arranged with the commander. Should unit members die in service, the chaplain must conduct a spiritual memorial service, while bearing in mind the diversity of religious practices and traditions.

The strategic level entails ethics, values and the concept of religion as a human right. Ministry should be based on the non-religious language of ethics and morality, in order to make it possible for chaplains to communicate beyond the boundaries of their religion. In most modern military forces, the emphasis has shifted from warfare to peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and the prevention of conflict. Chaplains therefore have to move from their traditional religious role to one that enables them to relate to civilian organisations such as the Red Cross and the World Council of Churches, and to understand the structures of regional bodies such as the African Union (AU) and the SADC. In line with these expectations, the South African Chaplains Service signed an agreement in September 2003 with

Also see Maasdorp, pp. 60-65, on moral reconstruction and spiritual development in the spirit of *ubuntu*.

57 Editorial Staff, pp. 18-20.

the Canadian Chaplains Service to provide training for South African chaplains in peace support operations.⁵⁸

With this new approach, South African chaplaincy moved from a religion-based support service to one based on ethical and moral values. Expectations with regard to the obligations of chaplains did not differ from those of the previous order, but the emphasis shifted from a denominational and mainly Christian focus to a pluralistic environment and a spiritually inclusive ministry. This is also reflected in Maj. Gen. Gqiba's Christmas address for 2003, in which he identified social injustice, the growing gap between rich and poor and the stigmatisation of people living with HIV/AIDS as the main enemies of the spirit of Christmas. He remarked that Christmas should not be a season for Christological arguments, determining who is religiously correct and who is not, but rather a moment of *ubuntu* for a suffering humanity.⁵⁹

With the termination of apartheid, South Africa's international alignment profile changed from western to African, and in 1994 South Africa became a signatory to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Treaty, committing itself to cooperation in the region. In August 1998 South Africa was called upon, for the first time, to help to stabilise the region, when unrest followed in the wake of the Lesotho general elections of May 1998. The Lesotho government requested military intervention from the SADC, and a peacekeeping force consisting of 600 SANDF troops and 200 Botswana Defence Force troops was deployed in Lesotho from September 1998 to May 1999. This initiative became known as Operation Boleas. Owing to a lack of coordinating peacekeeping plans, no chaplains accompanied the South African troops. The combined force crossed the South African border on 22 September 1998 and immediately met with heavy military resistance. Eleven SANDF soldiers were killed and five wounded. Cpln SG van Niekerk volunteered to serve as chaplain, but he only arrived in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, five days after the conclusion of hostilities. The omission was rectified and Cpln DF de Jager became Brigade Chaplain. Other chaplain appointments followed.⁶⁰

South Africa became involved in several other peacekeeping operations; and in 2010, the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mr Thabang Makwetla, stated that South Africa had been involved in 14 peacekeeping missions in countries such as Burundi, the Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic, the Sudan, the Comoros and

58 FFS Gqiba, "The role of the chaplain in the changing twenty-first century Defence Force", *Diverse Publikasies*, 30 June 2001, p. 22; "Canadian Chaplains Service offers Peace Support Courses to their SA counterparts", *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, p. 9.

59 FFS Gqiba, "Chaplain General's Corner: the social impact of Christmas", *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, p. 3.

60 Winkates, pp. 455-459; Van Niekerk, pp. 219-220.

Liberia. The international community is increasingly minimising its African peace-keeping operations, and it may thus be assumed that South Africa's role in this regard will continue, and most probably be extended depending on the availability of funds.⁶¹

In April 2001 the SANDF Specialist Contingent was deployed in the DRC as part of a UN peacekeeping operation, known as Operation Mistral. Chaplains who accompanied the South African contingent were stationed at Iveco Base, but they also ministered at other bases such as Kananga, Ilebo and Kisangani. Ministry included pastoral care, counselling, ministry by presence, scripture reading and prayer, and arranging contact between SANDF members and their families at home. In October 2001 the Protection Support Detachment of the SANDF was deployed to Burundi to protect returning, formerly exiled political leaders. This initiative became known as Operation Fibre. Ministry was similar to that in the DRC. In keeping with the viewpoint that socio-economic matters should receive priority in Africa, SANDF involvement in the regions where they were stationed consisted of social support and feeding services to the local population, especially to street children and orphans. Chaplains also visited local churches, and good relations were maintained with the local church ministers. In Bujumbura, Burundi, South African troops donated money for the building of a church hall.⁶²

Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba hosted a Chaplains' Conference annually, while chaplains from the various arms and divisions of the SANDF also met regularly. This practice still continues. At these meetings, chaplains receive information with regard to the Chaplain General Division, future planning is carried out, matters of common interest are discussed, and the promotion of unity and friendship is encouraged.⁶³ Reviews on these conferences formed part of the information articles in the new in-house journal, *The Military Chaplain*, which was launched at the

61 DefenceWeb, "Peacekeeping Africa 2010, <<http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com-content&view=article&id/>>, accessed 12 November 2011; E Nibishaka, "South Africa's peace-keeping role in Africa: motives and challenges of peacekeeping", *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftingung* 2, 2011, pp. 5-7.

62 Van Niekerk, pp. 220-221; Mwamunyanga, pp. 8-14; LM Moepya, "A chaplain in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Iveco base: from November 2002 to March 2003", *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, p. 16; RD Nkopodi, "SANDF Chaplains Service and Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC: Operation Mistral 3 in support of United Nation MONUC Mission: during the period April-October 2002", *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, p. 21; MJ Mosoeu, EB Mhlongo, "Chaplains' duties in Burundi, Ops Fibre", *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, p. 17; OA Motdhudi, "The Cplns service rendered by Cpln O.A. Motshudi with 43 SA Brigade during Operation Fibre, First Contingent in Burundi", *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, pp. 16-17; T Mqamkana, "The role of the chaplain during Operation Fibre (15 July-16 November 2002) Bujumbura, Burundi", *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, p. 17.

63 Reviews of these conferences are published in *The Military Chaplain*. See, for instance, *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, pp. 18-20, 32; *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, pp. 8-9, 15, 27.

Chaplain General's Headquarters in Pretoria on 6 December 2002. Information on staff members, SANDF divisions, projects, religious traditions, sporting events and messages from military dignitaries, as well as inspirational columns, comprise part of the contents. Comments hailed the journal as an informative publication of high quality. In 2002, the chief editor was Cpln S Tshelane and the assistant editor, Cpln MT Masuku. The Chaplain General serves as Director.⁶⁴

In 2004, Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba was appointed as South Africa's ambassador to Israel, and a farewell function was hosted in Pretoria on 9 June 2004. Several speakers paid tribute to him. They highlighted his dedication to transformation and to the HIV/AIDS programme. During his term of office as Chaplain General, the Chaplains Service changed from a predominantly white division to one that reflected the demographic profile of South Africa and furthered gender equality. Its theological character changed from a Calvinist DRC-dominated standard to one that accommodated a more inclusive spiritual outlook; and formerly sidelined churches and other religions received more prominence. His relationship with other regional chaplaincies earned him the title "Mr Value, a true son of the soil".⁶⁵

From 11 June 2004, Col. ZA Makalima served as Acting Chaplain General. During October 2004, Cpln M Cornelissen of the DRC was promoted to Brigadier General and appointed as the new Chaplain General of the SANDF.⁶⁶

4. BRIG. GEN. (REV.) M CORNELISSEN,⁶⁷ 2004-2011

When Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen took command as Chaplain General of the SANDF in 2004, the transformation of the Chaplains Service had, to a large degree, been achieved. This was acknowledged by the Chief of the SANDF, Gen.

64 "The launch of the chaplains magazine, 'The Military Chaplain'", *The Military Chaplain* 2(1-2), June 2003, p. 8. Also see "Letters to the Editor", *The Military Chaplain* 2(3-4), December 2003, p. 5.

65 See "Farewell tribute", *The Military Chaplain* 3(2-3), September-October 2004, pp. 11-13; Editorial Comment, *The Military Chaplain* 3(2-3), September-October 2004, p. 2.

66 ZA Makalima, "Chaplain General's Corner: Chaplains Service face challenges head-on", *The Military Chaplain* 3(2-3), September-October 2004, p. 3.

67 In 1979, Brig. Gen. Marius Cornelissen carried out his National Service as a chaplain after completing his studies at the University of Stellenbosch. He was ordained as a Minister of Religion at the DRC congregation of Warrenton in 1980, where he also served as Reserve Chaplain at 93 Ammunition Depot. In 1985 he joined the SADF, serving as chaplain at 3 SAI Battalion Potchefstroom (Infantry Training Unit). He also served at the School of Armour, Bloemfontein, before taking over as Command Chaplain, North West Command, Potchefstroom. He became SSO Reserve Forces Directorate Chaplains Service, and thereafter served first as SSO Policy and Planning and later as SSO Education, Training and Development (ETD). See K Masemola, "Retirement: Brig Gen (Rev) Marius Cornelissen", *The Military Chaplain*, Summer 2011, p. 28; Directorate Personnel, <<http://www.chaplain.mil.za/aboutus/profile.htm>>, accessed 21 October 2011.

Godfrey Ngwenya, in 2005. He wrote that the Chaplains Service had fulfilled the transformation requirements of the *Defence Review*, and that it was among the leading Divisions of the DOD with regard to transformation.⁶⁸ Despite this achievement, the goals of transformation remained part of the mission of chaplaincy, and it was stated that the Chaplains Service would take cognisance of the transformation imperatives of the DOD in future appointments and promotions.⁶⁹ Against this background, it is all the more remarkable that Maj. Gen. (Rev.) Gqiba's successor was a white minister from the DRC. To some extent, this shows that chaplaincy was able to overcome the ideologies of transformation in building a ministry for all. In June 2004 there was a total of 144 chaplains, of whom 66% were black, 26% white, 7% coloured and 1% Asian. These included ten female appointments.⁷⁰

The Reserve Force had 237 chaplains who were used to relieve Regular Force chaplains who were deployed, ill or on leave. During 2004, attempts to facilitate the involvement of Reserve Force chaplains in the course, *Combating HIV/Aids through spiritual and ethical conduct*, met with little success, as only 28 chaplains attended. It was admitted that the system of Reserve Force chaplains did not work well. Many chaplains who were on the Reserve Force lists had become inactive, and this necessitated the updating of data.⁷¹ In 2007, the first-ever conference for Reserve Force chaplains was presented in Durban, and it was attended by most of the SANDF Reserve Chaplains and senior chaplains from the Regular Force. Some of the matters that were reviewed included "Command and control matters", "Spiritual and moral support" and "Deployment of chaplains". Brig. Gen. JJG Gibbs, Deputy Chief Director Defence Reserves, attended the conference and outlined the role of Reserve Force chaplains in Africa. On the last day, the Reserve Force chaplains committed themselves to the provision of spiritual and moral support to members of the DOD, and undertook to participate in the support systems of the units, to attend courses, and to provide and undergo training in the Chaplain General's HIV/AIDS Value-based Programme, also known as *Combating HIV and AIDS through Spiritual and Ethical Conduct* (CHATSEC) courses.⁷²

68 G Ngwenya, "Special word from the Chief of the SANDF", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 3.

69 The mission reads: "The Chaplain Service, representing a cross-section of the religious communities in South Africa, provides spiritual leadership to DOD members at home and on deployment in order to build human capacity that enhances spiritual, ethical and human wholeness. It does so within the context of religious diversity, taking cognisance of the transformational imperatives of the DOD and in support of democratic peace building in Africa."

70 "SANDF Chaplains Service and transformation", *The Military Chaplain* 3(2-3), September-October 2004, p. 22.

71 TJ Molaba, "SANDF Reserve Force Chaplains equipped to combat HIV/AIDS", *The Military Chaplain* 3(2-3), September-October 2004, p. 15; M Cornelissen, "Chaplain General's Corner", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 3.

72 CB Bosiki, "The Reserve Chaplains' Conference", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 26.

Under the guidance of Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen, CHATSEC was prioritised and expanded to include chaplains of the other security forces, the South African Police and the Department of Correctional Services; and the programme was also conveyed across the borders of South Africa to peacekeeping operational areas. The assignment of Cpln VP Nkonyane, stationed at the Military Skills Development Division, included ongoing research on the programme; and in November 2005, a research team developed scientific tools to measure the programme's effectiveness. In the same year, the programme, which had hitherto focused mainly on teaching people to make value-based, ethical decisions, was extended to include the training of all chaplains in giving pastoral care and support to infected members. Cpln (Dr) J Dill was invited to present the programme at a conference on HIV/AIDS treatment and care in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, during September 2006. He emphasised the necessity of a holistic approach and ascribed the success of CHATSEC to the utilisation of an African cultural and spiritual point of departure in making people aware of their daily ethical decision-making processes, namely in terms of the traditional concept of *ubuntu*. Feedback on the presentation was very positive. As early as 2005, Gen. Ngwenya remarked that, as a result of the impact of CHATSEC, it had become one of the most successful programmes offered in and across the borders of South Africa.⁷³

Closely linked to CHATSEC, was the moral regeneration programme that was initiated in 2007. Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen was convinced that the greatest need in South Africa was to enhance the moral fibre of society. Two projects were identified to attain this in the DOD. The first was a conference on moral regeneration. The second was the implementation of a programme, covering 24 ethical themes, in all units and bases. The objective was to support DOD members in making the correct ethical decisions. The conference was held at the Cape Town Convention Centre from 30 to 31 January 2007. The aim of the conference was to create an awareness of the Moral Regeneration Initiative of the government, and to develop a strategy on this matter for the DOD by engaging all relevant stakeholders and government departments. Two hundred people attended the conference. They represented faith-based organisations, national religious forums, religious advisory

73 Ngwenya, p. 3; J Dill and JM Thobakgale, "Combating HIV & AIDS in the DOD through spiritual and ethical support", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, pp. 27-28; CF Blom, "SANDF Chaplains Service and external deployments: Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)", *The Military Chaplain* 3(2-3), September-October 2004, p. 18; M Cornelissen, "Chaplain General's Corner", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 3; F Meulenbeld, "SAMHS CHATSEC programme at Lohatla, 14-16 July 2006", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, p. 29; See Loate, MJ Frantz and ET Masweu, "CHATSEC facilitators programme in the Department of Correctional Services, 20-24 November 2006, Bloemfontein", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, p. 30; J Dill, "Chaplain HIV and Aids treatment and care: conference for military populations in West African countries", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, p. 31.

boards, state departments, academics and senior members of the SANDF. The conference facilitator was Prof. Charles Villa-Vicencio. The aspects that were touched on included, *inter alia*, the question of crime, greed, and the consequences of corruption, which is tantamount to stealing from the poor and the vulnerable. Other points of discussion included the impact of moral issues on the youth, education, families, security services and the media. Some of the outcomes of the conference included an agreement that religious bodies and faith groups should give sound ethical advice in their constituencies, that they should build relations and that they should take care of the vulnerable.⁷⁴ The issue of moral regeneration was also discussed at the Chaplain General's annual conference of 2007. The theme was "Spiritual self-care in order to equip chaplains so that they can support others". Representatives from Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Namibia, Kenya, the Seychelles, Nigeria, Zambia, Botswana, Canada and the United States of America (USA) attended the conference, which, for the first time, took on a military character. The opening ceremony was conducted in the form of a military parade. It also had a strong religious basis, with candle ceremonies, singing and praying. As a result of these endeavours, the concepts "Ethical leadership for commanders" and "Ethical lifestyle for members of the SANDF" were established.⁷⁵

On 29 July 2008, a Charter of Positive Values was adopted at the Waterkloof Air Force Base in Pretoria as part of the Moral Regeneration Movement. The Chaplains Service organised the event in collaboration with the Deputy President's Office and the Department of Arts and Culture. The ceremony consisted of speeches by various dignitaries, and guests were entertained by poets and actors. The Charter was launched in nine languages, and it included values such as respect, loyalty, cultural tolerance, fairness and sound family values.⁷⁶

In Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen's view, it was imperative that an open relationship, conducive to co-operation, should be maintained between the Chaplain General's headquarters and the different Advisory Boards, as the most important stakeholders in the Chaplains Service representing the civilian section of the religious leadership. Meetings were held on a regular basis and Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen also attended synods and church meetings, addressing them on the work of the Chaplains Service. Between 2005 and 2007, he addressed 26 religious groups all over the country. During one of these occasions in August 2007, he also met with the Muslim Judicial Council in Cape Town. Every four to six years, chaplaincy policies

74 "Chaplain General's Moral Regeneration Conference", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 25; M Cornelissen, "Chaplain General's Corner", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, p. 3.

75 MJ Radithhalo, "Chaplain General's annual conference of 2007", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 27; Masemola, p. 28.

76 RM Ngwanya, "Adoption of the Charter of Positive Values", *The Military Chaplain* 7(2), Summer 2008, pp. 6-7.

were revised and brought in line with recommendations from the different Advisory Boards, when members of the Chaplain General's Staff Council met with other selected chaplains. Annually, the Staff Council convenes during August to plan for the following year.⁷⁷

One of the major features of the SANDF in the twenty-first century is its commitment to the African continent. At the bi-annual conference of the Interstate Defence and Security Council (ISDSC), held from 8 to 11 August 2005 in Lusaka, Zambia, the Chaplain General of South Africa was re-elected as chairperson. South African chaplaincy services continue to assist with the establishment of chaplaincy services and the training of chaplains in the region, and to provide support in the fight against HIV/AIDS and the moral regeneration of the region.⁷⁸

Spiritual and moral support to deployed members of the DOD and their families remained one of the core functions of the Chaplains Service, especially with regard to the DRC, Burundi and the Sudan. The SANDF became involved in the Sudan in support of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), under the code name Operation Cordite, in July 2004. During deployment, outreaches to the local church communities, orphans and street children were organised. An orphanage was established in Burundi, and at times there were as many as 150 children receiving moral, spiritual and material support. The Chaplains Service also assisted Burundian women who had lost their husbands during warfare to obtain financial grants from the Burundian government. In the DRC, food was donated on a monthly basis to schools, and troops also sponsored school fees and clothes. In one instance, a student who was employed as a cleaner in the SANDF received assistance with his medical studies. Reserve Force chaplains were also deployed externally. The first was Cpln M Nomtoto, who served with the Contingent Command and Support Unit (CCSU) at Inkala Base, Kinshasa, during 2006. In reviewing deployment, chaplains often declared that it was an enriching experience which challenged them to construct a ministry of pastoral care that could render an account of the spiritual and cultural resources of Africa. The first two women chaplains, Cpln MS Ngombane and Cpln FV Mnyanda, were deployed in Operation Mistral during 2008. They proudly represented the Chaplains Service, and feedback on their contributions was very positive. It became customary for senior members of the SANDF to visit the deployed troops during the course of December as part of a goodwill team. From 2006, selected

77 "Chaplain General meets religious bodies", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 9; M Cornelissen, "Chaplain General's Corner", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 3; Security Services Christian Advisory Board (SSCAB) gets new leadership, p. 13; "Chaplains Service review religious policy", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 10; "Chaplain General 2006/7 planning session", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, p. 14; "Chaplain General planning session", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 10.

78 "Chaplains Service and external visits: SANDF chaplains and ISDSC", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 29; Masemola, p. 28.

representatives of religious groups, including the Chaplain General and his wife, became part of this team, and they visited Burundi, the DRC and the Sudan.⁷⁹

Apart from the African continent, chaplains are also deployed to Marion and Gough Islands, as well as Antarctica. Deployments are organised by the Department of Tourism and Environmental Affairs and usually last for a period ranging from three to six months. The chaplains' main task is to ensure the well-being of the expedition team.⁸⁰

The first trauma counselling course for chaplains started during May 2008 at the University of South Africa (UNISA). It is a six-month course, and a certificate is awarded on completion thereof. Although it does not entitle chaplains to register as trauma counsellors, it enhances their skills in dealing with trauma situations. Chaplains can also enroll at the North West University, Potchefstroom Campus, for a course in preserving life stories. This versatile course focuses on spiritual and emotional processes, and is conducive to reconciliation and healing in society.⁸¹ Chaplains are also trained to face combat situations through participation in operations, such as Exercise Seboka, which was held at the Lohatla training area in the Northern Cape during 2005. Here, they were confronted with the realities of combat situations, facing the fact that chaplains are also vulnerable, and that they, too, could be maimed or killed. Chaplains may experience the same emotions of anxiety, fear and uncertainty as the troops, but they should still be able to function under these circumstances as "hope-givers". Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen also oversaw the development of an M.Phil. programme for chaplains – the first in Africa and only the third in the world.⁸²

79 DefenceWeb; "SANDF Chaplains Service and external deployments: Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)", *The Military Chaplain*, 3(2-3), September-October 2004, pp. 18-19; M Cornelissen, "Chaplain General's Corner", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 3; "Chaplains Service and external deployment: Burundi/The Democratic Republic of the Congo", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, pp. 20-21; "Chaplains Service and external deployment: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Sudan", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, pp. 23-24; JM Molefe, "SANDF chaplains and external deployments: the story of Cpln J.M. Molefe and Oliver Bashonga Wetemwami in the DRC", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 20; ET Masweu, "Operational deployments: deployed chaplains", *The Military Chaplain* 7(2), Summer 2008, p. 11.

80 BA Mabuza, "Islands ministry", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 20; M Smit, "Chaplain support to environmental services: deployment to Antarctica", *The Military Chaplain* 7(1), Winter 2008, pp. 14-15.

81 Masemola, p. 28; P Oberholzer, "Training of chaplains: trauma counselling course", *The Military Chaplain* 7(1), Winter 2008, p. 20; AG Herbst, "Preserving life stories", *The Military Chaplain* 7(1), Winter 2008, p. 21; AG Herbst, "Memory work short course", *The Military Chaplain* 7(2), Summer 2008, p. 18.

82 SG van Niekerk, "Chaplains during conventional operations", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 19; SG van Niekerk, "Chaplain's operational course", *The Military Chaplain* 6(1), Autumn 2007, p. 18.

The chaplains' spouses' organisation of the old dispensation ceased to exist with the formation of the SANDF, but in 2005 the need to revive this organisation was pointed out. A meeting of Senior Chaplains and their spouses, including the Chaplain General and his wife, took place at Bronkhorstspuit on 11 June 2005. The matter was discussed and it was unanimously agreed that the project should continue. A committee comprised of volunteers was formed. Its task was to organise meetings for the spouses of those chaplains who resided in the vicinity of Pretoria. It was envisaged that these meetings would be extended to the entire country at a later stage. During meetings of the SANDF Spouses' Forum, the need for an organisation of chaplains' spouses on a national front became more pronounced. A special breakfast for the spouses of chaplains from the Tshwane area was chaired by the wife of the Chaplain General, Mrs Lizette Cornelissen, on 29 September 2007. The way forward was discussed, and regular meetings and a formal constitution were proposed.⁸³

In 2008 there were 155 chaplains, of whom 67% were black, 24% white, 8% coloured and 1% Asian. Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen's vision for these chaplains was one of holistic support with regard to their ministry and pastoral care, their social and ethical challenges and their career development. In his view, the responsibilities of the Chaplain General's office included the provision of specialist advice on religious support, the determination of policy and strategic direction, the exercise of performance control, and the provision of research capabilities in religious matters. Needs in the SANDF should be identified and addressed accordingly, while the Chaplains Service should also provide specialist advice to the military leadership of the SANDF. Regionally, the Chaplains Service should provide spiritual and moral support during deployment and in relationships with neighbouring countries. Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen's motto was that "you cannot change the past, but you can change the future". This can be achieved by listening to one another and by acknowledging each other's right to freedom of choice and association. Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen not only succeeded in shifting the focus of South African chaplaincy services to ministry and pastoral care; he also hosted the first-ever World Chaplain Generals' Conference in 2009, during which he was elected as the first chair of the Chaplain Generals of the World. Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen retired at the end of 2011, having served as Chaplain General for seven years. On 1 January 2012, he was succeeded by Brig. Gen. (Rev.) MA Jamangile as Chaplain General. At the Handing and Taking Over-ceremony on 24 February 2012, the Chief of Staff, Joint Operations, Maj. Gen. Dlambulo Tshiki, commended

83 "Birth of Chaplains' spouses organisation", *The Military Chaplain* 4(2), Summer 2005, p. 17; DG Masuku, "Chaplains' spouses in Tshwane (Pretoria) area meet", *The Military Chaplain* 6(2), Summer 2007, p. 16.

Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen for his loyalty and his contributions to the strategy of the Department of Defence.⁸⁴

5. CONCLUSION

If transformation is defined only in terms of ethnic representation, it can be stated that the Chaplains Service had reached its goals by 2004, and that it had also made progress in terms of the requirements of gender equality. This achievement is all the more remarkable if it is taken into account that a Chaplain General from a white, DRC background was appointed in 2004. This did not signify a continuation of the old order. Despite the fact that some basic guidelines of ministry, such as pastoral support, are not subject to change, the Chaplains Service underwent radical changes with regard to operational structures, names, appointment contracts and the language of communication. Coupled with the outcomes of transformation, these aspects changed the outward image of the Chaplains Service, to the extent that it no longer resembles the pre-1994 order. Transformation was not accomplished in an emotional vacuum; and Brig. Gen. (Rev.) Cornelissen's appointment attested to the fact that the Chaplains Service was able to overcome the obstacles of prejudice and ideology. This was achieved by a more fundamental change in the nature and ethos of military chaplaincy in South Africa, enabling chaplains from different backgrounds to foster an inclusive sense of belonging.

The integration of the statutory and the non-statutory forces brought together divergent structures, with differing viewpoints on religion. In the statutory forces, the point of reference for ministry was Christianity, mostly presented in a denominational context; and the predominance of the DRC, both in the SADF and in South African society, determined the nature of ministry as Calvinist, conservative and intermingled with the distinctive nationalistic features of the Afrikaner culture. In the non-statutory forces, the mediums of worship differed, and the approach followed was more closely connected with the African culture – and in some cases, even with the disapproval of religion. The Chaplains Service became the bridging point for different viewpoints, and transformation changed chaplaincy from a denominationally-based ministry of religious teachings to an inclusive spiritual experience, based on moral and ethical values.

Programmes aimed at enhancing ethical thinking and the ability to make value-based decisions, received prominence. The influence of moral values on the spreading of HIV/AIDS and the effect that this could have on the combat-readiness

84 Masemola, p. 28; Interview: Bredenkamp – Cornelissen; P Mafenya, "Breaking news: SANDF appoints new Chaplain General", *The Military Chaplain*, Summer 2011, p. 5; L Tlhaole, "The new spiritual leader of the SANDF inaugurated", *South African Soldier* 19(3), March 2012, pp. 44-45.

of the SANDF, prompted the Chaplains Service to make the fight against this pandemic a priority. The successes in this regard spread to the other security forces in South Africa and over the borders to SADC countries and the peacekeeping operational regions. Here, the Chaplains Service became involved in outreaches to reduce Africa's major threat – the socio-economic plight of the African people and their children.

The Chaplains Service is playing a major role in transforming the SANDF into an asset to the country and a bastion of democratic peace-building in Africa, by providing spiritual guidance to assist people in becoming spiritually, ethically and socially empowered. The example set by the Chaplains Service with regard to reconciliation and cultural tolerance will remain a beacon in South African history.