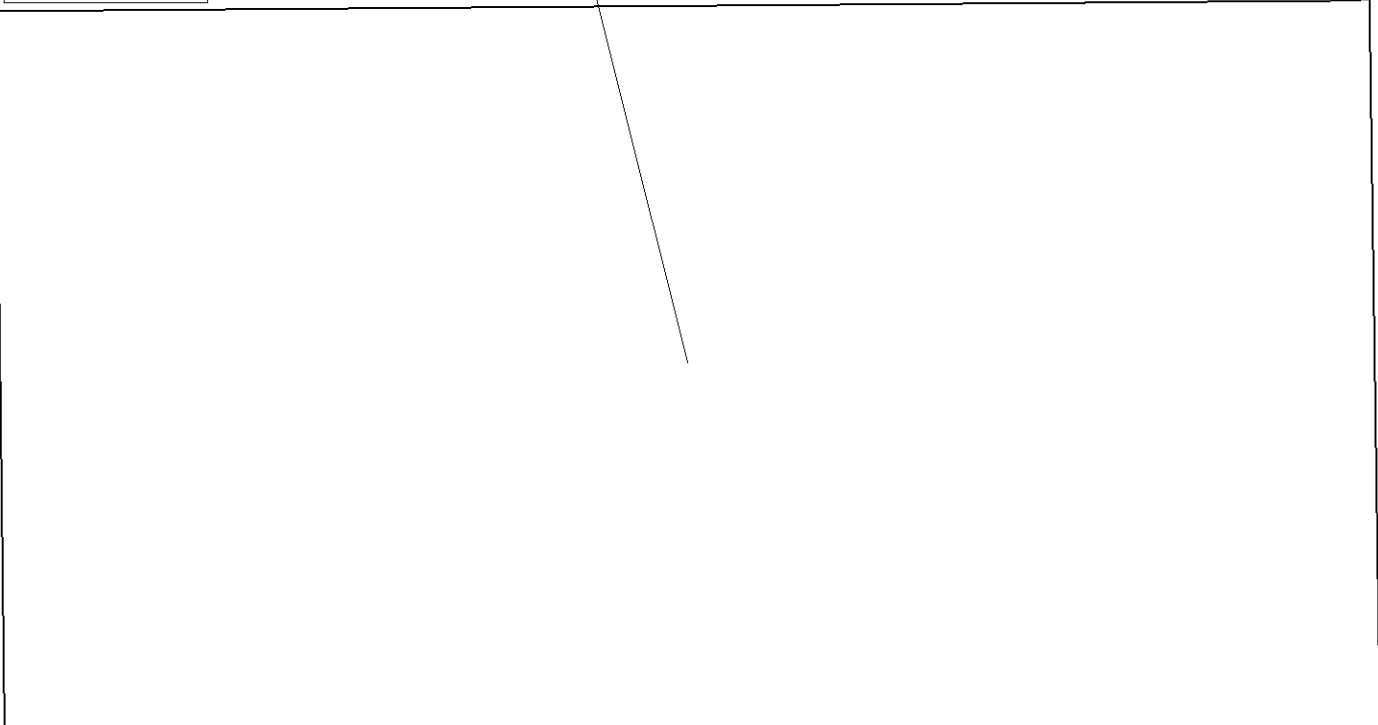


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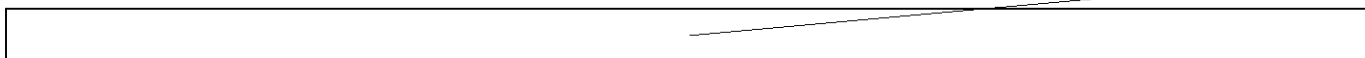
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/\*\*\*\*\* THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE \*\*\*\*\*/

BODY

COUNTRY: (U) SOUTH AFRICA (SF).

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SUBJ: [Redacted] SOUTH AFRICA--NEW DEPUTY OF DEFENCE NAMED -- MEIRING, MODISE, AND KASRILS -- WHAT A PHOTO OP (U)

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

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- DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
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SOURCE: (U)

SUMMARY: (C) MP RONNIE ((KASRILS)) HAS BEEN NAMED DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE. THE FORMER CHIEF OF MK INTELLIGENCE AND CURRENT MEMBER OF THE SA COMMUNIST PARTY IS NOT A VERY POPULAR FIGURE AMONG THE SENIOR WHITE MILITARY LEADERSHIP.

TEXT: 1. (U) SEE SUMMARY

2. (U) THE FOLLOWING PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE 24 JUNE

- BEGIN TEXT: FORMER UMKHONTO WE SIZWE ((SPEAR OF THE NATION; ANC MILITARY WING)) INTELLIGENCE CHIEF MR RONNIE ((KASRILS)) HAS BEEN APPOINTED DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE, PRESIDENT NELSON ((MANDELA)) ANNOUNCED ON FRIDAY. HE SAID IN A STATEMENT THAT DEFENCE MINISTER MR. JOE ((MODISE)) HAD MADE REPRESENTATIONS TO HIM ABOUT THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SENIOR PERSONNEL TO RUN HIS MINISTRY.

HE HAD AGREED TO THE REQUEST AFTER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE SANDF AND THE CHALLENGES IT FACED IN THE VITAL PROCESS OF INTEGRATING THE DIFFERENT ARMED FORCES.

MR MANDELA SAID MR KASRILS HAD EXPERIENCE IN MILITARY AFFAIRS AS A LEADING OFFICER OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE.

HIS EXPERIENCE, EXPERTISE, AND SKILLS ENABLED HIM TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE DEFENCE SUBCOUNCIL OF THE TEC.

"I AM CONFIDENT THAT HE WILL DO THE SAME IN HIS NEW ROLE AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE," HE SAID.

MR. KASRILS APPOINTMENT BRINGS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DEPUTY MINISTERS TO 13.

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HE BECAME A MEMBER OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE (MK) ON ITS CREATION AND CARRIED OUT ACTS OF SABOTAGE BEFORE BEING SENT ABROAD FOR MILITARY TRAINING.

AFTER SEVERAL YEARS IN THE ANC OFFICE IN DAR ES SALAAM MR KASRILS AND HIS WIFE ELEANOR MOVED TO LONDON WHERE HE WORKED TO ESTABLISH UNDERGROUND MK UNITS IN SOUTH AFRICA. DURING THIS PERIOD HE ALSO CO-WROTE SEVERAL BOOKS ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHER AND SOCIALIST BERTRAND RUSSELL.

IN 1977 MR KASRILS MOVED TO ANGOLA TO BECOME POLITICAL INSTRUCTOR IN THE MK CAMPS AND LATER POLITICAL COMMISSAR FOR ANGOLA.

HE WAS BASED IN LUSAKA BETWEEN 1985 AND 1989. HE WAS CHIEF OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE FROM 1983-1988 AND WAS A CO-OPTED MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FROM 1987.

WHEN HE RETURNED ILLEGALLY TO THE COUNTRY AT THE END OF 1989, MR KASRILS WAS HUNTED BY THE SECURITY FORCES FOR HIS ROLE IN OPERATION VULA AND REPEATEDLY ESCAPED ARREST BEFORE BEING INDEMNIFIED IN JUNE 1991. HE WAS ELECTED TO THE NEC (NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE) AND THE NATIONAL WORKING COMMITTEE AND THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE SACP.

KASRILS AUTOBIOGRAPHY "ARMED AND DANGEROUS"; MY UNDERCOVER STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID" WAS PUBLISHED EARLIER THIS YEAR. END ARTICLE

(b)(1); Sec. 1.4(c)

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