

**ADDRESS BY UMKHONTO WE SIZWE AMRY
COMMANDER, COMRADE JOE MODISE AT
MK MILITARY SEMINAR, HELD IN
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, APRIL 25 -26,
1990.**

Members of the NEC, commanders, commissars, officers and soldiers of Umkhonto we Sizwe I welcome you all to this important MK seminar which will examine strong and weak points in the conduct of armed struggle. This seminar will also examine the place and role of MK soldiers in the current political situation as well as in conditions of peace. You are expected to identify problem areas and make suggestions and proposals for the way forward.

You are also called upon, comrades to discuss seriously and in a practical way the character of the future South African army.

It is my hope, and certainly the hope of many people in our Movement, that honest and constructive debate on all these issues will point the way forward. This is the spirit with which we begin our deliberations.

The seminar takes place within the epoch-making developments in the sub-region at the centre of which are the heroic mass struggles of our people. As a result of

these mass struggles coupled with the telling blows of the people's army which reached the highest levels in 1988, the apartheid regime has been thrown into a deep and irreversible crisis. All its schemes and programmes of reform have failed.

Today the country's economy is shattered, spiralling inflation is the order of the day. Millions of our people are unemployed and homeless. The masses of our people continue to reject white political domination and are embroiled in political struggle for a new order.

In this situation MK operations continue, though they are small and less than those in 1988. The feeling of MK and that of our activists and people is that major operations should be mounted to further destabilise the regime. The people's expectations are that they should not only be mounted but sustained. You will have to examine the feasibility of such operations.

In the Bantustans our people are putting up courageous resistance to domination, calling for the incorporation of the Bantustans into South Africa and the resignation of puppet administrations such as that of the tyrant Mangope. Brutal repression has failed to dampen their spirit of resistance.

This historic event is taking place shortly after the unbanning of the ANC, that has direct implications to the furtherance of our national liberation struggle. The popularity of our Movement has grown, and so has that of Umkhonto we Sizwe. The popularity of the people's army - M.K. has been characterised by young activists carrying symbolic AK's during funerals of victims of police and security forces terror and other mass gatherings of our people. This admiration and support should be harnessed and channelled in the interests of our struggle.

Our army has welcomed most sincerely the release of our leaders who have greatly strengthened the leadership of our Movement. we are stronger today than ever before.

It must be stated loud and clear that MK has had modest beginnings when the young fighting arm of the people, was launched to fight government policies of racial oppression and violence. The small units that carried out the first sabotage explosions on December 16, 1961, have grown to be a force that constitute a direct threat to the apartheid regime.

What we should underline is that MK has contributed in the bringing about of the present political climate in our country. It is not accidental that de Klerk calls for

the suspension of the armed struggle. This climate has been brought about partly by the ingenuous sacrifices of MK men such as those of G-Five, combatants like Anthony Fransch and major operations like those of Koeberg, Voortrekkerhoogte, Sasol, Pretoria car bomb and Slurry. The memories of all those courageous and daring fighters who fought in these actions and others will live forever.

These sacrifices and activities of the ANC and those of its armed wing, MK, have enhanced the image of our Movement, making the ANC the unchallenged leader of the struggle for change in South Africa. It is the combined efforts of the ANC, the Mass Democratic Movement and MK on the one hand and the impact of the international community - boycott sanctions campaigns on the other hand that forces the enemy to the negotiations table.

The growth of MK has not been without success and failures, weaknesses and strong points. We have not been able to sustain the momentum of the 1988 operations. Why? We have also not been able to gain a foothold in the rural areas. Our efforts in involving the workers and the peasants in armed actions in sufficient numbers have fallen short. Why is it that we have failed to establish a "Ho Chi Minh trail"?

In Natal in the last three year over three thousand (3 000) people have been murdered in cold blood by Inkatha

and its warlords. Thousands have been made homeless and many have fled and continue to leave the area in fear of their lives. Allegations of police connivance in support of Inkatha continue to come out. In Bophutatswana, tyrant Lucas Mangope murdered peaceful demonstrators. The memories of Braaglagte, Odie and other places are still fresh in our minds.

The seminar will have to address the afore mentioned weaknesses and consider how MK can act and intervene effectively in defence of our people in these situations.

Comrades the conditions that led to the launching of armed struggle, with the formation of the military wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe still stand. The state of emergency has continued to exist for more than three years, over 32 000 people have been detained in this period. Arrests, torture, murder and killings of patriots continue unabated. The world recently witnessed the cold-blood murder of 9 peaceful demonstrators by racist police in Sebokeng at the beginning of this month.

Our Deputy President comrade Nelson Mandela clearly stated upon his release from a life sentence imprisonment on February 11, 1990 that "...The factors which necessitated the armed struggle still exist today. We have no option but to continue."

We have to continue with the armed liberation struggle until there is an agreement on the cessation of hostilities. For as long as there is no such agreement, we have no alternative but to continue the armed struggle. We however wish to reiterate our Movement's readiness to enter into an agreement with the Pretoria regime as stated in the Harare Declaration as soon as a climate conducive for a negotiated settlement exists.

In the meantime, all commanders, commissars and ~~combatants of the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe~~ remain active in their posts committed to the strategic goal of overthrowing the Pretoria regime by armed force for the seizure of power for the creation of a peaceful and democratic South Africa.

We must therefore reflect seriously on how to develop the combat capacity of the people's army in the present phase of our struggle. We must consider every expansion of MK and the building of a new South African army given the legal space provided by the new political climate at home.

The legalisation of our Movement provide us with new opportunities to build MK into a strong and efficient

force capable of unleashing telling blows to the enemy.

This must be fully exploited by:

- a) building a capable underground machinery;
- b) mobilising manpower and material resources;
- c) improving and perfecting our means for material and personnel infiltration;
- d) utilising the space created by the Bantustans crisis for our projected military programmes;
- e) elevating the capacity of the entire MK by instituting specialised training in those wings of the army in which we lag behind;
- f) putting together and training a highly skilled officers corps.

In building the army, we have to base ourselves on the idea of people's war and on the need to involve the entire people in their own defence. This entails a massive recruitment drive for MK in a manner and scope we have not seen before.

Only thus, will we be able to extend, develop and build MK into a powerful people's army to be developed into a well-trained regular, modern army. At the same time whilst building this modern army, we will have to organise along side its extensive popular defence units, militia units military police and a strong reserve force capable of engaging and defeating the enemy on the battlefield.

The seminar is further called upon to consider practical steps in building a regular standing army. These include ideas on the division of the army into branches and creation of special forces. The nucleus of that standing army is MK with its guerilla detachments which will compose its infantry. Modest steps have been taken in training our combatants in other branches such as helicopter pilots and groundstaff, jet pilots and ground staff, communications, political officers and the navy. It is of great importance that we expand and develop training in these areas as well as in other branches.

Is it not time that we think about the formations of special forces such as paratroopers and the creation of military police force? It will be necessary at the same time to embark on training of military legal experts whose numbers and experience will grow with the young army.

Some points of crucial importance include:

a) a single command structure is a fundamental principle in building the army. It is the only meaningful way of command and control of forces. Through it, training and education of personnel, organisation, discipline and high standard of combat readiness are ensured.

b) professionalism: we need to instil a spirit of devotion, dedication and professionalism amongst the cadres. Dedication to the cause of our people and loyalty to the Movement's aims and objectives together with professional training will undoubtedly guarantee military capability and combat effectiveness of the young army. The mastery and skilful use of military equipment and armament under any circumstances is of paramount importance, if we are to engage the enemy and win.

That is why the building of an officers corps, who are organisers, educators, commanders and commissars necessary to run the army scientifically, is an important task that we cannot afford to delay any longer.

c) recruitment: we must launch without delay a massive and extensive recruitment drive that covers every town, village and workplace throughout the length and breadth of our country. Such a drive should first and foremost aim to involve the oppressed majority in their thousands whilst seeking the active participation of all sectors of our society.

Particular attention should be paid to the recruitment of women, who constitute a sizeable percentage of our population into the army. For too long we have paid little or no attention at all to this important section of our Movement.

d) training: it will be necessary for the seminar to reflect on the type of training that will be required to meet the political ideological, technical and personpower demands of today's army. Special efforts must be made to upgrade our cadres and to recruit personnel with acceptable formal education to receive skilled training in all these branches of the army. This should not be done at the expense of the cadres with little formal education whose upgrading should continue without hindrance.

Other aspects of a regular army that merit our attention include the formulation of a military code which will ensure discipline among the forces and proper exercise of justice on the part of those in command. This code should also cover rules and regulations for carrying out internal duties and for the maintenance of internal order.

In conclusion, I want to stress that we have before us the great task of laying firmly the foundations of the future South African army which will grow to be the sword and shield of our people. This is a responsibility we cannot shirk.

I also want to emphasise that our people have great confidence in the ANC and its military wing, MK. Our performance and line of action has aroused great

expectations amongst our people, supporters and friends.

We must live up to these expectations.