

SA, Cuba cement defence ties

South Africa and Cuba have strengthened cooperation in the defence field with the signing of a memorandum of understanding.



(Image: GCIS)

Defence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu and Cuban Vice President of the Council of Ministers Ulises Rosales del Toro signed the Agreement on Defence Cooperation in Pretoria on Tuesday, 10 January 2012.

"Of significance is the cooperation in areas such as military veterans, defence industries, military health, and training and exchange programmes. These and many others must be pursued with vigour and the enthusiasm it deserves," Sisulu said.

South Africa could also draw lessons from Cuba regarding the citizen force.

"Furthermore, of greater importance for us is to learn from you about the citizen force which will make our people responsible during any human and manmade disaster at any given time," she added.

SA youth could learn from Cuba

Sisulu said that South African youth could learn from the Cuban value system, which was characterised by a deep sense of patriotism, culture and work ethic.

"... We can learn a great deal from the Armed Forces of Cuba and I believe that Cuba can, as it has always, contribute and share her expertise with our defence forces to the benefit not only of South Africa but the region and the continent at large," the minister added.

She noted the long-standing relationship South Africans shared with Cuba, adding that Cuban people had played a role in

the fight against apartheid.

Del Toro said the agreement would help both countries prepare for the future at a time when there were new weapons, strategic thinking and methods of fighting.

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