

FROM: NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

TO: CODESA SECRETARIATE

RE: UTILIZATION OF THE RESEARCH FACILITIES AND SERVICES OF THE MILITARY RESEARCH GROUP FOR PURPOSES OF WORKING GROUP 1.

Significant areas of Working Group 1 - outlined in both the points and themes of the Working Group - refer to the role of the security forces during the immediate, medium and long-term scenarios (particularly points (c); (e); (g); (h) and (j)). The areas covered by these points are extensive and refer to a variety of topics - civil-military relations; the role of the armed forces in transition; the role of the intelligence community etc. It is the contention of the N.I.C. that specialist research is required to provide both the background and the direction essential for the Working Group's success in this sphere.

The accessing of military and security-related information is problematised by the history of defence-related and strategic studies institutes in this country. Most have enjoyed close relationships with the state and the present S.A.D.F. and have, consequently, been deprived of much legitimacy within the broader community. Their enquiries have, in most instances, been seen as supportive and partisan towards the state. It is essential therefore to acquire the services of an institute/group/network which possesses institutional autonomy, credibility and the ability to provide research on a wide range of military-related topics to the Working Group.

The N.I.C. contends that the recently formed Military Research Group is an ideal candidate in this regard. It is an independent network of academics, strategic study theorists and scholars of civil military relations who aim to broaden the scope of military-related research (see accompanying flyer). N.I.C. strongly recommends that the services of this Group be enlisted in support of the Working Group.

Defence and Security in a Democratic South Africa

- What form will the integration of MK, the homeland Defence Forces and the S.A.D.F. assume?
- What will be the nature of Defence policy, posture and strategy both in the current transition and the future?

These questions, and others, remain crucial not only for all South Africans but also for progressive organizations as well.

MILITARY RESEARCH GROUP

The Military Research Group (MRG) is an independent group of progressive researchers, policy analysts and academics involved in strategic study and military-related research. The MRG was formed in late November 1991 to co-ordinate research being conducted into areas of military matters by progressive organizations and individuals.

The MRG has grouped military research into four major categories:

1. Defence and Transition.
2. Defence in a Democratic South Africa.
3. The future of the Armaments Industry.
4. The restructuring of the South African Intelligence environment.

AREAS OF RESEARCH

In line with the above-mentioned categories, the MRG has prioritised the following areas of research for the future:

- alternative security theory;
- the revision of prevailing threat analyses and perceptions;
- the dynamics of regional security;
- future defence policy, postures and doctrines;
- the parameters of civil-military relations and forms of political accountability;
- the modalities of integration;
- restructuring of the intelligence environment;
- women and militarization;
- environmental issues and the military;
- the arms industry and its conversion potential;

- defence economics;
- current military initiatives within the state and society;
- transitional politics and the dynamics of civil-military relations and many, many more issues.

AIMS

At present the aims of the MRG are fourfold:

1. To provide ongoing and thorough research into specified areas of military-related research.
2. To allow progressive organizations and individuals to contribute to and influence the outcome of defence and military-related debates both in the current transition and a democratic South Africa.
3. To provide a service to progressive organizations and individuals requiring either research into and/or information on military-related research.
4. To network with both local and international organizations, think-tanks and individuals involved in research of a military or strategic studies nature.

CONTACT INFORMATION

MRG welcomes participation in its proposed activities and plans to hold regular seminars in this regard. Interested parties can contact the MRG at the following telephone numbers or addresses:

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