

SANDF honours those serving with distinction

By [Dennis Cruwagen](#)

14 Feb 2013

CAPE TOWN: SANDF head General Solly Shoke has for the first time in Cape Town handed out medals to men and women who have served or are still serving the nation with distinction.

At a SANDF medal ceremony in Wynberg on Wednesday, he praised the members for their military professionalism, loyalty and dedication, adding that the medal recipients were examples of this.

General Shoke gave medals to those who had served the country for periods ranging from 50, 40 and 30 years. Lieutenant-General AM Shilubane (retired) and Captain J Nel, one of the oldest people still in uniform, were given medals for 50 year's service. Medals were also handed out posthumously.

He had always held the view that soldiering was a calling. It didn't matter in which arm of the SANDF personnel served because "once you are in the SANDF uniform you are called to serve and not to be served".

He said he was concerned about a culture of entitlement which seemed to be creeping into the defence force, where some "instead of putting the interests of the organization and the country, put their rights and freedoms above everything else". He said this would be opposed.

"We are here to serve the people of our country. We should serve the interest of the people first," General Shoke said.

The SANDF was committed to supporting other government departments and the people of South Africa.

This was illustrated by its anti-poaching operations in the Kruger National Park, where it was doing well against criminals attacking the country's heritage; disaster relief support operations in neighbouring Mozambique; and helping to secure the 2013 Africa Cup of Nations tournament.

The SANDF was also involved in operations in support of the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, counter piracy operations in the Mozambique Channel as well as in the Central Africa Republic (CAR).