



**MINISTRY OF POLICE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Good Afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

This morning I met with the Minister of State Security, Mr David Mahlobo, the Executive Mayor of Ekurhuleni, Mr Mzwandile Masina, the MEC of Community Safety, Ms Sizakele Nkosi-Malobane, the top management of the Police as well as the leadership of Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) which included the CEO of ACSA, Mr Bongani Maseko, the GM of O.R. Tambo International Airport, Ms Bongiwwe Pityi and ACSA's Group Manager for Security, Mr Jason Tshabalala. This meeting was informed both by the ongoing concern around safety and security and the strategic nature of O.R. Tambo International Airport, as one of the country's national key points.

O.R. Tambo International Airport is the biggest and the busiest airport in South Africa. O.R. Tambo International Airport is not only a national key point, but also plays a very strategic role in our country, last year alone, approximately 21 million passengers passed through the airport, on this basis, it remains the gateway to Africa as well as opens the door to millions of international guests visiting our country annually. Therefore its security is of paramount importance to the South African Police Service, as well as the country as a whole.

As the Police Minister, on 6 June 2017, I visited O.R. Tambo International Airport and met with Airport Management, to assess the state of security, and I must admit that I was shocked by the low level of policing and police visibility at the airport. I shared this concern with our parliamentarians in Parliament that same day, and assured them that appropriate steps will be taken to correct the situation.

As part of this morning's meeting, we received a briefing from Airport Management on the nature of crimes being committed at the airport, like the R20m armed robbery where criminals impersonated police officers. Another example, is a cash in transit that occurred on the 01st of April where cash in transit was blown up with explosives on the R24 highway.

On the 15th May, a high-jacking and murder took place at the airport, whereas on the 01st of July there was a Swissport warehouse armed robbery. As we were about to receive the briefing this morning, an armed robbery of a truck containing valuable goods coming from the airport was hijacked.

We have identified the nature of the challenges that we need to respond to at O.R. Tambo International Airport, with regards to the crime being committed there. Simply put, part of the challenge is corruption and collusion where police officers are in cahoots with criminals. An obvious lack of police command and control is highly concerning and without it, the ability to effectively manage deployed personnel at the airport will remain a major challenge. We were further informed on the non-

implementation of policing measures put in place. There are further challenges with regards to the non-existence of tactical crime intelligence. Furthermore we discussed an inherent lack of effective prosecution. We need to revisit the steps put in place over the 2010 Soccer World Cup period. There is a collective agreement that, we need to explore the 2010 Soccer World Cup strategy which was both efficient and effective.

We further discussed and reached agreement that it is critical to ensure that as part of the long term, sustainable security plan, all people that work at the airport need to be effectively vetted, so that we have a greater appreciation of who is working and/or based at the airport.

On this basis, we jointly agreed that a more senior police officer with the rank of Major General needs to be deployed to the airport and lead its policing operation. The Major General will be based at the airport. As part of this meeting, we have been reassured by the Executive Mayor of Ekurhuleni Municipality, Mr Mzwandile Masina, that the city of Ekurhuleni will deploy more EMPD officers to assist in curbing crime at O.R. Tambo International Airport.

As part of the next steps, we have agreed to the following: There will be a joint deployment to the airport that will include crime intelligence, the Hawks, and detectives. This team will operate out of an operations room where crime will be monitored on a daily basis at the airport and a report will be sent to me on a weekly basis, on the progress being made in this regard. It is also important to look at the nature of the security architecture

of South Africa and our ports of entry in particular. Essentially what we are saying is that criminals must not find it easy to commit crime in South Africa. To indicate our seriousness, next Friday, 21 July 2017, we will regroup here at the airport in order to flesh out a masterplan for security with all government agencies within the security cluster.

Based on today's meeting which involved all key stakeholders on the way forward, we have a better appreciation of the nature of challenges we face and we can assure South Africans that good, solid police men and women are up to the task. As we speak, the leadership of SAPS is strengthening the plan of fighting crime at O.R. Tambo International Airport. In a very short space of time we will brief South Africans on the victories that we would have achieved. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the leadership of Airports Company South Africa (ACSA), for consistently bringing their concerns to me and my office. As expressed as part of this meeting, Airports Company South Africa's role is to manage and develop airports. This is what they do best and must continue to focus on as part of their mandate. Ours as the SAPS, is to ensure that we keep this national key point safe for all passengers and visitors to the airport and to our country.

We therefore want to be clear in sending a strong message to criminals and those corrupt police officials who are in cahoots with criminals, that your days are numbered. We will not tolerate a state of lawlessness where criminals do as they please in our country. We therefore want to assure South Africans and our international guests that their safety is our number priority as the South African Police Service.

I thank you.

End

Enquiries

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