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21 February 2026

PRESS RELEASE- BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE CONDEMNS ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLINE AND PROFESSIONALISM

The Botswana Defence Force unequivocally condemns the alarming rise in violent incidents occurring within the country, which have sadly led to the loss of innocent lives. Members of the BDF, as part of the community, are not exempt from these troubling occurrences.

These acts, although circumstantial and isolated, are entirely unacceptable. As a professional organisation guided by the rule of law and the BDF Act, we adhere firmly to our core principles and values such as Botho, Loyalty, Integrity, and Discipline, as well as our professional ethos and cultural norms. Violent acts are in direct contradiction to our values and standards, undermining the integrity of the organisation and eroding public trust. Furthermore, they violate the principles of humanity, security, and human rights that the BDF vigorously upholds.

In light of these, the BDF categorically rejects the circulation of false and irresponsible statistics by certain individuals purporting to present records involving its members. It is important to note that the BDF is concerned about each life lost, as it considers every single life significant. Over the past five years, an average of 4 murder and or suicide cases directly linked to our members have been recorded per calendar year. The previously communicated figure of 76, referred to the combined total number of Gender Based Violence (GBV) related cases comprising assault common, emotional abuse, murder and suicide recorded within a single year. The BDF wishes to emphatically reassure the public that it places the utmost priority on the well-being of its members. The Organisation's comprehensive support facilities and professional institutions are robustly designed to assist with social welfare, mental health and spiritual well-being. We strongly urge and always encourage our members and their families to fully engage with these invaluable resources to confront challenges related to mental health, relationship issues, and other personal difficulties. Utilising these support systems is essential in preventing tragic outcomes and fostering a healthier and more resilient community within our ranks.

Furthermore, the BDF is committed to ensuring that every member feels supported and equipped to handle life's challenges effectively. The organisation proactively engages in a variety of initiatives designed to educate, counsel, and motivate its members. Its institutional programmes and policies strategically focus on effective conflict resolution, resilience in adversity, emotional intelligence, tolerance, and responsible conduct. We are unwavering in our commitment to enhance our measures and implement stronger initiatives that will prevent further incidents and restore public confidence.

The BDF treats this issue with the utmost seriousness and expresses its profound regret for any loss of life resulting from the unjustified actions of its members. The organisation is resolute in tackling these challenges head-on, ensuring sustainable and long-term resolutions. It is in this regard that, amongst other initiatives, on 10 January 2026, the Commander issued a directive on Integrated Prevention and Management of Gender Based Violence and Suicides in the BDF. The Directive establishes an integrated Force-Wide Framework for the prevention, early identification, management and post-handling of GBV and suicide cases in the BDF.

The Botswana Defence Force remains steadfast in its mission to serve and protect the nation with honour, professionalism and integrity.

Thank you,



Fana Maswabi

Lieutenant Colonel

Directorate of Protocol and Public Affairs

BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE HEADQUARTERS