

Fight against the stigmatization of people living with HIV/AIDS

End HIV Discrimination in the South African National Defence!



STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

The Treatment Action Campaign raises its voice in solidarity with the coalition of organisations fighting to end HIV discrimination. Encouraging all people in South Africa to unite fight against the stigmatization of people living with HIV/AIDS in our country!

- ◆ HIV positive people are still workers in the *South African National Defence (SANDF)*, and need to be treated with respect, dignity and need privacy in defence of democracy.
- ◆ Implementations of the SANDF policies are largely irrational, unlawful, and unconstitutional; they discriminate against people living with HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ The case arises from the ongoing discrimination against HIV positive members or potential members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) which denies them opportunities for employment, deployment and promotion.

What are we advocating for as Treatment Action Campaign, South African Security Forces Union, Aids Law Project and South African National Defence Force:

The SANDF claims that HIV positive people cannot be deployed in active service because:

- ◆ They are not physically fit;
- ◆ Their immune systems are compromised;
- ◆ The progress of the disease is unpredictable and they could become sick on deployment;
- ◆ The stressors associated with deployment would worsen their condition;
- ◆ And Antiretroviral treatment (“ART”) does not adequately address any of these concerns

All these claims are not valid. It is unreasonable to use HIV testing and exclusion as a measure to reduce HIV in the SANDF. The effect of the testing policy is to stigmatize people and therefore undermines HIV prevention, treatment, care and support within the SANDF.

Over the years the SANDF has justified its HIV testing policy and its implementation on such grounds as the following:

- ◆ The military has a duty to protect the Republic
- ◆ There is a need to keep HIV prevalence low in the military
- ◆ People living with HIV are medically unsuitable and unable to withstand stress, physical exercise, adverse climatic conditions, etc
- ◆ Foreign deployment conditions are too harsh for people living with HIV
- ◆ HIV positive members pose a risk to others



Campaigning for the rights of people with HIV/AIDS!

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**One Defence One Union
Soldiers fighting against
Stigmatization!**

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The AIDS Law Project, acting on behalf of the South African Security Forces Union (SASFU) and individual members of the SANDF.

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