

Border Management Authority launches

President Cyril Ramaphosa says the newly launched Border Management Authority (BMA) will provide a sustainable solution to the structural challenges of border security, control and coordination.



Image: [SANews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

The President emphasised that a more secure border is important for curbing illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and that the BMA will help in combating cross-border crime.

President Ramaphosa was delivering remarks at the launch of the Border Management Authority (BMA) at Musina Show Grounds in Limpopo on Thursday.

He said that this will be a new model of integration of functions, roles and responsibilities in the broader law enforcement environment.

“The Border Management Authority is expected to tackle the challenges of congestion, procedural delays, long transit times, lack of predictability and high logistics costs. I commend the Border Management Authority for the speed with which it has already commenced its work.

“When our country’s ports of entry and borders are well-protected and well-managed, we are able to prevent the illegal importation and exit of goods. We see the Border Management Authority as a vital link in our efforts to harness the benefits of the African Continental Free Trade Area,” he said.

The President said the Border Management Authority was established in response to a number of serious challenges. One of these challenges is the increase in the number of undocumented foreign nationals entering the country, which has exacerbated many of the country’s social and economic problems.

“The movement of persons and goods at ports of entry has often not been as efficient as it should be, resulting in unnecessary delays and increased costs for individuals and companies. This in turn is harming our economy.

“Deficiencies in border management have also enabled corruption and organised and cross-border crime to thrive. We have faced a problem of fragmentation of powers, responsibility and accountability,” the President said.

The Border Management Authority is now the third armed service in South Africa after the South African National Defence Force and the South African Police Service.

It is mandated to perform border management functions within ports of entry as well as the law enforcement area. The Border Management Authority is being established through an incremental approach.



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Steps have already been taken to integrate under the Border Management Authority various relevant functions of the departments of Home Affairs, Agriculture, Health, and Fisheries, Forestry and the Environment.

To enable its work, the President said the Border Management Authority has signed implementation protocols with the South African Revenue Service, Police Service and Defence Force.

“While the border guard will be conducting border law enforcement functions, including access control, the South African National Defence Force remains responsible for border protection and safeguarding.

“The border guard will interface with the nearest police station with regards to the occurrence of a crime at a port of entry,” the President said.

BMA important tool to develop the region

The President took a tour to the Beitbridge Border Post with his counterpart from Zimbabwe, President Emmerson Mnangagwa, and they agreed that the establishment of the Border Management Authority will be an important tool for the development of the region.

“It will form part of integrating border management activities in the SADC region as we implement the African Continental Free Trade Area. We will be able to work towards eradicating various forms of red tape that are hindering trade, investment and the movement of persons,” he said.

The President said that Border Management Authority will be redeveloping six ports of entries as one-stop-border-posts.

This approach will improve efficiency at land border crossings by combining the stops required for processing exit and entry formalities.

In July, the country saw the deployment of the first officers of the border guard of the Border Management Authority at vulnerable segments of the border line, including the informal community crossing points.

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