

SA citizen charged on terror-related activities

International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) Minister Lindiwe Sisulu has called for a probe into the terror-related charges faced by South African citizen Andre Mayer Hanekom in Mozambique.



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The Minister received a report from the South African High Commissioner to Mozambique, Mandisi Mpahlwa, on the charges faced by Hanekom, related to his supporting and aiding an extreme jihadist group that is destabilising the northern part of Mozambique.

According to DIRCO, these jihadists activities are also linked to the deaths of over 100 people in that area.

In light of this, the Minister has requested South African law enforcement agencies to also investigate the charges with the aim of ensuring that no South African citizen becomes involved in activities that destabilise other countries.

“The people of South Africa and Mozambique share a very deep political history and very strong economic relations. It is not acceptable that a South African citizen is in court for alleged involved in extreme jihadists activities that resulted in loss of life. South African citizens should spread love and peace across the SADC area, continent and the world,” Sisulu said.

More than 800 South Africans are in prisons across the world for different crimes including fraud, drug possession and violent crimes, with the majority in the Americas for drug-related convictions.

"We are very concerned about South Africans in prisons across the world, but we are specifically concerned about South Africans who are involved in crimes and activities that seek to destabilise democratically-elected states.

"We have asked law enforcement agencies to look deeper into this matter. South Africans must spread peace and also be agents of economic development and political stability wherever they go," Sisulu added.

The Minister also added that as from 1 January 2019, South Africa takes up its non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for a two-year term. The issue of extremist groups operating on the continent will be high on the agenda.

"Among key issues we want to attend to as a non-permanent member of the UNSC is the rise of extremist groups in Africa. The fact that South Africans are alleged to be involved makes this a very important and urgent matter for our law enforcement agencies in the SADC region and on the continent," she said.

Among the key priorities during the two-year tenure on the UNSC is the silencing of the guns in Africa, attending to the plight of women and children in conflict areas and coordinating a response to the rise of extremist groups on the continent.

"We go to the UNSC carrying an African mandate. The people of Africa have sent us to highlight their issues and to work with other nations to find solutions to their challenges. We are ready and our diplomats are ready," Sisulu said.

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