

Government condemns Botswana for shooting Namibians

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GOVERNMENT yesterday condemned the random shooting of Namibian citizens suspected of being poachers at the Botswana border, saying the authorities in that country are too quick to pull the trigger.

Deputy minister of international relations and cooperation Peya Mushelenga told The Namibian that the shooting of Namibians at the game reserve was uncalled for and was done without investigation.

Mushelenga was referring to the recent diplomatic tension between Namibia and Botswana after border patrol soldiers from that country shot and killed two Namibian suspected elephant poachers in May.

The two Namibians, Maziezi Tekulo Salomon (26) and Manyuka Shakawyaie Iwana (29) were allegedly discovered with four elephant tusks in their possession in the Kwando area.

"We have our own laws in Namibia on how to react to such situations. Botswana has a death sentence, but shooting is not a solution," he said.

Mushelenga said that his office has requested the Namibian high commission in Botswana to look into the matter.

"There are innocent Namibians who go to Botswana and into the game reserve unaware about what is going on but are shot just because they are suspected of being poachers," Mushelenga said.

The deputy minister said the Botswana authorities should first ask questions before firing. "The Botswana Defence Force should also fire warning shots," he suggested.

Minister of environment and tourism Pohamba Shifeta said Namibia has a standing relationship between neighbouring countries on how to handle suspected poachers across the borders.

"We communicate to other countries when there is a suspected poacher and handle the matter without shooting. Namibia does not shoot at suspected poachers unless the official is under threat by an armed suspected poacher, we do not have capital punishment in Namibia," he said.

Shifeta also suggested that authorities in Botswana should first fire warning shots at Namibians before shooting them.

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- Unfortunate I am of the different opinion, no wonder our Rhinos and elephants are disappearing, no wonder our wives and children are being slaughtered like flies. Our laws are soft, with loopholes. Lets us introduce capital punishment, eye for an eye. Why do u hunt in other country's game parks. Hunt here where you go to prisons and have choice to eat rice and sweetie potatoes instead of eating salt porridge for the rest of your life.

Botswana stands on its ground as sovereign state, SADC tribunal is useless, it just protecting the elite. - Roberts Ntesa Ntesa | 2015-07-10 [15935]

- Julius you are right! They just condemn and then what? Something needs to be done. Like they requested our ambassador to investigate the Botswana ambassador should also have been called in to explain his country's actions. It's done that way all over the world. - Nicko Maloboka | 2015-07-10 [15936]
- condemning alone is not enough in my point of view, why can't we summon the Botswana Govt and hold them accountable for their deeds? by the way - Julius Edward | 2015-07-10 [15939]
- BDF BE WARNED.....maybe you want to practice on Namibians.....but the time would come, don't till trouble troubles you.....instead of arresting them, BDF are shooting them.....and from the SADC point of view HOW CAN WE COOPERATE WITH BOTSWANA.....? Let us not kill by our own laws, seems me BOTSWANA is not cooperating with their neighbouring countries and only option for them is to shoot and kill. Let us face the BOTSWANA PRESIDENT and BDF MINISTER that this will broke up the SADC cause they are not the masters of NAMIBIA - Barnes Uwu-khaeb | 2015-07-10 [15938]
- In a country run by a former military general who had graduated through all junior and senior military ranks, with several decorations and awards, what then do you expect? The worse or better human rights? Go through profiles. - Oshonoosho Hambaa | 2015-07-10 [15941]
- Too many Namibians from the Caprivi region have been killed by the BDF and our government has been silent on this matter, it is time our government reacts to this uncivilized torture and murder of Namibians by the BDF. - Leroy Makhosi | 2015-07-10 [15940]
- I had been passing Botswana in transit to eastern countries such as Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. I could experience these human rights abuses. I remember how me and my friends were detained for asking questions to the officers on duty. Some of my friends were beaten up for no reason. The country is run on dictatorship basis. - Tuhafeni Twakulilwa Shikonekeni | 2015-07-10 [15937]