

# CITY POLICE TRAFFIC TIPS



## A cautionary advisory for learner drivers

### Community Policing Officer

Driving is a privilege that comes with great responsibility. Many new car owners mistakenly believe that simply owning a vehicle gives them the right to drive it immediately. However, the law is clear: No person may operate a motor vehicle on a public road without the necessary authorisation and certification. It is important for learner drivers to take cognisance of the legal provisions, risks, and the importance of voluntary compliance in this respect.

According to the Road Traffic and Transport Act, 1999 (Act No. 22 of 1999) and the Road Traffic and Transport Regulations, no person is



Great responsibility... A learner driver must always be accompanied by a fully licensed driver in the vehicle while operating it. Photo: Contributed

permitted to drive a motor vehicle on a public road unless they hold a valid learner's licence or driver's licence. A learner's licence is granted

only after successfully passing a theory test that assesses knowledge of road signs, rules and regulations. Furthermore, under Regulation

102 of the Road Traffic and Transport Regulations, a learner driver must always be accompanied by a fully licensed driver in the vehicle while operating it. Failure to adhere to these regulations constitutes an offence and may result in a fine of N\$1000 or disqualification from obtaining a full driver's licence.

It is key to allude to the fact that not adhering to road safety laws poses serious risks, not only to the learner driver but also to other road users. Inexperienced and untrained drivers are more likely to make errors that could lead to crashes, injuries, or fatalities.

In the same vein, driving without a valid learner's or driver's licence is an offence that may result in prosecution, fines, or even imprisonment. Most insurance policies do not cover crashes caused by unlicensed drivers, leaving individuals financially liable for damages.

A driver who is not properly trained may not know how to react

in emergency situations, increasing risks for pedestrians and other motorists.

The Windhoek City Police Service urges all aspiring drivers and vehicle owners to comply with the law voluntarily.

Road safety is a collective responsibility, and responsible driving begins with proper training, legal certification, and adherence to traffic regulations. Before getting behind the wheel, ensure you have obtained a valid learner's licence, enrol in a reputable driving school to enhance your driving skills and road knowledge and always be accompanied by a fully licensed driver when practising. One may only drive independently once they have successfully obtained a driver's licence.

Ultimately, road safety is not just about compliance with the law; it's about protecting lives, including your own. Therefore, it is important for drivers to comply with the law and assist law enforcement in their quest to make our roads safer.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

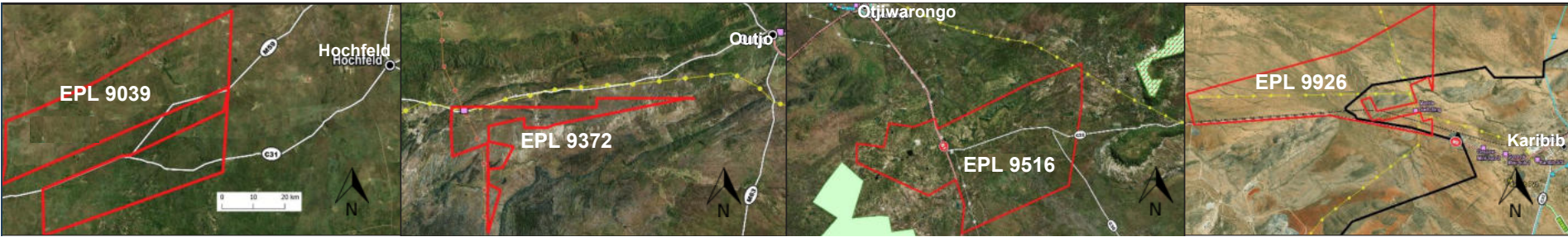
- APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATES (ECCs) FOR PROPOSED MINERALS EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES BY**
- MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd EXCLUSIVE PROSPECTING LICENSES (EPLs) Nos. 9039, OKAHANDJA DISTRICT OTJOZONDJUPA REGION, 9372 OUTJO DISTRICT KUNENE REGION, AND 9516 OTJIWARONGO DISTRICT OTJOSONDJUPA REGION**
  - OSINO NAMIBIA MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd EPL No. 9926, KARIBIB DISTRICT, ERONGO REGION**

**MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd** (the "PROPONENT") has been granted the preparedness to grant the application for Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) No. 9039 with respect to Dimension Stone, Base and Rare Metals, and Industrial Minerals, group of minerals. The physical license will only be granted by the Mining Commissioner if the Proponent is issued with an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) by the Environmental Commissioner in MEFT. The EPL 9039 is located in the Okahandja District Otjozondjupa Region and has a total area of 65354.4918 Ha covering the following farmlands: Agagia Noord 307, Groot Alarona 304, Haemonie 225, Hartland 334, Emmabrun 222, Alfa 226, Marwil 221, Paloma 229, Wilton 220, Rema 219, Kalkloch 230, Omuramba 341, Otjikuara 151, Elsie 87, Groot Martinsveld 326, Elisenore 85, Okaharui 81, Mareenwill 84, Otjikuoko Ost 82 and Otjikuoko West 83.

**MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd** (the "PROPONENT") has been granted the preparedness to grant the application for Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) No. 9372 with respect to Dimension Stone, Base and Rare Metals, Industrial Minerals and Precious Metals, group of minerals. The physical license will only be granted by the Mining Commissioner if the Proponent is issued with an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) by the Environmental Commissioner in MEFT. The EPL 9372 is located in the Outjo District Kunene Region and has a total area of 22570.2970 Ha covering the following commercial farmlands: Deurslag 1154, Rasputin 137, Munsterland 113, Steineck 109, Verdeel 319, Zuwitsaub 1151, Okaua 99, Tsuwandes 107, Volunteer 106, Aasvoelkrans 100, Uranius 105, Gaseneirob 104, Saturn 103, Libertas 101, Moselle 102, Harmonie 97, Okay 97 and Nuremberg 88.

**MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd** (the "PROPONENT") has been granted the preparedness to grant the application for Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) No. 9516 with respect to Dimension Stone, Base and Rare Metals, Industrial Minerals and, Precious Metals group of minerals. The physical license will only be granted by the Mining Commissioner if the Proponent is issued with an Environmental Clearance Certificate by the Environmental Commissioner in MEFT. The EPL 9516 is located in the Otjiwarongo District Otjosondjupa Region and has a total area of 54560.3592 Ha covering the following farmlands: Farm 582, La Mont 405, Vlakplaats 325, Ozondjache 316, Ozondjache 152, Epsom 155, New Market 156, Okateitei 157, Ohakaua 154, Hohenfels 153, Ozondjache 315, Okahua 418, Graslaagte 313, Tweekoppies 486, Klipkop 314, Etekero 518, Ohakaua 143, Tottenham 487 and Laconia 141.

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REGISTER BY EMAIL, SMS OR WHATSAPP: [frontdesk@rbs.com.na](mailto:frontdesk@rbs.com.na) / +264812772546 AND CONTACT PERSON: Dr Sindila Mwiya (EAP/Technical Permitting Advisor/ Consultant)  
CONSULTATION DURATION AND DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS IS: THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025



# ‘This is just incompetence’: Neil Coleman slams Treasury over budget shortfalls

As South Africa’s budget presentation approaches, Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana has drawn criticism over his claim that the government lacks the funds to sustain the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant. In an interview on Newzroom Afrika, Senior Policy Specialist and co-founder of the Institute for Economic Justice Neil Coleman refuted this claim, arguing that the SRD grant was already accounted for in the 2025 budget baseline and accusing the Treasury of misinformation. “He actually, I’m afraid to say, is misleading the country deliberately, misinforming the country,” Coleman said. He pointed out that in Parliament on October 31, 2023, the director-general of the Treasury confirmed that the SRD grant was included in the medium-term budget policy statement under a provisional item. “So there’s no trade-off,” Coleman insisted, rejecting Godongwana’s suggestion that increased VAT might be necessary to sustain the grant. Coleman further dismissed claims that financial shocks, such as the United States (US) government’s decision to cut the President’s Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (Pepfar) funding, contributed to budget shortfalls. “It’s not fair to say that. This is just



Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana faces criticism over statements on the sustainability of the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant.

incompetence on the part of the minister and Treasury. They failed to budget for items that were easily anticipated.” He argued that revenue had exceeded

projections in 2024 and that social spending had already been cut significantly in recent years. The discussion also touched on broader fiscal management,

with Coleman emphasising that alternatives exist for raising revenue and reducing wasteful spending. “Trade-offs, as you call them, are being made in ways which

disadvantage the poorest and most vulnerable in society,” he asserted, highlighting that policymakers are protecting wealthier interests at the expense of the poor. The upcoming budget presentation is expected to be contentious. “I anticipate that when the budget is presented on Wednesday by the Minister, it is going to be a robust debate, and it’s not going to be smooth sailing,” Coleman said. The conversation also raised the potential for zero-based budgeting, which Coleman acknowledged could be valuable if conducted transparently and based on expert analysis. “It must be based on objective scientific evidence. And what you will find is that once you do that exercise, there are certain areas where a very significant increase in spending is required, particularly in critical public services,” he argued. While wasteful expenditure should be cut, Coleman stressed that austerity measures have already harmed essential services. “There has to be a recognition that there is a serious impact that austerity over the number of years and the cutbacks have had on services for the majority,” he said. Godongwana is expected to table the budget on Wednesday, March 12. [hope.ntanzi@iol.co.za](mailto:hope.ntanzi@iol.co.za)  
IOL Politics

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EPL 9039

EPL 9372

EPL 9516

EPL 9926

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**Risk-Based Solutions (RBS) CC** - (URL: [www.rbs.com.na](http://www.rbs.com.na))

Your Technical Specialist Consultants, Permitting & De-Risking Advisors in Natural Resources in Petroleum Exploration & Production/ Minerals Exploration & Mining / Energy / Water / Environmental Assessments & Management (ESG, SEA, EIA, EMP, EMS)



# Bushiri and his wife ordered to be extradited to SA for rape and financial crimes

**T**he Chief Resident Magistrate Court in Malawi has ordered that self-proclaimed prophet, Shepherd Bushiri and his wife, Mary Bushiri, be extradited to South Africa. Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development Mmamoloko Kabuyi, said the South African government welcomed the ruling on Wednesday. The Bushiris had appeared before two South African courts in 2020, facing criminal charges. The two were granted bail pending trial but failed to comply with their bail conditions and fled the country under unknown circumstances. They were later located in Malawi. In response, South Africa submitted an extradition request to Malawi, seeking the Bushiri’s return to face charges, including, rape, violating bail conditions, contraventions of the Contraventions of the Financial Advisory and Intermediary Services Act, Banking Act, Civil Aviation Act, and Immigration Act “This decision reaffirms judicial independence, international cooperation, and public trust in the South African and Malawian legal institutions,” Kabuyi said in a statement.



Prophet Shepherd Bushiri and his Mary have ordered to be extradited to South Africa to face charges, including rape among others. Picture: Contributed

“It reinforces the principle that no one is above the law and underscores the importance of accountability, transparency, and adherence to legal frameworks in both South Africa and Malawi.” The case has drawn significant public and media attention, highlighting broader issues of corruption and accountability. Kabuyi underscores the critical role of legal agreements and treaties in

combating transnational crime. South Africa remains committed to strengthening legal and diplomatic partnerships to ensure that fugitives are brought to justice and that legal systems remain fair, credible, and effective, she added. The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development works with the Malawi Central Authority, INTERPOL, the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), and the South African Police Service (SAPS). Kabuyi added that she had been informed that the Bushiris intended to appeal the ruling. “The South African government will oppose the appeal. The Department will await the outcome of the appeal process if they proceed.” She said if they do not appeal, the Department of Justice will await formal notification from Malawi’s Central Authority. “Once received, INTERPOL, in collaboration with the South African Police Service (SAPS), will coordinate the transfer arrangements and logistics. The State will cover all associated costs,” Kabuyi added. [simon.majadibodu@iol.co.za](mailto:simon.majadibodu@iol.co.za) IOL News

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# 'We have ignored lessons': how Covid continues to affect lives five years later

**I**t's been five years since the Trump administration declared a nationwide emergency across the US on 13 March 2020, The announcement came days after the World Health Organization (WHO) designated Covid-19 a global pandemic. Since then, there have been 1,222,603 deaths from Covid in the US. Much of the country, along with the rest of the world, has moved on from the pandemic, with fewer people wearing masks and life returning to the way it was before the outbreak started. Among the dozens of people who shared with the Guardian how their lives have changed since, many talked about embracing remote working and the greater work-life balance they have achieved. Others mentioned feeling encouraged to change jobs or start their own business, as well as how their relationships were strengthened by the shared experience. Many reported being diagnosed with long Covid and the permanent impact this had had on them. Some still said they experience loneliness and find it difficult to socialise, while others feel trust between people has eroded and that differing views highlighted by the pandemic has made society more divisive. Here, six people in the US tell us how their lives have changed since the start of the Covid outbreak.

**'It's like everyone is moving on without us'**  
In February 2020 I was living a vibrant, full life. I hiked, backpacked and rock climbed. I had a strong community. I was planning to go to med school. Lockdown



People wearing protective masks wait on a subway platform at Grand Central in New York, U.S., on Monday, Sept. 21, 2020. Michael Nagle/Bloomberg via Getty Images

was hard but we were all in it together. Then, in 2022, I got Covid despite taking extreme precautions. Now, I am bed-bound with long Covid while everyone thinks the pandemic is over. My partner and I are so lonely, seeing everyone believe Covid is over and moving on without us. I used to be whip-smart and witty, and now I labor to process basic sentences. I used to be a risk-taker and spontaneous, and now I have to plan out my walks to

the bathroom. I used to love six-hour talks with friends; now I can barely handle a short phone call. I had traveled to 20 countries and 30 states; now I leave the house once or twice a year for medical appointments. I lie in bed and think of how my life used to be. I miss the sky. I miss my old life so much it's unbearable. I feel like a ghost. Some days, I feel everything is behind me except suffering and oppression. Others, I am able to listen to a good book and

text a friend, and I feel hopeful I could improve someday, though most likely never recover. Nash, 25, unemployed, Washington DC

**'I harvested dead trees and left behind tables and benches'**  
a man with a beard in a selfie Thomas Locatell. Photograph: Thomas Locatell/Guardian Community  
In March 2020, I began frequenting Gilbrook nature area, a local woodland I

had become fond of near my apartment. As a carpenter, my love of all things tree-related had caused me to notice the unusual nature of this little patch of woods. Every day I would walk there and wonder why more people weren't doing the same. That's when the gravity of the situation of the pandemic really sank in. People were scared. I wasn't. That was freeing. With a few hand tools and a wagon, my trips became not walks in a lovely park, but a mission to harvest dead trees on the ground. Once I made my first cut, I was hooked. I hardly missed a day up there for over a year and left behind tables and benches – one of my largest pieces was a 16ft table. I even replaced a rotten set of steps down to a pond where beavers lived. It was an experience like no other. People started to notice and I was on the local news and featured in a YouTube video about different characters in Vermont. The city became aware of my activity and actually approved of it. To my great surprise, they provided me with a place to work where I am engaged to this day. Five years on, I never expected for any of this to come out of the pandemic – it's been fun. Thomas Locatell, 67, retired carpenter, Winooski, Vermont  
**'We've become closer as a family'**  
Prior to the pandemic, I had a good relationship with my parents overall. My father's chronic condition started accelerating and I think it brought my mother and I closer together. When the pandemic started getting serious, I started talking to talk to my sister more often and I think that brought us closer to one another. Just before the pandemic, my father was

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- MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd EXCLUSIVE PROSPECTING LICENSES (EPLs) Nos. 9039, OKAHANDJA DISTRICT OTJOZONDJUPA REGION, 9372 OUTJO DISTRICT KUNENE REGION, AND 9516 OTJIWARONGO DISTRICT OTJOSONDJUPA REGION**
  - OSINO NAMIBIA MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd EPL No. 9926, KARIBIB DISTRICT, ERONGO REGION**

**MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd** (the "PROPONENT") has been granted the preparedness to grant the application for Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) No. 9039 with respect to Dimension Stone, Base and Rare Metals, and Industrial Minerals, group of minerals. The physical license will only be granted by the Mining Commissioner if the Proponent is issued with an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) by the Environmental Commissioner in MEFT. The EPL 9039 is located in the Okahandja District Otjozondjupa Region and has a total area of 65354.4918 Ha covering the following farmlands: Agagia Noord 307, Groot Alarona 304, Haemonie 225, Hartland 334, Emmabrun 222, Alfa 226, Marwil 221, Paloma 229, Wilton 220, Rema 219, Kalkloch 230, Omuramba 341, Otjikuara 151, Elsie 87, Groot Martinsveld 326, Elisenore 85, Okaharui 81, Mareenwill 84, Otjikuoko Ost 82 and Otjikuoko West 83.

**MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd** (the "PROPONENT") has been granted the preparedness to grant the application for Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) No. 9372 with respect to Dimension Stone, Base and Rare Metals, Industrial Minerals and Precious Metals, group of minerals. The physical license will only be granted by the Mining Commissioner if the Proponent is issued with an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) by the Environmental Commissioner in MEFT. The EPL 9372 is located in the Outjo District Kunene Region and has a total area of 22570.2970 Ha covering the following commercial farmlands: Deurslag 1154, Rasputin 137, Munsterland 113, Steineck 109, Verdeel 319, Zuwitsaub 1151, Okaua 99, Tsuwandes 107, Volunteer 106, Aasvoelkrans 100, Uranius 105, Gaseneirob 104, Saturn 103, Libertas 101, Moselle 102, Harmonie 97, Okay 97 and Nuremberg 88.

**MITTEN MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd** (the "PROPONENT") has been granted the preparedness to grant the application for Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) No. 9516 with respect to Dimension Stone, Base and Rare Metals, Industrial Minerals and, Precious Metals group of minerals. The physical license will only be granted by the Mining Commissioner if the Proponent is issued with an Environmental Clearance Certificate by the Environmental Commissioner in MEFT. The EPL 9516 is located in the Otjiwarongo District Otjosondjupa Region and has a total area of 54560.3592 Ha covering the following farmlands: Farm 582, La Mont 405, Vlakplaats 325, Ozondjache 316, Ozondjache 152, Epsom 155, New Market 156, Okateitei 157, Ohakaua 154, Hohenfels 153, Ozondjache 315, Okahua 418, Graslaagte 313, Tweekoppies 486, Klipkop 314, Etekero 518, Ohakaua 143, Tottenham 487 and Laconia 141.

**OSINO NAMIBIA MINERALS EXPLORATION (Pty) Ltd** (the "PROPONENT") has been granted the preparedness to grant the application for Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) No. 9926 with respect to Base and Rare Metals, Industrial Minerals, and Precious Metals group of minerals. The physical license will only be granted by the Mining Commissioner if the Proponent is issued with an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) by the Environmental Commissioner in Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT). The EPL 9926 area is located in the Karibib District, Erongo Region and has a total area of 1303.8373 Ha covering the following land uses: Karibib Townlands Remainder of Portion A of the Farm Karibib No. 54, Portion 22 (a Portion of Portion A) of the Farm Karibib Town and Townlands No. 54, and Portion 11 of Farm Kranzberg No. 59.



If the ECCs are granted for the EPLs Nos. 9039, 9372, 9516 and 9926, the Proponents (Mitten Minerals Exploration (Pty) Ltd and Osino Namibia Minerals Exploration (Pty) Ltd) intend to conduct prospecting activities starting with desktop studies including the processing and interpretation of the existing geophysical and other historical minerals exploration data sets, followed by regional field-based reconnaissance activities. If the initial exploration results prove positive, the Proponents will implement detailed site-specific field-based activities using field-based and site-specific techniques such as geological mapping, geophysical surveys, trenching, drilling, and sampling for laboratory tests. The proposed prospecting activities are listed in the Environmental Management Act, 2007, (Act No. 7 of 2007) and the EIA Regulations 30 of 2012 and cannot be undertaken without Environmental Clearance Certificates (ECCs). In fulfilment of these environmental requirements, the Proponents have appointed Risk-Based Solutions (RBS) CC as the Environmental Consultant, led by Dr Sindila Mwiya as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to prepare the Environmental Assessment and Management Reports to support the application for ECCs for the EPLs Nos. 9039, 9372, 9516 and 9926. Interested and Affected Parties (I&APS) are hereby invited to register and submit written comments / objections / inputs with respect to the proposed prospecting / exploration activities. A Background Information Document (BID) is available on request upon registration. In terms of the provisions of the EIA Regulation 23 (1), an interested and / or affected party is required to disclose any direct business, financial, personal, or other interest which that party may have in the approval or refusal of the ECC application. Please note that the proposed activities are not mining operations which requires Mining Licenses (MLs), but prospecting / exploration operations aimed at searching for potential economic minerals resources in each of the listed four (4) EPLs.

**REGISTER BY EMAIL, SMS OR WHATSAPP: [frontdesk@rbs.com.na](mailto:frontdesk@rbs.com.na) +264812772546 AND CONTACT PERSON: Dr Sindila Mwiya (EAP/Technical Permitting Advisor/ Consultant)**  
**CONSULTATION DURATION AND DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS IS: THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025**



# Angola refuses entry to opposition leaders from across Africa

Angola is under fire after it denied entry to several senior African political figures set to attend a conference hosted by the country's main opposition party. Unita said it had invited the politicians, including Tanzanian opposition leader Tundu Lissu, Mozambique's Venancio Mondlane and Botswana's former President Ian Khama, to a summit on democracy. "The action of the Angolan government to prevent us from entering Angola is inexplicable and unacceptable," Lissu said on X. The BBC has asked the Angolan government to comment. But according to a source from the Migration and Aliens Service (SME), "the expulsion was due to irregularities in the visa procedure, which prevented Mondlane and 13 other members of his entourage from entering Angolan territory". Mondlane, who has called for nationwide protests over what he says were rigged elections last year, was this week subjected to travel restrictions in his home country. At least 20 leaders and representatives from various political parties across Africa were denied entry, said Lissu. "The government of this country is ruling a dictatorship while pretending that Angola is a democratic country," he said. Lissu is a vocal critic of the



Botswana's former President Ian Khama -Picture: Contributed

Tanzanian government and head of the main opposition party, Chadema. He survived an assassination attempt in 2017 and has spent several years in exile. Kenyan senator Edwin Sifuna, from the opposition Orange Democratic Movement, said on X he was among those denied entry into Angola. Delegates from Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique and South Sudan who had visas or were eligible for visa on arrival were deported, the Platform for



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African Democrats (Pad), a group of opposition parties across Africa, said in a statement. Khama, Colombia's former President Andres Pastrana, Zanzibar's first Vice-President Othman Masoud Othman and 24 others were detained at the airport for nine hours with no explanation. They were released but missed their connecting flights, according to Pad. The Angolan government promised to make up for these actions by providing a plane, but it never materialised, the opposition grouping said. Zanzibar's main opposition party, ACT Wazalendo, urged the Tanzanian government to immediately summon the Angolan ambassador to provide a formal explanation of why the party's vice-president was denied entry to the country. Tomas Viera Mario, a Mozambican political analyst, told the BBC the

move was "strange" as Angola's President Joao Lourenco has positioned himself as a kind of mediator on the continent. Lourenco is currently the chair of the African Union (AU), and is hosting peace talks over the DR Congo conflict next week. Mr Mario added that barring these figures showed "total contempt and "little respect" for the pan-African spirit of the AU. All the deported leaders were part of a delegation invited by Unita to attend its 59th anniversary celebrations in Benguela province. Unita lawmaker Nelito da Costa Ekwiki also condemned the decision not to allow them entry to the country. The Angolan government has long been accused of shutting down dissent in order to maintain its hold on power. Additional reporting by Jorge Nsimba in Luanda-BBC

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# Rwanda severs ties with Belgium over ‘neo-colonial delusions’

Rwanda has cut diplomatic ties with Belgium, saying it has been “consistently undermined” by the European nation during the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Brussels has been leading calls for European nations to sanction Rwanda over its support for the M23, a rebel group at the centre of DR Congo’s crisis. The authorities in Kigali, Rwanda’s capital, have given Belgian diplomats 48 hours to leave the country. Belgium, which is the former colonial power, has said it will respond to these measures and labelled Rwanda’s decision “disproportionate”. Despite assertions from the UN and US, Rwanda has denied backing the M23. In its statement on Monday, Kigali accused Brussels of attempting to “sustain its neo-colonial delusions”. “Belgium has clearly taken sides in a regional conflict and continues to systematically mobilise against Rwanda in different forums, using lies and manipulation to secure an unjustified hostile opinion of Rwanda, in an attempt to destabilise both Rwanda and the region,” the statement said. Belgian Foreign Minister Maxime Prevot responded to Rwanda’s measures on social media, saying: “This is disproportionate and shows that when we disagree with Rwanda they prefer not to engage in dialogue.” The evidence that shows Rwanda is backing rebels in DR Congo What’s the fighting in DR Congo all about? Prevot said Rwandan diplomats in

Belgium will be declared “persona non grata”. This declaration can lead to the removal of diplomatic status and often results in the expulsion or the withdrawal of recognition of envoys. Before Kigali cut ties with Brussels, Rwandan President Paul Kagame vowed that his country would “stand up” to Belgium. “We would ask [Belgium]: ‘Who are you by the way? Who put you in charge of us?’ Rwandans believe in God, but did God really put these people in charge of Rwanda?” Kagame asked in an address on Sunday. Since the beginning of the year, around 7,000 people have been killed in fighting between the M23 and DR Congo’s armed forces in the east of the country, the Congolese authorities have said. More than 850,000 people have been forced to flee their homes since the conflict increased in intensity in January, the UN children’s agency, Unicef, said. The M23 has taken control of two key cities - Goma and Bukavu - in the past two months. On Monday, the EU sanctioned three of Rwanda’s military commanders, citing connections to the M23. The sanctions, which include the freezing of assets, were also applied to the head of Rwanda’s state mining agency. The EU has accused the agency of exploiting DR Congo’s conflict in order to extract valuable resources from the mineral-rich east. Britain and Germany have also taken measures against Rwanda - over the past month both countries cut some of their aid to Kigali.



President Paul Kagame -Picture:Contributed

And in February, the UN Security Council demanded that the M23 end hostilities and that Rwanda should pull its troops out of DR Congo. Rwanda’s diplomatic spat with Belgium comes a day before the

Congolese government and M23 rebels are set to meet for peace talks. The talks, due to be held in the Angolan capital, Luanda, overturn the government’s long-standing policy of not negotiating with the M23.

However, since the M23 began capturing larges swathes of territory, Congolese President Félix Tshisekedi has been under pressure to meet with the rebels, news agency Reuters reports.

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Your Technical Specialist Consultants, Permitting & De-Risking Advisors in Natural Resources in Petroleum Exploration & Production/ Minerals Exploration & Mining / Energy / Water / Environmental Assessments & Management (ESG, SEA, EIA, EMP, EMS)