

Germany praises SA's role in Africa

Germany's Foreign Affairs Minister Guido Westerwelle praised South Africa on Monday (29 April) for its interventions in strife-torn countries on the African continent.



Image: Wiki Images

"We welcome your commitment to African and regional integration," he told reporters after talks with his South African counterpart Maite Nkoana-Mashabane in Pretoria.

"We value highly South Africa's commitment to peace and security in Africa, for instance the mediation efforts by former president Thabo Mbeki in Sudan. We pay tribute to your peace-keeping efforts too," Westerwelle added saying African countries should play the leading role in conflict resolution on the continent.

"I can only welcome the compass of my colleague Maite Nkoana-Mashabane: African solutions for African problems. Germany, the European Union and the international community may be supportive of these efforts.

"We are ready to support the African countries, but they must be in the driving seat," he said.

Westerwelle expressed "deep sympathy" following the deaths of 13 South African soldiers during a foreign mission in the Central African Republic (CAR) last month.

On future interventions on the continent, Nkoana-Mashabane said South Africa would always get involved as and when the need arose and be guided by the Constitution.

"We are Africans and we are guided by our foreign policy. We all benefit from a continent that is secure, democratic and respects international laws," she said.

"When called upon to intervene in situations of strife we will never say 'no' because South Africa would not have had a democracy if Africa had thought what was happening here was a South African problem. We had unequivocal support of all African nations." South Africa would send troops to the CAR again, if asked.

"We are Africans and we will not look away, but will follow the prescripts of the rule of law if we're invited by the region, the AU and the United Nations," Nkoana-Mashabane said.

Meanwhile, President Jacob Zuma hosted a CAR delegation, led by Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye, on Sunday (28 April). Tiangaye said his trip sought to cement bilateral relations between South Africa and his country.

Source: Sapa via I-Net Bridge

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