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# Kenya's FM to Visit Russia to Protest Recruitment of Citizens for Ukraine War

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Clinton Mogesa, 29, died while fighting for Russia. **Ukraine Defense Intelligence**

Kenya's Foreign Minister Musalia Mudavadi said Tuesday he planned to travel to Moscow in a bid to prevent the further recruitment of Kenyans to fight for Russia in the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

"We have seen loss of lives, and I am planning to make a visit to Moscow so that we can emphasize that is something that needs to be arrested," Mudavadi said in a statement to the media.

He did not specify when the visit would take place and Moscow has not yet commented on the plans.

Nairobi estimates that around 200 Kenyans have been recruited to fight for Russia, all of whom traveled from the East African country through unofficial channels. The real number is believed to be higher.

Ukrainian intelligence estimates that Russia has recruited more than 1,400 people from 36 African countries into its military. Moscow has denied recruiting foreign fighters for its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

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Mudavadi said more than 30 Kenyans had been evacuated from Russia over the past two months and that 600 recruitment agencies who misled Kenyans with promises of jobs overseas had been shut down.

He said he would also pursue the release of Kenyans held as prisoners of war in Ukraine and check on the condition of those hospitalized.

Mudavadi told the BBC that Kenya will urge Kenya to curb illegal recruitment practices through discussions on visa policy and bilateral labor agreements spelling out a ban on military conscription.

The minister added that Kenyan authorities were providing the repatriated fighters with psychological care to "de-radicalize" them and address their trauma.

In one police raid in September, AFP reported that Kenyan police rescued 21 young men who were about to fly to Russia. A Kenyan recruitment agency employee who rented an apartment housing these men is being prosecuted for "human trafficking."

A Russian citizen implicated in the case, Mikhail Lyapin, was reportedly expelled from Kenya at Moscow's request.

Ukraine's Ambassador to Kenya Yurii Tokar said Russia first targeted former Soviet republics in Central Asia, then India and Nepal, before turning to Africa.

"They are looking for people for cannon fodder everywhere it is possible," Tokar told AFP.

It remains unclear how many Kenyans have died while fighting Ukraine.

*AFP contributed reporting.*

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