Over 1K Kenyans Sent to Fight With Russian Forces in Ukraine, Intel Report Says

By AFP

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Luis Tato / AFP

More than 1,000 Kenyans have gone to fight for the Russian army in Ukraine, most of them tricked into signing military contracts, according to an intelligence report presented to Kenya's parliament.

Multiple media investigations, including one published earlier this month by AFP, have exposed how Russia has enticed men from African countries with promises of lucrative jobs, only to force them into fighting on the front line in Ukraine.

A joint investigation by Kenya's National Intelligence Service and Directorate of Criminal Investigations, presented in parliament on Tuesday, put the number of recruits from the country at "over 1,000" — far higher than the figure of around 200 given by authorities in

December.

"The Kenyans leave the country on tourist visas to join the Russian army through Istanbul, Turkey, as well as Abu Dhabi, UAE," parliament majority leader Kimani Ichung'wah told lawmakers.

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But Ichung'wah said increased border enforcement at Nairobi's airport meant recruits were also now travelling to other African countries to avoid detection.

He said unlicensed recruitment agencies in Kenya were "colluding with rogue airport staff."

Ichung'wah said at least 39 Kenyans were currently hospitalized, 28 missing–in–action and 89 on the front line.

Kenya's Foreign Minister Musalia Mudavadi is due to visit Moscow next month to discuss the issue, with the government condemning the use of its people "as cannon fodder."

Uganda and South Africa are among the other African countries that have been targeted for recruitment as Russia faces heavy casualties in Ukraine.

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