

Death sentence: SA 'engaging' China

Written by News24.com

Friday, 09 April 2010 00:00 - Last Updated Sunday, 09 January 2011 18:06

Johannesburg – The case of a South African woman sentenced to death in China has been referred to that country's high court in Beijing for a final decision, the Department of International Relations and Co-operation said on Friday.

The department said in a statement that the judicial process was ongoing, as it had already, on behalf of government, started engaging with the Chinese authorities.

It said South Africa's Ambassador in Beijing, Ndumiso Ntshinga, was leading government efforts in this regard.

News agency DPA, quoting the official Xinhua news agency in possession of a court statement, reported that Janice Bronwyn Linden, 35, was sentenced in July last year after she was convicted of drug smuggling in China.

A higher court in China on Friday upheld Linden's death sentence following an appeal hearing in November of the original sentence.

The agency reported that Linden was arrested after customs officers found about three kilograms of methamphetamines in her luggage following her arrival at Baiyun International Airport in the southern city of Guangzhou in November 2008.

A court statement reportedly said Linden had "attempted to evade supervision of Chinese customs to smuggle a large amount of drugs into the country, which exerted a very negative impact on society".

No leniency

The court, therefore, had decided it "should allow no leniency", the statement said.

The upholding of Linden's sentence comes after Chinese authorities on Tuesday, executed the first Japanese citizen since the two nations normalised diplomatic ties in 1972.

That execution of the convicted drug trafficker was followed by the execution of three more Japanese drug traffickers on Friday.

At least one other South African citizen faces a possible death sentence in China, according to South African media reports.

Michael John McDermid, 55, was detained in Beijing after he was caught with three kilograms of heroin, The Star newspaper reported in April 2009.

In November, South Africa's department of foreign affairs said 691 South African citizens were

Death sentence: SA 'engaging' China

Written by News24.com

Friday, 09 April 2010 00:00 - Last Updated Sunday, 09 January 2011 18:06

detained abroad for drug-related offences, but it was not known how many were detained in China.

China executed British man Akmal Shaikh for drug trafficking in December, despite pleas for clemency from the British government and international rights groups in the first execution of a European national in China in 50 years.

<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Death-sentence-SA-engaging-China-20100409>

- SAPA