

South African national sentenced to death in Malaysia for drug-related offences

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) has been informed through its Consular Services and the South African High Commission in Malaysia that a South African national (Deon Cornelius) has been sentenced to death in Kuala Lumpur for drug-related offences.

The South African High Commission in Kuala Lumpur is rendering consular support to Cornelius as was the case since his arrest in 2013. The family has been informed of developments and DIRCO is also rendering consular support to the family in South Africa.

When a person is sentenced to death by the High Court in Malaysia, the case will be automatically be referred to the Court of Appeal. At the Court of Appeal, the case will be further considered to establish whether the High Court was correct in its verdict and the person would again appear before the Judges with his/her legal representative. This process usually takes between 6 to 12 months before the Appeal Court reaches a decision.

While this appeal process is before the Court, the South African Government cannot intervene in the matter. The South African High Commission in Kuala Lumpur will closely monitor the events over the next few months.

It is only if the Appeal Court upholds the death sentence that the South African Government will approach the Malaysian Government with a request for clemency.

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