



PRESS RELEASE

INCREASE IN INCIDENTS OF ARRESTS ABROAD OF MALAWIAN NATIONALS ON DRUG TRAFFICKING OFFENCES

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has noted with great concern the increase in incidents of Malawian Nationals, mostly young women, who are being arrested and detained abroad on drug trafficking offences. In the past month, two young Malawian ladies were recently arrested at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for trafficking dangerous drugs and are currently in detention awaiting trial. Another Malawian woman is serving a 7 year jail sentence in an Ethiopian prison while a fourth one is undergoing trial in the same country, having been arrested last year over similar charges. We have others serving sentences in India and Latin America.

Based on reports from the arrested women, it has been brought to the attention of the Ministry that the victims are either duped or coerced by foreigners (mostly male) to enlist in this illicit drug trade with promises of monetary rewards, better life and sometimes even marriage. In some cases, the drug dealers have also approached the victims posing as businessmen trading in products such as cosmetics, artificial hair and other items and have taken the unsuspecting women on business trips to places such as India, Brazil and West African countries unaware that the said businessmen are dealers or traffickers of dangerous drugs including cocaine, heroin and other dangerous narcotic substances. In the process, the victims are made to carry luggage (sealed or otherwise) concealing drugs when passing through airport security check points, ending up being arrested.

It is in view of the foregoing that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation would like to appeal to all Malawians to be vigilant and not to fall prey to fraudsters whenever they are approached by foreigners for business ventures that involve travelling to countries abroad to deliver luggage or parcels to unknown contacts. Furthermore, the Ministry would like to urge the travelling public not to accept to carry any luggage suggested to them by people they do not know, especially those they meet in airports and other public places. Parents and guardians of Malawian students studying abroad are encouraged to ensure that their children and students are adequately warned and informed of this development and risk

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation would like to remind that drug trafficking is a serious offence which carries heavy penalties including death sentence in some countries. It is therefore everyone's duty to report to the authorities whenever they notice or meet suspicious people indulging in business dealings that do not conform to the expectations of operating legitimate businesses in Malawi.

The reputation and security of our nation and its people is everyone's responsibility. Let us all work together against this vice

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

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