South Africa's foreign minister says Israel trying to intimidate her over ICJ case
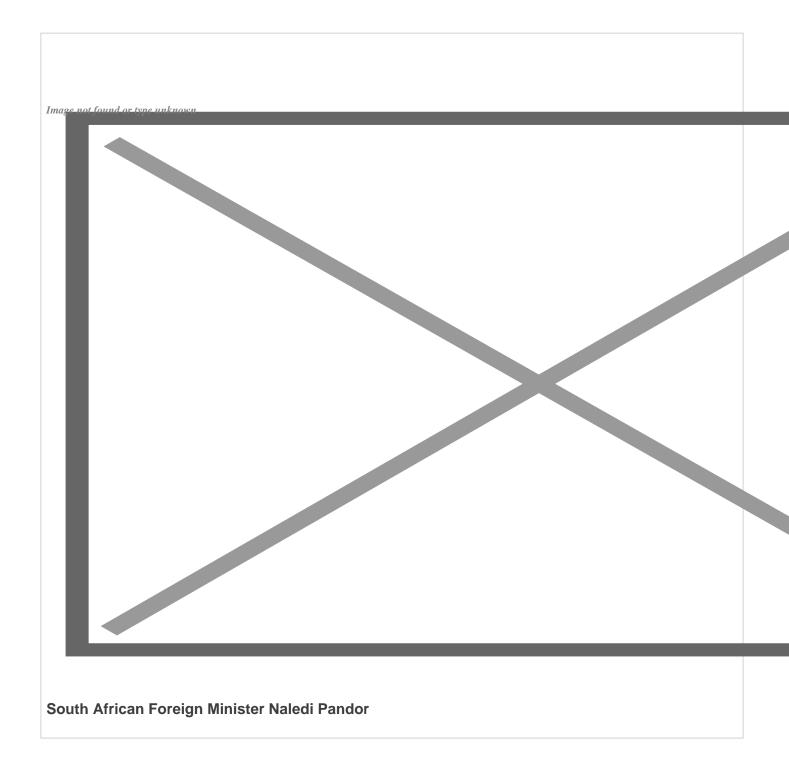

South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor

Cape Town, February 9 (RHC)-- South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor denounced the Israeli intelligence agency's attempts to "intimidate" her over the Israeli genocide case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and reaffirmed Pretoria's support for the Palestinians.

Speaking on the sidelines of President Cyril Ramaphosa's State of the Nation address on Thursday night, Pandor said she was concerned for the safety of her family after having been targeted on social media.

Pandor said she had spoken to Police Minister Bheki Cele about beefing up her security after she received threatening messages.   "I felt that [it would] be better if we had extra security. But what I'm more concerned about is my family, because in some of the social media messages my children are mentioned and so on, but this is par for the course.

"The Israeli agents, the intelligence services, [this] is how they behave, and they seek to intimidate you, so we must not be intimidated. There is a cause that is under way," the top South African diplomat said.

She said the government was determined to see the ICJ case through, much like the people of Palestine had been in fighting South Africa's apartheid system.   "We can't stand back now. We must be with them. And I think one of the things we must not allow is a failure of courage. It's extremely important that we continue with this. We talked to the South African people; they understand why it is we have taken up this moral course," Pandor noted.

The ICJ, also called the World Court, issued an interim ruling last month, ordering Israel to take "all measures within its power" to prevent acts that could amount to genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The Hague-based court, however, stopped short of ordering a ceasefire.

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