

Press Release

For immediate release

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South African Institute of Race Relations
The power of ideas

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The IRR has said South Africa is not immune to the threat of terror attacks

The IRR said that a number of factors made South Africa vulnerable to terror attacks. These included:

- Its position at the tail of the African terror belt which ran from Middle-East/North Africa down the African east coast and into South Africa.
- Its relatively porous borders which made it easy for people to enter and leave the country illegally.
- Weak control over official documents which made it easier for people to corruptly obtain identification and other documents.
- Ease of access to illegal weaponry.
- Its sophisticated banking and financial services institutions which aided in the laundering of terror money.
- The very public presence of large number of Western companies which made enticing targets for terror attacks.

IRR CEO, Dr Frans Cronje, said: “For a number of years the IRR has been warning that South Africa should not see itself as immune from terror attacks. The type of attacks that played themselves out most recently in France and Belgium are very difficult to prevent and it is that type of attack – a relatively isolated incident carried out by a small group of extremists with simple weaponry against a prominent target – which South Africa is also vulnerable to.”

He added: “It is misleading for South Africa’s security agencies to say there is no terror link or threat to South Africa. There are, for example, numerous examples over an extended period of time of terror suspects being found in possession of South African passports. There is also no security agency anywhere in the world that could provide an assurance that a specific country faces no terror threat. Terror is a global threat and as security measures in Western democracies are strengthened scenarios that see Western-aligned targets being attacked in third party countries become more likely.”

Ends.
