The IRGC's radical QUD Force is active in South Africa

Compiled by Tony Stone

The Islamic Republic of Iran has established durable, institution-based influence networks in the South Africa, utilizing political, religious, educational, and nonprofit structures to advance its interests. According to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and specifically its foreign operations branch, the Quds Force (IRGC-QF), is active in South Africa through the Al-Quds Foundation South Africa. It utilizes the country as a political safe haven, logistical hub, and base for ideological influence in Africa, and serving as the primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorist groups abroad. The Quds Force, under the command of Major General Esmail Qaani, reports directly to the supreme leader of Iran. His deputy, Mohammad Hassan Mahkaki, was killed by Israeli forces.



Major General Esmail Qaani, commander of the Quds Force in Africa.

While the IRGC-QF is heavily involved in regional destabilization and supporting specific militant groups, the IRGC-QF uses various covert mechanisms—including charities, businesses, and banks—to fund these regional partners and proxy groups, including the ANC.



Sheikh Ebrahim Gabriels.National Director of the Al-Quds Foundation South Africa

At the core of this network are two organisations and one political party, which operate out of Cape Town, South Africa. They are:

- **The Cape Town Ulama Board (CTUB):** This group has maintained a visible relationship with the Iranian embassy in South Africa. The CTUB and its leaders, such as Mufti Sayed Haroon Al Azhari, have hosted the Iranian ambassador to South Africa, Mansour Shakib Mehr, for briefings, advocating for strong relations between the two countries and opposing Western influence.
- **Ahlul Bait Foundation (Cape Town):** Identified as a Shia Muslim association, this foundation operates in Cape Town and has expressed support for Iranian leadership, including mourning the death of key Iranian political figures.
- **Al Jama-ah Party**: This is a South African Muslim political party represented in Parliament, which has publicly pledged support for Iran, collaborating with the Iranian embassy to mobilize support among local religious groups.



Naledi Pandor

Key Aspects of the influence network in South Africa

- **Core Entity:** These organisations operate under the direction of the Al-Quds Foundation South Africa.
- **Infrastructure:** These organisations operate through religious and educational institutions, and affiliated nonprofits designed for long-term presence, to influence the ANC as demonstrated by DIRCO's unwavering support for the Iran and Naledi Pandor taking the chair at the Nelson Mandela Foundation.
- **Goal**: The aim is to create, replicate, and maintain institutional footholds in the South Africa. rather than short-term or covert operations.



Farhad Hoomer

This network is part of a broader, decades-long international Islamic effort to cultivate influence inside South Africa and inside Western countries.

Naledi Pandor, as South Africa's former Minister of International Relations and Cooperation (2019–2024), has maintained a close relationship with the Al-Quds Foundation South Africa and its affiliated leadership through shared, high-profile advocacy for the Palestinian cause.

Pandor has been a featured speaker at events hosted by or associated with the Al-Quds Foundation South Africa, including being hosted by the Gatesville Mosque (Masjidul-Quds) in Cape Town, where she thanked the Muslim community for their activism.

She has worked closely with individuals deeply involved in the foundation, such as Ebrahim Gabriels, a prominent leader of the Al-Quds Foundation of South Africa and the Al-Aqsa Foundation of South Africa, both of which are aligned with anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian efforts.

An example of the Al-Quds Foundation South Africa's activity is Durban businessman Farhad Hoomer, who was accused of leading a local ISIS cell and who sanctioned by the U.S. in 2022, and his attempt to register a political party named the "Islamic State of Africa" (ISA) in May 2025. The party aimed to establish Sharia law in South Africa but was rejected by the Electoral Commission due to insufficient signatures, public notice failures, and intense public concern. Hoomer has appealed and is intending to participate in the upcoming local government elections in order to gain a foothold.

Hoomer was previously arrested for a 2018 deadly mosque attack and accused by the US Treasury of heading an ISIS-linked cell in Durban that funded jihadist activities through extortion and kidnapping.

The ISA intended to operate in the eThekwini region for the 2026 municipal elections, advocating for Sharia law.

The IEC rejected the application in July 2025 due to failure to meet the necessary voter signature threshold, inadequate notice of registration, and over 200 public objections.

Hoomer has not been convicted of terrorism charges in SA courts but was added to the US Specially Designated Nationals list. The party was given 30 days to appeal the decision, which it has.

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