

# *It's business as usual for Bosasa's migrant centre*

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Bosasa-owned Lindela Repatriation Centre in Krugersdorp will continue to operate, despite the property being sold for R60 million on auction yesterday, the department of home affairs said.

The auction kicked off on Wednesday after liquidators had won a court order allowing them to sell off Bosasa's assets in a bid to recover over R500 million owed to them.

The bidding for the repatriation centre, still under the ownership of Bosasa, was said to have started at R30 million

yesterday. The department of public works still had a monthly lease of about R1 million.

Home Affairs Minister Aaron Motsoaledi said as far as the department was concerned "we can't move, we have no other place to take them", referring to the foreign nationals detained in the facility.

He said the department always had the understanding that "this time might come" when Bosasa had their first blows with the law and other governmental departments started to terminate all dealings with the corruption-tainted company.

Home affairs was the only de-

partment that kept its contract because there was no other facility they could move to, he said.

At the time, there had been extensive discussions between government stakeholders, including the minister of public works, and the liquidators who had come to the agreement that home affairs would have the right of first refusal of the property.

Motsoaledi said they had been in meetings with the department of public works since Wednesday to discuss the matter further.

When asked about the status of the repatriation centre,

recently appointed director of Bosasa Jared Watson insisted the auction was illegal as the liquidators failed to fulfil an important requirement to gain the authorisation of the company's board of directors.

"The court order says there should be authorisation by the directors to carry out the auction. There has not been any authorisation," said Watson.

Meanwhile, the South African Revenue Service (Sars) had filed court papers opposing an urgent bid by Watson to halt the auction.

In court papers, Sars also indicated it would oppose Wat-

son's main application to have six Bosasa companies placed under business rescue, filed on Tuesday.

Sars stated in its papers that as a result of the tax inquiry into Bosasa's affairs, it had determined that Bosasa owed Sars more than R500 million in taxes, which included penalties and interest on various amounts.

This made Sars the largest creditor and, as such, it had bemoaned Watson's failure to join Sars as a party to the litigation, asking the court to dismiss the application on this ground alone.

— *Additional reporting by News24 Wire*