

Africa Regional Police Chiefs' Organizations Meeting

The first Africa Regional Police Chiefs' Organizations Meeting on the project "***The Fight against the Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of Firearms and explosive materials in Africa***" was held in Kigali Rwanda from 26th to 27th May 2011.

The meeting brought together delegates representing Police Chiefs from EAPCCO, CAPCCO, SARPCCO, WAPCCO and ECOWAS including the host country, Rwanda. In attendance were also representatives from the AU, EU, Interpol and RECSA.

The meeting was officially opened by the Minister for Internal Security the Government of Rwanda Hon. Sheikh Mussa Fazil HARELIMANA.

The following issues emerged during discussions on the EU-funded project being coordinated on the continent by RECSA:

1. The Police Chiefs welcomed the project and called for its implementation
2. The need to harmonize training modules from the various regions
3. The need for joint cross regions training of trainers on small arms and light weapons management
4. Need to harmonise standard operating procedures across the regions to enhance information sharing and joint cross-border operations on crime management
5. The need for holding undertaking joint planning and operations on illicit arms control within and across regions

The meeting received information and experiences from CAPCCO, ECOWAS/WAPCCO, EAPCCO and SARPCCO. The following issues were raised by the presentations;

1. The challenge of illicit arms small arms and light weapons came up as a common challenge across regions
2. There are on-going trainings, workshops and seminars within the regions on various aspects of illicit arms control and crime management.
3. The need to cooperate beyond the specific Police Chiefs Cooperation Organizations was emphasised especially in view of the cross regional membership of States.
4. The regions recognised the positive role being played by RECSA in addressing the issue of illicit arms proliferation and the need to establish a coordinating mechanism at the continental level in coordination with AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs)
5. The supportive role of Interpol to regional and national police work was recognised and the need to enhance it.
6. The meeting called for the implementation of regional instruments by RECs and Member States

Recommendations/Way forward

The meeting agreed on the way forward including joint operations, arms marking, enhancement of cooperation between agencies, and the need to establish a Continental Police Coordination mechanism.

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Courtesy Call on Rwanda President

In the course of the meeting heads of delegations were granted an audience by the President of the Republic of Rwanda, His Excellency Paul Kagame. During the audience the President highlighted the need to strengthen coordination, cooperation and unity among the Regional Police Chiefs Organizations as a mechanism to effectively fight against all forms of organised crime including the proliferation of illicit SALW.



His Excellency Paul Kagame (fourth from left) poses for a group photo with the delegation after the courtesy call