



EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
THE GREAT LAKES REGION



UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE
GREAT LAKES REGION

2nd Meeting of the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network, 13 – 14 June 2018, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

A. Overview

On 13-14 June 2018 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania the Secretariat of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), with the support of the Office of the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region (O/SESG-GL) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) held the second meeting of the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network (GLJCN). The meeting sought to consolidate engagements made at the first meeting of the network, held in Khartoum in November 2017, and to move forward closer judicial cooperation for serious and transnational crimes in the Great Lakes Region.

The main objectives of the GLJCN are:

- To connect Central Authorities/focal points on judicial cooperation
- Facilitate formal and informal cooperation on cases of transnational crime (extradition, transfer of sentenced persons, joint investigations, mutual legal assistance, confiscation of proceeds, special investigative techniques, witness protection, etc.)
- Conduct training on judicial cooperation (general, specialized areas)
- Discuss best practices, address challenges and propose solutions to address judicial cases of cross-border crime.

The meeting was held under “Chatham House Rule” and therefore the report summarizes the main outcome without going into detail of the specific cases discussed.

B. Conclusions and recommendations of the 2nd meeting of the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network

Conclusions

- For the Network to effectively deliver the expected results, i.e. facilitate the administration of justice on cross-border crimes, the role of the focal points needs to be consolidated and supported, both in the respective countries as well as within the Network
- Members of the Network committed to strengthen cooperation and work towards the implementation of the recommendations made, with a particular focus on those aiming at harmonizing legislation and addressing the protracted cases
- The conclusions of the meeting will be presented to the Heads of States and Government at the 9th meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism planned for October 2018 in Kampala, for their appreciation and to encourage their further engagement on this key regional commitment.



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Recommendations

The final recommendations of the meeting, agreed by all participants, focus on three areas: the role of the focal points and the actions they need to take to clearly establish their role and effectively function; specific areas of collaboration and next steps to ensure the Network delivers concrete outcomes; and the support required from external actors, mainly the UN and ICGLR to enable the Network to be fully operational.

For focal points

- Ensure their national authorities and all other relevant national actors are aware of and support their role as key contact points on cross-border judicial cooperation
- Ensure they are informed/copied in all relevant requests of cross-border nature (sent and received)
- Be proactive in establishing and using formal and informal channels of communication (e.g. before a formal request is sent)
- Fill in forms on existing bilateral cooperation agreements proposed by Burundi
- Update country details on the Directory of National Competent Authorities.

Operationalizing the Network

- Communicate about the role of the Network, how it works, and the existence and role of the focal points
- Commit to promote cooperation on specific concrete cases, to regularly share progress, and report back at the next Network meeting (Zambia example with DRC on timber trafficking)
- Identify and lift blockages to cooperation, for example:
 - For extradition cases blocked because of the death penalty application in the requesting country, to consider proposing the “given assurance” policy (based on mutual agreement)
 - For cases of extradition blocked because of alleged political considerations by working together on the preparation of the dossier (focus on criminal acts rather than political considerations)
- Promote collaboration on cases related to the exploitation of natural resources:
 - establish two-way communication/information sharing and launch joint investigations on suspicious/illicit natural resources movements
 - coordinate on the implementation of the recommendations of the ICGLR-O/SESG expert meeting of July 2017 on sustainable natural resources management and the UN Group of Experts reports



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- Identify “champions” in specific domains of judicial cooperation that can support neighbouring countries carry out investigation and prosecution of cases (Rwanda example helping South Sudan with forensic expertise)

Supporting the Network

- UNODC to establish a website for the Judicial Cooperation Network, with partners
- UNODC to assist countries in domestication of legislation
- UNODC to provide training on specialized areas (alignment of legislation etc.) for focal points
- Partners to identify and support opportunities to enhance the capacities of the focal points and of the Network to function effectively.

C. Participants

Senior representatives from Directors of Public Prosecution offices of Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Sudan and Angola could not attend.

Eleven of the 30 participants were women, with Rwanda and Kenya being represented by teams composed uniquely by women.