



PRESS RELEASE

PR35 - 11.11.2016

Said Djinnit: the time has come to act together to overcome the cycles of violence caused by years of impunity in the Great Lakes region

Nairobi (Kenya), 11 November 2016 - The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Office of the United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes seek to follow up on recommendations made at a conference held in Nairobi on 19-20 April 2016 that aims to facilitate the administration of justice through judicial cooperation in the Great Lakes region.

During a two-day meeting in Nairobi on 10-11 November, the 12-member states of the ICGLR worked together to lay the foundation of the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network (GLJC Network). The meeting brought together public and military prosecutors, and legal experts from the Office of the UN Special Envoy, ICGLR, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as well as partners from the East African Association of Prosecutors, Africa's Sahel Judicial Cooperation Platform, the International Centre for Transitional Justice, the European Judicial Cooperation Network, and the German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ).

The Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network will contribute to the prevention and punishment of trans-border organized crimes committed in Africa's Great Lakes region. The GLJC Network will provide a forum to facilitate effective and collaborative legal actions at the regional level, and contribute to promoting the fight against impunity in crimes committed by organized groups and negative armed forces operating in the region, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, sexual violence, illicit trafficking of fire arms and drugs, illegal exploitation of natural resources, and terrorism.

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Regional cooperation in criminal matters is needed if the region is to deal effectively with the broad array of crimes which take place in individual countries, but have significant cross-border and regional effect. “Today’s meeting demonstrates the readiness and willingness of the Great Lakes region to work together through a Network that will foster cooperation among judicial institutions from the ICGLR member states. Impunity continues to fuel the cycles of violence that have plagued the region for over 25 years, and the myriad of crimes being committed in many parts of the Great Lakes region continue to have significant regional implications. Here’s a great opportunity to work together, and to look at crimes committed in individual countries as a threat to the entire region,” Said Djinnit, the United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region said in his opening remarks.

The establishment of the GLJC Network is a follow-up to the decision of the 5th ordinary summit of the heads of State and Government held in Luanda, Angola, on 15 January 2014. The proposed Network is a regional cooperation tool for criminal matters for the use of judicial actors from the 12 ICGLR member states and other countries in the region.

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