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United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI)

- Training and Programmes
- Research and Documentation
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BILINGUAL NEWSLETTER- ENGLISH

**UNAFRI AT THE CONTINENTAL LAUNCH AND
COMMEMORATION OF THE AFRICA AMNESTY MONTH 2025**

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2025 TO MARCH 2026

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NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2025 TO MARCH 2026

**UNITED NATIONS AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRIME
AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS (UNAFRI)**

“Empowering African States for crime prevention and criminal justice to ensure sustainable development”.

“Renforcer la capacité des États africains dans la prévention du crime et la justice pénale pour assurer un développement durable”.

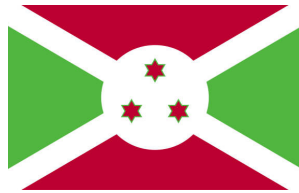
«Fortalecer la capacidad de los Estados africanos en materia de prevención del delito y justicia penal para el desarrollo sostenible»

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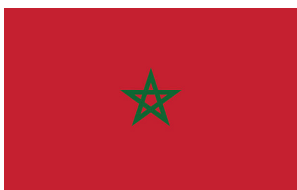
Kenya



Libya



Malawi



Morocco



Mozambique



Niger



Nigeria



Rwanda



Senegal



Seychelles



Sierra Leone



Somalia



Sudan



Tanzania



Togo



Tunisia



Uganda



Zambia



Zimbabwe

UNAFRI AT AFRICA AMNESTY MONTH 2025

“Safer Communities through Voluntary Disarmament”



UNAFRI Director General represented the Institute

On 2nd October 2025, Dr. KITIO Edouard, Director General of UNAFRI, represented the Institute at the commemoration of Africa Amnesty Month 2025 held at Speke Resort Munyonyo under the theme “Safer Communities through Voluntary Disarmament.” The event showcased Uganda’s progress in implementing the Amnesty Law of 2000, with over 30,000 illegal small arms and light weapons voluntarily surrendered or collected, a significant milestone in promoting peace and security.

In his address, Hon. Gen. Kahinda Otafiire, Minister of Internal Affairs, called on citizens to surrender all illicit firearms as a vital step toward building a peaceful nation. He further warned against the influence of arms manufacturers

who prioritize profit over human life, noting that their industry thrives only in times of conflict. He emphasized the need for citizens to act with wisdom and resist being exploited for mercantile interests.

The Chief Guest, H.E. Rt Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, reaffirmed the country’s commitment to fostering safer communities and advancing regional stability.

UNAFRI remains committed to supporting initiatives that combat armed violence and promote sustainable peace across the continent. Together, we move towards a safer, more secure Africa.

UNAFRI PARTICIPATES IN THE 3RD FINANCIAL SECTOR ANTI-FRAUD FORUM

“Closing Gaps through Strengthening Investigations and Prosecution via Collaboration”



UNAFRI Deputy Director General (left) with stakeholders from the financial sector, law enforcement, regulatory agencies, and the legal community

On October 21, 2025, Mr. Munanura Andrew Karokora, the Deputy Director General had the privilege of representing the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) at the 3rd Financial Sector Anti-Fraud Forum. This event was organized by the Uganda Bankers Association in partnership with the Bank of Uganda, bringing together key stakeholders from the financial sector, law enforcement, regulatory agencies, and the legal community.

The forum focused on four pivotal areas aimed at fortifying the integrity of Uganda’s financial services sector:

a) Developing a unified national digital defence strategy to collectively combat cyber threats and fraud.

b) Tackling collusion within the sector by enhancing detection and deterrence mechanisms.

c) Strengthening the investigation and prosecution of financial crimes through improved collaboration.

d) Fostering robust partnerships amongst all relevant stakeholders to close existing operational gaps.

UNAFRI was specifically tasked with moderating a panel discussion on the theme: “Closing Gaps through Strengthening Investigations and Prosecution via Collaboration.” I had the honor of leading a distinguished panel comprising:

- Ms Annet Namatovu, Chief State Attorney at the Anti-Corruption Court;
- D/SP Ndyamuhika Bill, Representative from the Criminal Investigations Directorate;
- Ms Judy Wambaire, Chairperson of the Uganda Bankers Association Legal Committee and Company Secretary, Kenya Commercial Bank; and
- Mr Kevin Bakulumpagi, Senior Officer, Litigation and Prosecution at the Uganda Communications Commission



The panel discussion explored key issues related to evidence collection and case management, highlighting common flaws that often lead to delays in prosecuting financial crimes. We discussed practical solutions to address these issues, such as enhancing

investigator training, standardizing evidence-handling procedures, and leveraging technology to reinforce the chain of custody.

Another key aspect of the discussion focused on fostering a culture of collaboration and organized cooperation among investigators, prosecutors, regulators, and financial institutions. The panel highlighted the importance of regular inter-agency dialogues, information-sharing protocols, and the formation of joint task forces to ensure a coordinated response to fraud and financial crime.

The insights shared during the session emphasized the importance of a comprehensive approach that combines strong legal frameworks, technological advancements, and multi-sector partnerships to effectively combat fraud and preserve the credibility of Uganda's financial sector.



MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

UNAFRI and ICC explore new avenues for cooperation



From left to right; Her Excellency Reine Alapini-Gansou, Vice President of the ICC; Her Excellency Ms. Tomoko Akane, President of the ICC; Mr. Munanura Andrew Karokora, Deputy Director General, UNAFRI

On 21 October 2025, the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) held a high-level meeting with the leadership of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The meeting was attended by Her Excellency Ms. Tomoko Akane, President of the ICC; Her Excellency Ms. Reine Alapini-Gansou, Vice President of the ICC; Mr. Christian F. Mahr, Director of the ICC Division of External Operations; Mr. David Saitoh, External Relations Advisor; Mr. Scott Nadioo, ICC Country Director in Uganda; and Mr. Andrew Munanura Karokora, Deputy Director-General of UNAFRI.

Discussions focused on strengthening information sharing and enhancing cooperation between UNAFRI and the ICC. President Akane highlighted the ICC's current challenges in expanding outreach and engagement across several African countries and emphasized the importance of forging strategic partnerships, such as with UNAFRI, to reinforce the Court's presence and impact on the continent.

The meeting further examined the legal and logistical considerations related to the hosting of ICC convicts serving sentences in African countries. President Akane informed participants that the ICC is seeking willing host countries



within Africa, noting that many states have expressed interest in understanding the associated benefits. Proposed incentives included the rehabilitation of national prison facilities by the ICC and the provision of specialized training opportunities for prison personnel.

Participants underscored the need for stronger frameworks and closer collaboration in this area. Particular emphasis was placed on capacity building, with witness protection identified as a priority area. In this regard, the ICC expressed interest in partnering with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to design and implement targeted training programmes.

On behalf of UNAFRI, the Deputy Director-General expressed appreciation to President Akane for the opportunity to engage at short notice and reaffirmed the Institute's commitment to supporting the ICC's mandate. He reiterated

UNAFRI's readiness to collaborate in delivering training and capacity-building programmes for stakeholders in Uganda and across the wider region. He also highlighted UNAFRI's available infrastructure, including modern training facilities and residential accommodation for expert consultants, while noting the continuing challenge of securing sustainable funding to expand and maintain its programmes.

Agreed Resolutions

The ICC President directed the Registry to initiate the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNAFRI and the ICC to formalize their partnership, noting that the ICC has previously concluded a similar agreement with UNAFEI, under which UNAFEI is implementing training activities across Asia.

It was agreed that UNAFRI would collaborate with the ICC to deliver training and capacity-building initiatives for stakeholders across Africa, with immediate preparations to be undertaken by the Registry.

Both institutions further agreed to explore comprehensive collaboration strategies aimed at strengthening outreach efforts across all African countries.

In addition, the parties resolved to pursue joint research initiatives addressing shared priorities in criminal justice and witness protection.

Overall, the meeting marked a significant step toward deepening cooperation between UNAFRI and the ICC, reflecting a shared commitment to advancing justice, strengthening institutional capacity, and fostering effective collaboration across Africa.

UNAFRI STRENGTHENS GLOBAL COLLABORATION AT THE 2025 AUTUMN PNI COORDINATION MEETING



UNAFRI actively participated in the 2025 Autumn Coordination Meeting of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network of Institutes (PNI)

The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) actively participated in the **2025 Autumn Coordination Meeting of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network of Institutes (PNI)**, held on **6 November 2025** at the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council (ISPAC) Secretariat in Milan, Italy. The annual meeting brought together heads and representatives of PNI institutions from across the world to review progress, exchange experiences, and reinforce international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice.

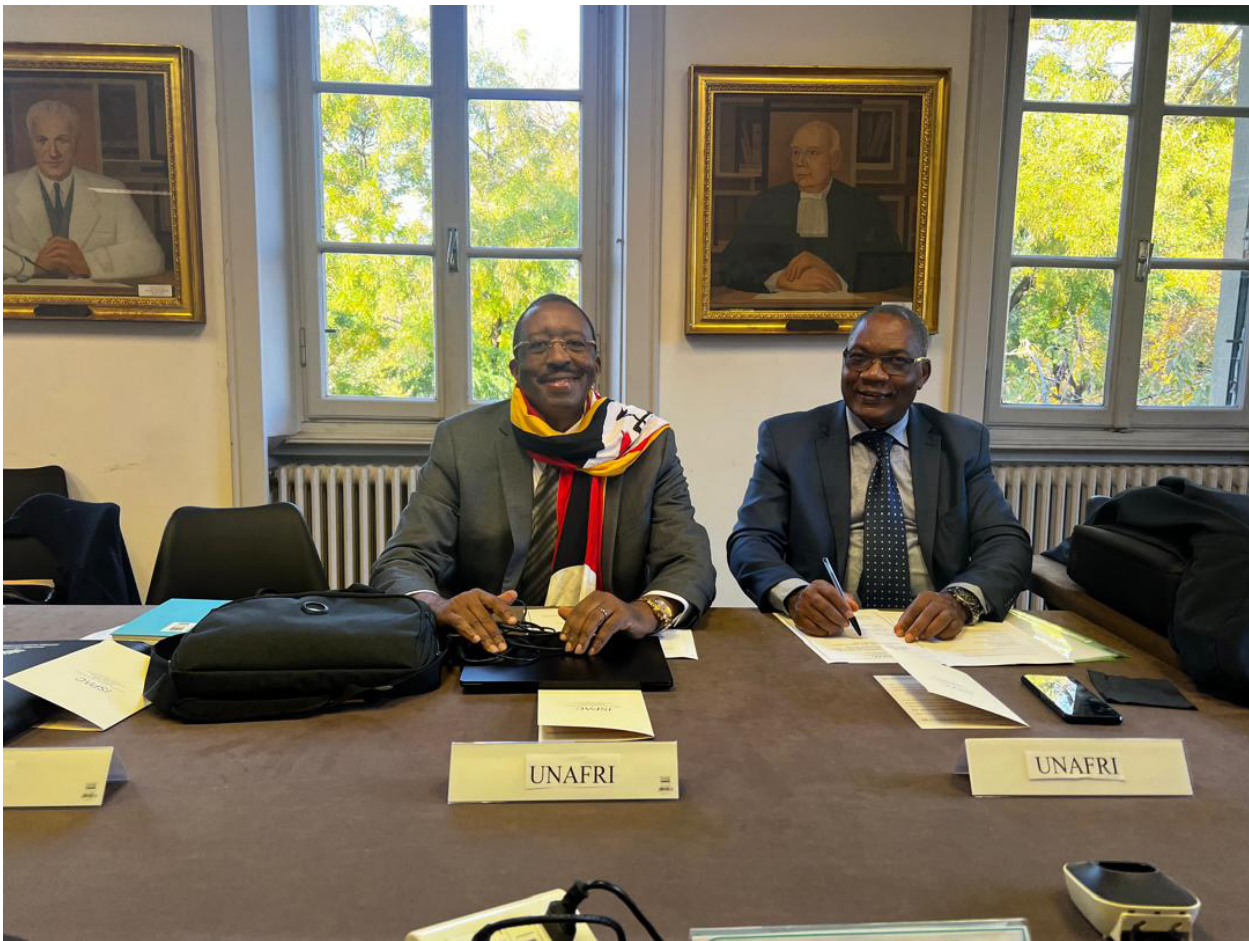
The meeting was chaired by Professor Stefano Manacorda, Director of International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council (ISPAC), UNAFRI was represented by its Director-General, Dr. Edouard Kitio, who joined counterparts from other regional and international institutes. The host, Dr. Stefano Manacorda, Director of ISPAC, warmly welcomed participants and highlighted ISPAC's continued

engagement in priority areas such as financial crimes, trafficking in cultural property, environmental crime, and international criminal justice.

Key Outcomes of the Coordination Meeting

Mr. Brandolino provided updates on UNODC's priorities, new initiatives, and ongoing projects, while also addressing challenges related to budgetary constraints and leadership transitions within the organization. He reaffirmed UNODC's strong commitment to supporting the PNI network and emphasized continued member state backing, noting, among others, a USD 55 million contribution from the United States. He also announced the signing of a new cybercrime treaty in Hanoi, Vietnam, with 72 countries as signatories.

The meeting reviewed progress across the PNI network as the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice approaches its conclusion. PNI members shared updates on diverse areas including



cybercrime, anti-corruption, asset recovery, youth crime prevention, artificial intelligence in justice systems, offender rehabilitation, and alternatives to incarceration.

UNAFRI's Contribution

In his intervention, Dr. Kitio highlighted UNAFRI's ongoing work across the African continent, including the organization and participation in regional conferences and knowledge-sharing forums involving practitioners, policymakers, and experts. He reported on four online workshops focusing on the protection of women's and children's rights, countering the recruitment and exploitation of children by extremist groups, improving access to justice, and strengthening offender rehabilitation and reintegration. UNAFRI also organized a physical workshop for Youth Ambassadors of Peace in preparation for Uganda's 2026 general elections.

Networking and Collaboration

On the evening of 6 November, the ISPAC Director hosted a dinner for PNI members and international experts at Ristorante Bauscia in Milan. The informal setting provided an opportunity for networking and strengthened collegial ties within the global criminal justice community.

International Seminar on Trafficking in Cultural Property

On 7 November 2025, UNAFRI participated in the International Seminar on "Curbing Trafficking in Cultural Property: A Path for Global Strategy?", held at Palazzo Edison in Milan. Opening remarks by Dr. Stefano Manacorda underscored the urgency of coordinated international responses to the illicit trafficking of cultural heritage. The seminar was moderated by Mr. Brandolino and featured contributions from UNESCO, INTERPOL, national

authorities, prosecutors, academics, and law enforcement agencies.

Representing UNAFRI, Mr. Andrew Munanura Karokora, the Deputy Director General presented the African perspective, highlighting regional progress and best practices, including Morocco's legal and institutional advances in protecting cultural heritage. Discussions throughout the day emphasized multi-agency cooperation, comparative legal frameworks, prosecutorial strategies, and the implementation of the 2014 UN International Guidelines on trafficking in cultural property.

Moving Forward

The 2025 Autumn PNI Coordination Meeting and the International Seminar reaffirmed the critical importance of international cooperation in addressing complex and evolving crime challenges. UNAFRI's active participation reinforced its role as a key regional partner within the PNI network, contributing to global efforts to promote effective, inclusive, and resilient criminal justice systems while safeguarding cultural heritage worldwide.



UNAFRI AND PACEM HAVENS FOUNDATION EXPLORE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ON OFFENDER REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION



UNAFRI Meets PACEM Havens Foundation to Strengthen Ex-Prisoner Rehabilitation & Reintegration

The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), led by its Director General, Dr. Kitio Edouard, hosted a high-level delegation from PACEM Havens Foundation, headed by Hon. Chris Rwakasisi, Senior Presidential Advisor and Chairman of the Foundation. The engagement marked an important step toward strengthening collaboration in offender rehabilitation, reintegration, and restorative justice.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Kitio Edouard warmly welcomed the delegation and commended PACEM Havens Foundation for its initiative to engage with UNAFRI. He underscored the strong alignment between the mandates of the two institutions, particularly in promoting humane, effective, and sustainable approaches to offender rehabilitation and community reintegration.

The Deputy Director General of UNAFRI, Mr. Munanura Andrew Karokora, provided an overview of the Institute's past and ongoing

prison-related interventions. He highlighted the landmark “**From Prison Back Home**” programme implemented in the early 2000s in partnership with the Government of Germany, noting that it remains a key reference point for rehabilitation practices within the Uganda Prisons Service. He further shared insights from a recent regional training programme on **Reducing Re-offending through Rehabilitation and Reintegration**, which brought together correctional and rehabilitation experts from Eastern and Southern Africa and recorded notable success. Additionally, he outlined model strategies pioneered by Japan and adopted by the United Nations, which UNAFRI has contextualized for regional implementation to strengthen reintegration outcomes.

Hon. Chris Rwakasisi expressed sincere appreciation to UNAFRI for the warm reception and the opportunity for dialogue. He emphasized that PACEM Havens Foundation's work is grounded in lived experience rather than theory. Drawing from his own journey following his release in 2009, he shared how visits to halfway homes in Germany inspired him to establish



a similar model in Uganda. Together with Mr. Shadrack Magara, this vision materialized into the PACEM Havens Foundation after earlier attempts by others had not succeeded.

Hon. Rwakasi explained that the **Halfway Home** model offers a more practical and supportive alternative to traditional reintegration approaches. He observed that stigma within families and communities often undermines reintegration efforts, whereas halfway homes provide a safe environment for personal transformation before former inmates return to society. He further emphasized the importance of spiritual transformation as a foundation for lasting change an element that distinguishes PACEM Havens Foundation's approach from largely secular rehabilitation models elsewhere.

The meeting also underscored the critical role of **Restorative Justice**, highlighting the need for structured reconciliation processes between offenders and victims. Participants noted that effective restorative justice requires specialized training and preparation for both parties to ensure meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

The Uganda Prisons Service was commended for its humane and patriotic approach to corrections,

particularly its emphasis on rehabilitation. Its vocational training programmes covering skills such as carpentry, tailoring, bricklaying, weaving, and hairdressing were recognized as vital to post-release reintegration. It was recommended that graduates be formally assessed, certified by the Ministry of Works, and supported with basic tools to enhance productive reintegration.

Ms. Ssanyu Rebecca, Executive Director of PACEM Havens Foundation, shared comparative insights from rehabilitation centres in Ireland, where reintegration efforts focus on providing startup kits aligned to inmates' pre-existing or acquired skills. She also highlighted challenges faced by former inmates, including mediation needs during community re-entry and difficulties related to instruments of release, emphasizing the importance of building the capacity of trained mediators.

In conclusion, both UNAFRI and PACEM Havens Foundation agreed to formalize their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) outlining specific areas of partnership. The meeting ended with mutual appreciation and a shared commitment to advancing rehabilitation, reintegration, and restorative justice across the region.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN UGANDA: ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL COURTS OF APPEAL AND MOBILE COURTS TO SERVE THE ISLANDS

By Dr. Édouard KITIO, Senior Magistrate, Director General of UNAFRI

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN UGANDA
Bringing Justice Closer to Every Ugandan

REGIONAL COURTS OF APPEAL

- Arua
- Fort Portal
- Gulu
- Jinja
- Masaka
- Mbale
- Mbarara
- Mubende

MOBILE COURTS TO SERVE THE ISLANDS

Justice that is accessible, swift, fair and equitable strengthens peace and development.

Bringing courts to the islands to protect rights and end impunity.

8 REGIONAL COURTS OF APPEAL
Bringing appellate justice closer to the people.

Reduce delays and costs

Improve efficiency and access

Strengthen public confidence in the judiciary

Protecting the rights of women and children

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND. JUSTICE FOR ALL.

The Ugandan government has recently made significant strides to accelerate access to justice for all. This initiative stems from the understanding that justice is the only reliable regulator of social relations, helping to maintain peace and stability in society. Until recently, there was only one Court of Appeal across the entire country, headquartered in Kampala, the political capital. Due to the many challenges faced by litigants in accessing it such as high transport costs and excessive judicial delays the government encouraged the resolution of disputes through alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms, particularly mediation. However, resorting to mediation does not prevent parties who wish to do so from bringing serious cases before state courts.

To reduce delays in the formal justice system, the government has undertaken another initiative consisting of establishing Courts of Appeal in regions where they did not previously exist (I), and mobile

courts to deliver justice in the islands (II).

I. Establishment of Regional Courts of Appeal

Eight (08) Courts of Appeal have been created by the judiciary to bring appellate justice closer to people within their respective regions. This initiative also aims to reduce judicial delays, the backlog of pending cases, and the cost of accessing justice. These courts have been established in Arua, Fort Portal, Gulu, Jinja, Masaka, Mbale, Mbarara, and Mubende.

The project seeks to strengthen judicial processes by promoting efficiency and effectiveness. It eases the burden on the single Court of Appeal in Kampala and facilitates the work of lawyers and litigants, who will no longer need to travel long distances to argue their cases there.

This reform is contained in Legal Notice No. 21 of 2025 and the constitutional guidelines relating to the



establishment of Courts of Appeal (2025), issued by former Chief Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo pursuant to Article 133 (1)(b) of the Constitution on October 30, 2025.

This decentralization allows litigants to file appeals within their respective regions, saving both time and resources. It strengthens public confidence in the judiciary and improves the quality of judicial services across Uganda.

According to judiciary spokesperson James Ereemye, the implementation of the new Courts of Appeal will be carried out in phases, beginning with Gulu and Mbarara once construction of their buildings is completed. Appeals from judgments delivered by courts in Arua, Moyo, and Nebbi will be handled by the Arua Court of Appeal. The Fort Portal Court of Appeal will handle cases from Fort Portal, Hoima, Kasese, and Masindi. The same arrangement will apply to the other regional courts based on their respective jurisdictions.

II. Establishment of Mobile Courts to Serve the Islands

The Chief Justice of Uganda, Dr. Flavian Zeija, drawing on his experience as a senior judge, has sought to address the difficulties faced by island communities in accessing courts. To this end, he signed an instrument establishing mobile courts to operate in the islands.

To implement this initiative, three boats have been acquired to enable judicial personnel to access these islands and hear cases according to a predefined schedule. He observed that many cases of rape and sexual violence occur on the islands, but due to distance and lack of financial means to travel to mainland courts, offenders are often arrested and then released without trial. This situation fosters impunity, encourages crime, and frustrates victims.

The islands most affected by limited access to justice include Kalangala and Buvuma, among others. According to Dr. Zeija, the goal is to bring justice closer to the people through mobile courts, allowing communities to access judicial services where no courts exist.

He expressed hope that with the three boats one of which has already been delivered judicial staff will be able to set up tents and chairs on-site, travel to the islands, conduct hearings, convict offenders, and return. He cited the example of Mazinga Island, near the Tanzanian border, where litigants have complained that traveling to Kalangala to attend court can cost as much as 400,000 UGX due to the need to hire a boat to cross into Tanzanian waters.

It is therefore his duty to ensure that the doors of justice remain open to all Ugandans, regardless of gender or social status.

This initiative is part of the community justice program launched by the Ugandan government with support from the Swedish government through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Phase I of the program helped restore public confidence in the justice system, while Phase II runs from December 2025 to December 2028.

Ms. Maria Håkansson, Ambassador of Sweden to Uganda, attended the launch ceremony and emphasized that when communities are empowered, justice becomes more accessible, credible, and capable of resolving their problems. She noted, however, that despite these efforts, access to justice remains a major

challenge due to geographical constraints, high costs, complex procedures, and institutional weaknesses.

The Ugandan government's efforts to improve access to justice are commendable, as the rule of law cannot exist without a justice system that is reliable, swift, fair, and equitable. Furthermore, access to justice must be facilitated for vulnerable groups, particularly women and children.

With these efforts, it is hoped that the number of pretrial detainees will decrease. Indeed, the Auditor General's 2025 report reveals that more than 5,000 children are held in detention facilities due to the absence of social inquiry reports. These reports provide courts with essential information about the social circumstances of children in conflict with the law and guide judges in determining appropriate measures for their treatment.

The annual report of the Ugandan police indicates that 4.3% of reported offenses involve children. Children were the direct victims in 9,408 cases, down from 10,741 cases reported in 2023 a decrease of 12.4% in recorded crimes.

Under international law, a child is defined as any person under the age of 18 at the time the offense is committed.

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ORGAN REMOVAL: AN EVIL TO ERADICATE

By Dr. Édouard KITIO, Director General of UNAFRI

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ORGAN REMOVAL: AN EVIL TO ERADICATE

YOUR POVERTY THEIR PROFIT SAY NO TO EXPLOITATION

FOR SALE HUMAN ORGANS \$\$\$

SUPPLY VULNERABLE COUNTRIES

DEMAND HIGH INCOME COUNTRIES

- PROTECT VICTIMS
- PUNISH TRAFFICKERS
- PREVENT EXPLOITATION
- PROMOTE DIGNITY AND EQUALITY

NO TO ORGAN TRAFFICKING YES TO HUMAN DIGNITY

EVERY HUMAN BODY IS NOT FOR SALE

TOGETHER, LET'S ELIMINATE THIS CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

The African continent has become fertile ground for organized crime. While porous borders have given terrorism an increasingly international character, trafficking in persons is also expanding and becoming an integral part of organized crime. To eradicate this phenomenon, the international community adopted a Protocol to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The term “trafficking in persons” is defined by this Protocol as: “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits

to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs.

As can be seen, organ removal is a form of exploitation within human trafficking. Indeed, organ transplantation is one of the most remarkable advances in modern medicine. Since the first successful attempts in the 1950s, organ transplantation has saved or prolonged the lives of thousands of patients. Initially considered too risky, it has become common due to scientific progress and is now practiced in hospitals in at least 100 countries worldwide. The organs concerned include the kidneys, heart, liver, lungs,

and pancreas, with kidneys being the most in demand globally.

Organs for transplantation generally come from two sources: deceased donation and living donation. In the first case, the donor decides to offer their body or parts of it for medical use after death, whether brain death or cardio-respiratory arrest. In the second case, a person in full possession of their mental faculties voluntarily donates one of their organs for medical treatment. In all cases, national laws strictly regulate organ donation. Despite these legal avenues, the scarcity of transplantable organs has become severe, pushing those in need to pay large sums of money to obtain them. This has led to the emergence and growth of organ trafficking, now an internationally punishable crime.

Organ trafficking is the illegal trade in organs, involving the removal of human organs or tissues from living or deceased persons for transplantation. It includes commercial transplantation where financial profit is involved or procedures conducted outside national medical systems. There is a growing global demand for healthy human organs for transplantation, far exceeding supply. It is estimated that in January 2020, more than 100,000 candidates were waiting for organ transplants in the United States. The most common illegal method of acquiring organs is “transplant tourism,” where recipients travel to medical centers in developing countries. Other forms include using a third country for transplantation or transporting donors to the recipient’s country.

When trafficking involves any of the elements defined by the Palermo Protocol, the victim’s consent to exploitation is irrelevant. A person can only give valid consent when fully free, which is not the case for trafficking victims. The situation of children deserves special attention. Under international law, a child is any person under 18 years of age. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a child for exploitation is considered trafficking, even without the use of force, fraud, or coercion.

Despite international legal frameworks, trafficking in persons continues to grow in Africa due to poverty, underemployment, unemployment, and other forms of vulnerability. The phenomenon has been observed in western Kenya, where young people in financial distress have sold their kidneys for survival. The price of a kidney ranges from €1,500 to €6,000, with intermediaries often taking the largest share. In many cases, sellers are not fully informed of the consequences or health risks associated with organ removal.

In South Africa, trafficking is fueled both by criminal networks and illegal organ harvesting in hospitals. In Mozambique, the government once considered closing shops at night to combat human and organ trafficking. A UNESCO report cited the case of a three-year-old child found dead with organs removed, and noted that the practice is expanding.

However, the human body should not be commercialized, and no organ or human tissue should be treated as merchandise. In France, a 1994 law reinforces this principle, already in place since 1976, stating that no payment may be made to a person for the removal of body parts, except reimbursement of expenses. Violators face up to seven years in prison and fines exceeding €100,000. Similar laws exist in England (since 1989) and Germany (since 1997), among many other countries.

Africa is not the only continent affected. Other countries impacted include Romania, Bulgaria, Iraq, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Israel, Albania, Iran, and Syria.

Organ-importing countries are mainly developed nations such as Australia, Canada, the United States, European Union countries, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Japan. However, transplant tourism is prevalent in many regions, especially in Asia and



the Middle East. Investigations have reported forced organ harvesting in China, where 12,000 kidneys and livers were transplanted in 2005.

In 2015, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) developed an assessment toolkit to help states detect and combat organ trafficking.

This toolkit provides both an overview of trafficking for organ removal and practical tools to assess the phenomenon. Its structure

reflects a dual approach: the first part addresses context, legal frameworks, actors, methods, and best practices; the second part contains detailed questionnaires to improve data collection and understanding of the crime. It is therefore a valuable tool in combating trafficking for organ removal.

According to the Palermo Protocol, States must take measures to protect victims of trafficking, including safeguarding their privacy and identity, and ensuring that related legal proceedings are not public. They must also provide legal assistance and implement measures to ensure victims' physical, psychological, and social recovery, taking into account their age, gender, and specific needs.

To prevent trafficking, States are encouraged to implement measures such as awareness campaigns, media outreach, and social and economic initiatives aimed at reducing risk factors. These include poverty, underdevelopment, and inequality of opportunity, which make individuals—especially women and children—more vulnerable to trafficking.

UNAFRI AND JLOS STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP AHEAD OF UNITED NATIONS CRIME CONGRESS



The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) and Uganda's Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) have taken significant steps to deepen collaboration following a high-level meeting held on 20 January 2026 at the UNAFRI Secretariat.

The meeting brought together officials from both institutions to explore practical areas of cooperation aimed at advancing a shared agenda in crime prevention, criminal justice reform, research, and advocacy. It also served as a strategic platform to coordinate joint participation in the upcoming United Nations Crime Congress, including preparations for Uganda's planned side event.

Discussions highlighted the strong alignment between UNAFRI and JLOS mandates, particularly in policy development, capacity building, and international engagement. Participants emphasized that strengthened collaboration would enhance the

effectiveness and visibility of both institutions at national, regional, and global levels.

One of the key proposals emerging from the meeting was the potential establishment of an African Crime Data Centre, a pioneering initiative aimed



at supporting evidence-based policy-making and informed decision-making in crime prevention and criminal justice across the continent. The initiative is expected to generate in-depth analysis to strengthen justice systems in Uganda and beyond.

In preparation for the United Nations Crime Congress, both institutions agreed to work closely on coordinated advocacy and joint messaging. Uganda's side event was identified as a major opportunity to showcase the country's achievements and best practices under the JLOS model. To support this, UNAFRI and JLOS will jointly produce documentaries, a magazine, and short video materials to enhance visibility and engagement during the Congress.

The meeting also explored ways in which UNAFRI can leverage JLOS's innovative approaches within the evolving criminal justice landscape. The JLOS model, widely recognized among practitioners, was identified as a strong foundation for presenting a unified and credible voice at the international level.

Beyond the Congress, both parties underscored the importance of sustained collaboration anchored in clear areas of joint work, including research, knowledge sharing, policy dialogue, and international advocacy.

Additional discussions focused on operational aspects of collaboration, including communication strategies, observance of protocol during international engagements, and the importance of maintaining UNAFRI's neutrality as a United Nations body. To promote inclusivity, arrangements were also made for translation of key documents into French to support wider participation at the Congress.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to translate discussions into concrete actions, including the development of a four-year collaborative initiative on the African Crime Data Centre and the formalization of the partnership framework. Participants also took part in a guided tour of the UNAFRI Secretariat, followed by a group photo session.



EX-PRISONER TRAINEES GRADUATE UNDER REINTEGRATION PROJECT

“Facilitating Successful, Productive Reintegration of Ex-Prisoners in Uganda”



The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), a partner to PACEM Havens Foundation, attended the graduation ceremony of ex-prisoner trainees under the Productive Reintegration Project. The training was implemented by PACEM Havens Foundation in collaboration with the Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI). The initiative, titled “Facilitating Successful, Productive Reintegration of Ex-Prisoners in Uganda,” continues to transform lives by equipping beneficiaries with practical and marketable skills. The ceremony, attended by distinguished guests



including representatives from the Australian High Commission, partners, and stakeholders, celebrated not only the completion of training but also the resilience and determination of the graduates. The event underscored the importance of second chances and the role of skills development in fostering sustainable reintegration.



In his address as Guest of Honour, Dr Edouard Kitio the UNAFRI representative commended the graduates for their commitment and perseverance. Having successfully completed intensive training in bakery, fruit processing, soap making, and detergent production, the graduates

were recognised for demonstrating discipline, resilience, and a readiness to embrace change.

“This programme is not just about returning to society, but about returning with dignity, skills, and purpose,” he noted. “You are now ambassadors of change, proof that rehabilitation works when opportunity meets determination.”

The Productive Reintegration Project highlights the importance of collaboration in advancing crime prevention and offender rehabilitation.



UNAFRI, whose mandate focuses on both crime prevention and the treatment of offenders, continues to support Member States through research, capacity building, and advisory services, while promoting non-custodial measures and reintegration initiatives.

PACEM Havens Foundation, the implementing partner, was applauded for its unwavering commitment to restorative justice and social inclusion. Through its programmes, the

Foundation continues to create opportunities for individuals to rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose.

The Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI) also received recognition for its vital role in delivering hands-on technical training and mentorship, ensuring that the skills acquired are relevant and aligned with market demands.

The project was made possible through the generous support of the Australian High Commission, whose contribution reflects a strong commitment to inclusive development and international cooperation. The impact of this support is already evident in the lives of the graduates and is expected to extend to their families and communities.

As the graduates embark on a new chapter, they have been encouraged to apply their skills responsibly, remain committed to lawful and productive living, and support one another in their journeys. Their success is expected to help break stigma and inspire others undergoing reintegration.

The ceremony concluded with a renewed call for continued collaboration among stakeholders to expand opportunities and ensure that reintegration efforts leave no one behind. The graduation stands as a powerful reminder that with the right support, individuals can rebuild their lives and contribute meaningfully to society.



THE GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY PROGRAMME WORKING GROUP MEETS ON CYBER- AND TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED CRIMES



UNAFRI participated in the Governance and Security Programme (GSP) Working Group Meeting on Cyber and Technology-Facilitated Crimes held on 27 March 2026 at the Sheraton Hotel in Kampala, Uganda. The meeting brought together key justice, law enforcement, and regulatory stakeholders to address the growing threat of cyber and technology-enabled crimes.

Discussions centered on practical case studies, emerging cybercrime trends, and strategies for strengthening institutional responses.



Representatives from the Uganda Police presented statistics on reported cybercrime cases, convictions, ongoing investigations, and financial losses linked to digital crimes, highlighting the increasing sophistication and scale of cyber threats in Uganda.

Participants identified several challenges hindering effective responses to cybercrime, including rapidly evolving technology, limited technical capacity, cross-border criminal activity, insufficient forensic



services, and difficulties in collecting, preserving, and presenting digital evidence. Additional concerns included case backlogs, software limitations, weak inter-agency coordination, and resource constraints across justice institutions.

The Judiciary and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions echoed the need for stronger technical



expertise, enhanced capacity building, and improved systems for handling digital evidence in cybercrime cases. The cross-border nature of these crimes further underscored the importance of international cooperation and stronger mutual legal assistance mechanisms.

Stakeholders proposed a range of reforms to improve the justice system's response to cybercrime, including amendments to the Computer Misuse Act and Electronic Transactions Act, simplified extradition procedures, increased institutional funding, and the establishment of specialized cybercrime courts.



The meeting also emphasized the importance of public awareness and victim reporting, calling for stronger sensitization campaigns to reduce stigma and encourage reporting of cyber-enabled offenses.



UNAFRI remains committed to supporting regional and national efforts to strengthen justice systems, build institutional capacity, and promote collaborative responses to emerging forms of organized and technology facilitated crime.