



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY IN AFRICA

THEME: ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE, LEGITIMATE AND SUSTAINABLE SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

NAIROBI KENYA, JULY 3RD- 4TH 2019

CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE

PREAMBLE:

We, the participants at the International Conference on Police Accountability in Africa, including; stakeholders in the police sector, Civil Society Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Academia, state agencies, and other strategic partners, having met and engaged in a conference organized in partnership with the Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ Kenya), the CLEEN Foundation, the Afro-Asian Association for Justice Development (AAAJD), the Institute for the Development and Communication (India) and supported by the Open Society Foundation (OSF), with the theme, “Achieving Effective, Legitimate and Sustainable Security Sector Reform,” have discussed regional African methods of police accountability and noted the politics, challenges and strategies of implementation. Plans for future measures to be taken by state and non-state actors in order to ensure police accountability and reputability were also discussed and noted.

Following the discussions and interactions, thereof, we the participants partake in,



ACKNOWLEDGING that pervasive issues still exist within the implementation of police accountability measures, with varying significance according to country and region in Africa;

NOTING that both the police and civil society sectors must work together towards a just, democratic, transparent and free society that values and respects police officers, who must in turn understand the importance of civilian autonomy and civil discontent;

AFFIRMING that institutions providing oversight on police accountability must exist apart from the police they seek to hold accountable;

ACCEPTING that efforts to hold police accountable must not operate within a vacuum, civil society, including the media sector, all tiers of the government sector and the private sector, must all collaborate with a congenial spirit to further accountability goals;

RECOGNIZING that the continuing challenges facing police accountability measures raise questions on how to strategically allow police to provide safety and security while congruently protecting the rights of individuals, especially vulnerable populations;

COMMITTING to ensuring the application of regional and international best practices for police reform.

DO HEREBY ADOPT THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS:

1. That all African States should make deliberate efforts to adopt mechanisms to limit political interference and control national police services in order to provide for a transparent and unbiased process in keeping police institutions accountable;
2. That in order to further an agenda of service delivery, it is imperative that all African States must evolve from having police institutions that focus on enforcement as result of colonial police infrastructures to become more service

oriental , as well as acknowledge that conversations must move beyond a focus on the challenges of colonialism;

3. That African States should promote financial accountability in police institutions through putting in place measures that ensure that budgets are responsive to the specific emerging security concerns of the police which will in turn lead to better service delivery to the citizenry;
4. That African States must recognize and acknowledge that merely having laws requiring police accountability is not sufficient in ensuring a fair and democratic society, and therefore there should be deliberate efforts to implement the laws through linking them to reform programmes , as well as efforts be made in drafting new ones where need be to further strengthen accountability of the police;
5. That African States should introduce sensitization programmes that promote and depict police services as accountable to citizens and not only the government of the day;
6. That police departments across the African continent adopt complaints mechanisms to receive complaints on police misconduct ,accompanied by thorough investigations into all complaints and reliable channels of feedback on actions taken to boost public confidence and make the police more effective and accountable;
7. That African States should prioritize a reframing of the police narrative, with an emphasis on humanizing police officers in regards to public perception, as well as

reframe public perceptions of the police service, with an emphasis on highlighting positive aspects of recruitment and serving in the police sector;

8. That African States should insure police accountability initiatives include a focus on the individual needs and welfare of police officers that include counseling and psychotherapy;
9. That police institutions should collaborate with the media and arts sector in order to take a proactive role in reporting positive police conduct and police successes to ensure that the media does not merely report on police misconduct undertaken by a few misbehaving officers;
10. That African States should endeavor to come up with innovative practices that seek to find ways in which police accountability can be achieved in a manner that is in line international best practices while taking note that we have different security realities in the region;
11. That efforts should be made to prioritize research to collect both qualitative and quantitative data relevant to those social influences and contexts that shape narratives and norms of policing, in order to efficiently change public perceptions of police and efficiently influence a change in behaviour of police via cultural change initiatives;
12. That African States should address corruption within the police departments by ensuring that accountable systems are put in place and codes of conduct and ethics for police officers are implemented;



13. That African States should implement programs that improve the welfare of police officers, such as an increment in salary and improved living conditions;

14. That African States should make deliberate efforts to put in place legal and administrative structures for the protection of different vulnerable and marginalized groups by the security sector;

15. That state militaries should ensure that there is synergy between the military and police during civil unrest, and each of the sectors should be held accountable in cases of misconduct during armed conflict;

AND

16. That for all African States must prioritize the inclusion of civil society and every day citizens within the process of creating new police reforms.

Thank You.

Done this 4th Day of **July 2019** in **Nairobi, Kenya**.