



## 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network Recommendations and Next Steps for the Focal Points

The Members of the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network (Network) gathered in Kinshasa from 13 to 14 June 2022 for the seventh statutory meeting. Having discussed developments, opportunities, and challenges in judicial cooperation, they agreed on the following recommendations directed to the member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the ICGLR Executive Secretariat, as well as technical and international partners:

### **Short-term Measures (2022)**

#### **ICGLR Member States commit to:**

- a) Communicate the name and contact details of their designated national Central Authorities to the ICGLR Secretariat;
- b) Create national working groups for the implementation of the Kinshasa Declaration and inform the ICGLR Secretariat on their structure, membership, frequency of meetings and achievements;
- c) Develop national action plans of specific next steps including clear timeframes, performance indicators and a definition of roles and responsibilities between national actors. Such specific next steps could include:
  - Reviewing the existing legal and procedural frameworks in each Member State to identify gaps and measures to overcome them;
  - Conducting an institutional auditing of each Member State's Central Authority, including on the current staffing and productivity levels/turn-around time, to identify areas of improvement; and
  - Adjusting the *Guidelines for Requesting Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters from the Great Lakes Region* to each Member State's national context.
- d) Identify areas where States may require support for the adequate implementation of the Kinshasa Declaration, including specific training needs at the national, sub-regional and regional levels; and
- e) Share their national prosecution policies and strategies with the GLJCN Secretariat to support consultations during the 8th Meeting of the GLJCN on the establishment of a common policy to address cross-border crimes.

#### **The ICGLR commits to:**

- a) Put in place a regional review committee that includes members of the GLJCN and meets periodically (and at least once before the end of 2022) to discuss progress, challenges, good practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the Nairobi and the Kinshasa Declarations.



### **Medium-term Measures (2023)**

#### **ICGLR Member States commit to:**

- a) In order to improve the effectiveness of judicial cooperation procedures in ICGLR Member States, request the UN to:
  - Conduct an inventory/mapping of cross-border criminal cases relevant to regional judicial cooperation;
  - Support the compilation of statistics on the number of MLA and extradition requests received and executed;
  - Support the compilation of statistics on the number of MLA and extradition requests issued and responses received; and
  - Produce a list of most relevant categories of cross-border crimes as a basis to enhance accountability for such crimes.
  
- b) Develop an inventory of the bilateral and multilateral treaties on judicial cooperation in criminal matters they are part of, as well as other relevant legal bases at the national level to grant mutual legal assistance and extradition.

#### **The ICGLR commits to:**

- a) Collaborate with select Universities in ICGLR Member States to disseminate the *Guidelines for Requesting Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters from the Great Lakes Region* and other relevant documents on judicial cooperation; and
- b) Create a website to host a database of foundational and other relevant documents – including the inventories and statistics previously mentioned – that ICGLR Member States can use to ensure the visibility of their work, as well as to promote better communication and information exchange between national working groups.

#### **The ICGLR, the UN and the IJ commit to:**

- a) Provide technical assistance (e.g., drafting of national legislation) and deliver capacity-building training workshops on different judicial cooperation-related topics.

### **Long-term Measures (2024 – )**

#### **The ICGLR commits to:**

- a) Produce a Great Lakes regional model law on Mutual Legal Assistance that reflects on regional good practices and is aligned with international standards; and
- b) Establish a pool of regional specialists on matters such as cybersecurity and forensics.

#### **The ICGLR, the UN and the IJ commit to:**

- a) In consultation with international donors, to support ICGLR Member States to establish a regional training plan to train criminal justice actors from the region on judicial cooperation matters.