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THE AFRICAN UNION MECHANISM FOR POLICE COOPERATION (AFRIPOL)  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **The African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) Holds the Sixth Meeting of its Steering Committee**

**Algiers, Algeria – 25 June 2020:** The Steering Committee of AFRIPOL was held, virtually, on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The meeting was attended by the Chiefs of Police from Algeria, as Chair and President of the General Assembly, Uganda as First Vice President, Nigeria as Second Vice President,– Central African Republic as Third Vice President and Zambia as Rapporteur. Also in attendance were the Chairs of the Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organizations (CAPCCO, EAPCCO, SARPCCO, WAPCCO), the North African Regional Capability (NARC), African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui; and Executive Director of AFRIPOL.

The meeting was opened by H.E. Mr. Khelifa Ounissi, the Director General for National Security of Algeria, in his capacity as Chairperson for the Steering Committee, and President of AFRIPOL General Assembly. In his remarks, he stressed the need for enhanced police cooperation in the continent, and the need to empower police agencies through training and capacity building in order to equip them with skills to effectively fight transnational organized crime and terrorism, which are a major security challenge to the continent. On his part, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, highlighted the importance of enhanced cooperation among the police agencies to fight organized crime in the continent as a contribution to the realization of the aspirations of the the African Union theme for 2020, “Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development” He also urged Member States to second officers to the AFRIPOL Secretariat in order to reinforce its capabilities in combating organized crime.

The meeting received an update from Dr. Tarek A. Sharif, Executive Director of AFRIPOL, on the activities undertaken by the AFRIPOL Secretariat towards the implementation of the strategic priorities of the AFRIPOL 5-Year Work Plan 2020-2024. The presentation also highlighted the projects and programmes between AFRIPOL and Partners such as INTERPOL, CEPOL, GIZ and the German Federal Police, which are intended to reinforce the efforts of AFRIPOL in combating transnational organized crime and terrorism in the continent, in line with relevant African Union policy frameworks.

The meeting welcomed the progress made by the AFRIPOL Secretariat towards the implement of the Work Plan, and emphasized on enhanced cooperation and coordination as key to the success in countering transnational organized crime and terrorism in the continent. The meeting also stressed on the importance for AFRIPOL Secretariat to continue to work with Partners to support the police agencies of the Member States in combating transnational organized crime and terrorism.

On the preparations for holding the Fourth AFRIPOL General Assembly for 2020 originally scheduled to be held in October in Abuja, Nigeria, and while noting the need to for sustained combined efforts to fight organized crime in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting agreed to postpone the General Assembly to a later date because of the increasing infections in the continent. It was agreed that the Chair would continue to liaise with the Members towards agreeing on a new date, while following the trends of the pandemic in the Continent.

The meeting called for additional awareness at the time when criminal networks are trying to increase their activities through cybersecurity and social websites.

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