



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Justice

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF JUSTICE
AND ATTORNEY GENERAL AT THE STAKEHOLDERS' DIALOGUE ON
STRENGTHENING CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGIES IN RWANDA**

Kigali Serena Hotel | 22 October 2025

The Honourable Chief Justice, and the Guest of Honor;

The Honourable Minister of Interior;

The Honourable Minister of Unity and Civic Engagement;

The United Nations Resident Coordinator;

The Representatives of UN Agencies;

The Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

The Representative of UNDP, our Co-Chair in this Dialogue;

**The Members of the JRLS Leadership Group and Steering
Committee;**

The Heads of Justice Sector Institutions;

The Representatives of Civil Society, Private Sector and the Media;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is my honour to welcome you all to this high-level Stakeholders' Dialogue on Strengthening Crime Prevention Strategies in Rwanda. I sincerely thank each of you for your presence and for the valuable contributions you continue to make toward building a safer, more just, and resilient Rwanda.

This Dialogue builds upon the outcomes of the 10th Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order Sector (JRLOS) and UPR Retreat held last year in Nyagatare, where participants underscored the need for a dedicated platform to reflect more deeply on crime prevention. Today's Dialogue responds to that important resolve, providing an opportunity for us to exchange insights, strengthen collective approaches, and share views on the draft National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS), which lies at the heart of this engagement.

**Hon. Chief Justice,
Distinguished Guests,**

Rwanda continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to crime prevention through robust institutional, legal, and policy frameworks, supported by close coordination among justice sector institutions and other stakeholders, a synergy that continues to foster a safer, more just, and resilient society. Over the past years, these collective efforts have yielded notable progress in strengthening law enforcement, enhancing access to justice, and promoting effective rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. This strong foundation continues to guide our work as we adapt to new and evolving challenges.

Crime trends observed during the 2023/2024 financial year point to recurring and emerging concerns that require sustained attention. The ten (10) most frequently reported offences include theft, intentional assault or battery, breach of trust, child defilement, use of threats, drug-related offences, unintentional bodily harm, harassment of a spouse, fraud, and damage or destruction of property. Notably, crimes such as theft, assault, and battery have remained the most prevalent since 2019, underscoring the need for continued prevention, education, and community engagement alongside enforcement.

Distinguished participants,

The sub-regional, regional and global context reinforces the urgency and relevance of this Dialogue. Within the East African Community, our region

scores 5.88 out of 10 on the ENACT Organised Crime Index¹, the highest criminality level on the continent.² Illicit trafficking of people, narcotics, arms and commodities remains entwined with cross-border conflicts and financial crimes. Cybercrime has become the fastest-growing offence in Eastern Africa, now constituting over 30%³ of reported incidents, as digital connectivity outpaces cyber security readiness.

Across Africa, serious crime has been on a steady rise over the past five years, with organized criminal activity increasing since 2018 and showing no sign of slowing. The continent's average resilience score against organized crime stands at 3.25 out of 10, underscoring the need for stronger institutions and cross-border cooperation.⁴

Illicit markets remain deeply entrenched: human trafficking continues to affect millions across the continent through forced labour and sexual exploitation networks, while drug trafficking, particularly the cocaine trade, has expanded sharply in East, West, and Southern Africa. West Africa has recorded unprecedented cocaine seizures as transnational cartels route shipments from Latin America through African transit points. Financial crimes and fraud also persist, with certain regions, notably North Africa, facing elevated risks of money laundering and related financial offences.⁵

As of 2024, online scams, particularly phishing, remain the most reported cybercrimes across African countries. Ransomware attacks, business email compromise, and digital extortion have also become routine threats to both governments and private enterprises. The scale of these losses is unprecedented: between 2019 and 2025, cyberattacks are estimated to have cost the continent more than USD 3 billion, with critical sectors such as finance, healthcare, energy, and public administration among the most affected.⁶

¹ The ENACT Index is a tool that measures and assesses levels of organised crime on the continent. It ranks the 54 countries on the continent according to their levels of criminality on a score from 1 to 10 (lowest to highest levels of criminality) and according to their levels of resilience to organised crime from 1 to 10 (lowest to highest resilience levels).

² <https://enactafrica.org/research/organised-crime-index#:~:text=In%20terms%20of%20regional%20dynamics%2C,25>, accessed on 20/10/2025.

³ Interpol Africa Cyberthreat Assessment report 2025, 4th Edition, page 10.

⁴ ENACT Index

⁵ ENACT Index, Africa Organised Crime Index 2023.

⁶ Interpol Africa Cyberthreat Assessment report 2025, 4th Edition.

Globally, transnational organized crime today accounts for an estimated 3% to 7% of global GDP, equivalent to around USD 5.8 trillion annually, surpassing the world's combined military expenditures. The value of black-market trade alone exceeds USD 1.8 trillion across 50 major categories, excluding related crimes such as money laundering and corruption. Cybercrime has risen by more than 600% since the COVID-19 pandemic, growing from USD 3 trillion in 2015 to USD 8 trillion in 2023, and is projected to reach USD 10.5 trillion by 2025. The boundaries between organized crime, insurgency, and terrorism are increasingly blurred, creating new markets of illicit activity and heightened threats to global peace and democratic governance. The International Labour Organization further estimates that over 50 million people are trapped in modern slavery worldwide, the highest number in recorded history.⁷

These global and regional dynamics carry important implications for Rwanda: they highlight the need to remain vigilant, to strengthen regional and international cooperation, and to continue investing in prevention, innovation, and institutional capacity. Through these efforts, Rwanda seeks to sustain its progress in ensuring safety, justice, and the rule of law in an increasingly complex global environment.

Esteemed participants, Colleagues,

Rwanda's approach to crime prevention is anchored in Vision 2050 and the National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), which envision a safe, accountable, and rights-based society. Over the last two decades, the Justice Sector has undergone far-reaching reforms since 2004—modernizing laws, enhancing institutional coordination, and mainstreaming community participation. The National Crime Prevention Strategy builds on this foundation through seven strategic objectives: (1) strengthening law enforcement capacity, (2) addressing root causes of crime and delinquency, (3) promoting community policing, (4) enhancing environmental and institutional engagement, (5) reinforcing international cooperation and border security, (6) advancing cybersecurity and digital resilience, and (7) rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders to reduce recidivism.⁸

⁷ The Millennium Project, <https://millennium-project.org/challenges-overview/global-challenge-12/#:~:text=Transnational%20organized%20crime%20takes%20in,during%20the>

⁸ Draft NCPS, pages 31-25.

Preventing crime is not only a security objective but also a development imperative. Every crime prevented safeguards human rights, protects economic assets, and fosters public trust. Our policy direction is therefore to shift resources toward intelligence-led policing, evidence-based planning, and grass-roots prevention programmes that address the root causes of crime, poverty, inequality, and social disengagement.

As we deliberate today, we are reminded of several key points for reflection that guide our collective efforts in preventing crime. These include strengthening law-enforcement capacities through specialized expertise and technology; modernizing our legal frameworks to keep pace with evolving crime trends and to harmonize regional approaches; deepening regional and international cooperation for timely intelligence sharing; reinforcing integrity and accountability across our institutions; and investing in prevention and rehabilitation, particularly initiatives that empower young people and strengthen community resilience.

**Hon. Chief Justice,
Distinguished participants, Colleagues;**

In closing, I wish to express our sincere appreciation to the UNDP for its continued financial support and partnership, and to all our partners including the UN family, development partners, and civil society for their steadfast collaboration in advancing justice and security.

The Government remains committed to strengthening these partnerships and translating today's dialogue into concrete action. As crime evolves, so must our response, guided by evidence, cooperation, and a shared resolve to uphold safety, integrity, and the rule of law.

Thank you.