

Police Accountability: the Africa region ***Meeting organized by CHRI, Africa Office***

Dates:

9:00 – 5:00, 14th and 15th October.

Please note that at 6:30pm on the 13th a reception will be held at the British Council, Accra, for the Africa launch of the report: *Police Accountability: Too Important to Neglect, Too Urgent to Delay*.

Meeting Venue:

Erata Hotel, Ouagadougou Avenue, Okponglo East Legon, Accra, Ghana.

Phone: (233) 21 506343/515192-4; Fax: (233) 21 505119

Website: <http://www.eratahotel.com/>

Overview:

This meeting is designed to discuss police accountability in Africa, focusing on the Commonwealth countries of the region. The focus of discussions will be on the different models of oversight bodies and the experience in different countries of advocacy towards establishing such a body, as well as details such as the establishment process, challenges faced and how they've been overcome, and success stories. The meeting is designed as a small meeting, with a maximum of 40 participants, to enable active participation of all.

Aims:

The Meeting aims to:

- Share experience on enhancing accountability of the police in varied jurisdictions from Southern, East and West Africa, from different perspectives.
- Prepare a communiqué on police accountability and the role of the Commonwealth, for presentation to the Commonwealth Law Ministers and associated advocacy, as well as wider dissemination
- Act as the Africa launch of the report, *Police Accountability: Too Important to Neglect, Too Urgent to Delay*
- Bring international expertise to Ghana to assist Ghanaian initiatives in promoting accountability by drawing on experiences from similar jurisdictions
- Build relationships between different policing initiatives in Africa

Format:

The meeting is designed to be interactive and informal. Therefore, the number of participants is limited to ensure time for active discussions. Additionally, participants all have active prior experience in the area of police accountability; and as such are expected to actively contribute to discussions.

Therefore, rather than a format where resource persons give detailed presentations, we have chosen a more informal format for the meeting. Each session will be led by a discussion leader, but participants are expected to actively engage in the topic, participate in the discussions and ensure that examples from their country / organisation are included.

Participants:

Participants at the meeting are from Commonwealth countries in Africa, and represent oversight bodies and civil society groups active on policing issues. The meeting will be limited to 35 - 40 participants to ensure that there is active involvement and discussion.

Law Ministers Meeting:

As noted, this meeting is timed to be held before the Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting, to be held in Accra on October 17th to 21st. Within the Commonwealth system, it is the Law Ministers who have previously discussed policing (although very briefly) and it was the mandate from their 2002 meeting which led to the Human Rights Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat to work on human rights training for the police in West Africa.

A statement from the Police Accountability meeting will be presented to Law Ministers on October 20th to encourage their continued engagement with issues of police accountability. The statement will also be disseminated more broadly, particularly at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in November. Participants at the Police Accountability meeting are also encouraged to engage with their Law Minister and country delegations to raise the issue of policing and human rights. For more information on this or assistance, please contact Clare Doube.

Contact details:

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