

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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African Union adopts new strategic framework for a collective response to illicit drug trafficking

The AU successfully concluded its Continental Consultation on Synthetic Drug Supply Reduction Efforts, which took place from August 25-27, 2025, in Gaborone, Botswana. The three-day meeting culminated in the adoption of the Gaborone Strategic Framework for Action on Strengthening Continental Responses to Address Illicit Synthetic Drug Production, Trafficking, and Related Transnational Organized Crime.

In his keynote address, H.E Advocate Duma Boko, President of the Republic of Botswana, described the spread of synthetic drugs as a "pandemic." He emphasized the urgent need for teamwork across Africa and the world and welcomed the new framework as a vital step forward. "The growing sophistication of trafficking methods means we need better detection tools, shared information, and strong intelligence to create effective laws. This will protect public health and national security by dismantling illicit drug networks which are often powerful cartels capable of undermining governance and destabilizing institutions," President Boko stated.

The consultation brought together experts, leaders, and representatives from AU Member States and international partners. They shared knowledge, identified major challenges, and gained a deeper understanding of the threat posed by the drug trade.

The discussions made it clear that a united and coordinated response is essential to address the production and trafficking of synthetic drugs, which pose a significant threat to security, health, and development in Africa. The Gaborone Strategic Framework is a direct result of this dialogue. It provides a clear and comprehensive roadmap for tackling this challenge and is a key part of the AU's Agenda 2063, which aims for a peaceful, well-governed Africa that protects its youth.

The new Framework is built on several key pillars, including:

- Building stronger laws and institutions.
- Improving cooperation and information sharing across borders.
- Strengthening public health programs and prevention campaigns.
- Tackling the root causes of drug trafficking and related organized crime.."

"The adoption of the Gaborone Strategic Framework signifies a new turning point in our collective endeavor to address the devastating impact of synthetic drugs on our continent," said H.E. Ambassador Amma Twum-Amoah, AU Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development. "This framework transcends a mere document; it represents a shared commitment and a clear blueprint for coordinated

action. It will empower our Member States to dismantle drug trafficking networks and cultivate safer, more secure communities for all Africans. The collaborative spirit demonstrated during the consultation underscores our shared resolve to confront this global challenge."

The AU remains committed to working closely with its Member States and partners, particularly the United States Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, to fully implement the Gaborone Strategic Framework, beginning a new era in the continent's fight against drug-related organized crime through strong partnerships for development.

For further information, please contact:

Dr Olubusayo Akinola | Head of Social Welfare, Drug Control and Crime Prevention Division | Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development | African Union Commission | E-mail: AkinolaO@africanunion.org | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ms. Faith Adhiambo | Communication | Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: ochiengji@africanunion.org

Information and Communication Directorate, African Union Commission | **E-mail:** DIC@africanunion.org
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