



EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE

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OLAF and partners strengthen EU – Africa cooperation in fight against fraud

On 19 – 20 October, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and its African partners are meeting in Brussels to discuss new trends and challenges in the fight against fraud. Participants include representatives from 12 African countries and 22 national, European or international institutions, such as national financial inspection and audit bodies, anti-fraud offices, the African Development Bank, the Office of Integrity and Anti-corruption of the African Union Commission, the European Investment Bank, the World Bank and several EU delegations.

Currently at its eighth edition, the long-running event was organised to strengthen the cooperation between OLAF and investigative authorities in Africa. OLAF can investigate wherever European Union funds are spent, within or outside Europe.

The two-day agenda discusses emerging trends and looks at avenues to address the challenges posed by cross-border fraud investigations. It also reviews examples of recent investigations OLAF conducted in both Northern and Sub-Saharan Africa, and explores new perspectives for a closer cooperation.

"Sharing knowledge and information is essential in order to face the challenges posed by the changing nature of fraud patterns, especially when investigations involve several countries and different continents. A close cooperation between OLAF and its African partners enables us to protect more efficiently the EU budget from cross-border fraud," said OLAF Director for Policy, Margarete Hofmann.

OLAF Director for Investigations Dominik Schnichels added that "OLAF values its relationship with its African partners. Working together is the only efficient way to fight fraud in a transnational context. This event is an excellent opportunity to strengthen cooperation and learn from each other."

Background information:

OLAF cooperates with a large number of partner organisations in non-EU countries to ensure that EU development and humanitarian aid reaches its intended beneficiaries, without being diverted by fraud and corruption.

The meeting between OLAF and its African partners, taking place on 19-20 October in Brussels is part of a series of Pilot Group meetings which started in 2007.

The Pilot Group was created to strengthen the cooperation between OLAF and African national authorities, as well as to enhance EU-Africa and trans-African cooperation. The

participation of other important international donors underlines the importance of this event and of cooperation in general.

OLAF mission, mandate and competences

OLAF's mission is to detect, investigate and stop fraud with EU funds.

OLAF fulfils its mission by:

- carrying out independent investigations into fraud and corruption involving EU funds, so as to ensure that all EU taxpayers' money reaches projects that can create jobs and growth in Europe;
- contributing to strengthening citizens' trust in the EU Institutions by investigating serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU Institutions; developing a sound EU anti-fraud policy.

In its independent investigative function, OLAF can investigate matters relating to fraud, corruption and other offences affecting the EU financial interests concerning:

- all EU expenditure: the main spending categories are Structural Funds, agricultural policy and rural development funds, direct expenditure and external aid;
- some areas of EU revenue, mainly customs duties;
- suspicions of serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU institutions.

For further details:

Silvana ENCULESCU

Acting Spokesperson

European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)

Phone +32(0)2 29-81764

Email olaf-media@ec.europa.eu

http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud

Twitter: [@OLAFPress](https://twitter.com/OLAFPress)