



News Release



16 December 2021

Handover of cybersecurity equipment to assist Zimbabwe Republic Police and regional police forces in tackling cybercrime and transnational crime

Today a handover ceremony for cybersecurity equipment provided through Grant Aid from the Government of Japan was held at CID Headquarters. Japan extended grant aid amounting to 390 million yen (approximately USD 3.6 million) for this equipment, with the goal to improve safety in the country as well as regional integration, and thus increase economic development. It includes facial recognition systems, facial forensic systems, and a digital forensic system, as well as an information-sharing platform. This equipment utilises the latest Japanese technology and is produced by a Japanese company, NEC. It was handed over to the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), who will use it in conjunction with INTERPOL Regional Bureau of Southern Africa, headquartered in Harare, and the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operation Organisation (SARPCCO) to combat cybercrime and transnational crime in the region.

As more and more criminals are taking advantage of the speed, convenience and anonymity that modern technologies offer in order to commit a diverse range of criminal activities, it has become vital for countries to take measures to step up cybersecurity in order to ensure sustainable economic and social development. Cybercrime, including card fraud, has rapidly increased with the rise in the use of electronic payment methods, such as swiping, online and mobile payments. Such crimes targeting tourists have also been on the increase. Meanwhile transnational crimes, in which crime syndicates use modern telecommunication networks such as the Internet and cell phones to commit a wide range of crimes spanning different countries, has also been increasing. These include the trafficking of illicit goods, motor vehicle theft, environmental crimes, such as the illegal export of wild animal parts including elephant ivory and rhino horn, and human trafficking.

The cybersecurity equipment handed over today is expected to help ensure that people can conduct their payments safely, while also ensuring that the region's people and natural resources remain safe from transnational crime syndicates. It is the latest state-of-the-art cybersecurity equipment, including digital forensic tools, face recognition systems and an information sharing platform.

The facial-recognition systems that have been installed at ports of entry into Zimbabwe use video footage to allow the identification and apprehension of wanted persons who enter into the country. The facial forensic systems allows analysis of digital images. The digital forensic equipment allows analysis of electronic devices during criminal investigations. Finally, the information sharing system allows increased collaboration between member countries of INTERPOL and SARPCCO. An important aspect of this project is the capacity building of the regional police departments tasked with investigating cybercrime and transnational crime.

The equipment has provided the ZRP and the region's police forces with the knowledge and tools to better tackle the crime threats of the 21st century, including cybercrime and transnational crimes. It is expected that it will lead to a 50% increase in cybercrime related arrests and a 30% reduction in cybercrime cases in the first year, as well as a 20% reduction in transnational crime. Importantly, it will allow the arrest of syndicates, rather than merely the perpetrators of such crime, through the interception and tracing of communications made by criminals.

This Grant Aid fulfils one of Japan's priorities in its development cooperation with Zimbabwe, that of providing high-quality infrastructure to facilitate regional integration with the southern African economy. In line with the National Development Strategy 1 and Vision 2030, Japan will continue to cooperate strongly with Zimbabwe in order to realise a peaceful, stable and secure society and the betterment of living standards for all.



Speech by Charge d'Affaires ad Interim,
Embassy of Jaapan



Speech by Minister of Home Affairs and
Cultural Heritage



Participants of the ceremony



Plaque in CID Headquarters