

The Minister of Internal Security, Dr Vincent Biruta, on Wednesday commended growing cooperation between the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) and China, saying the partnership has strengthened efforts to combat cross-border threats such as cybercrime and terrorism.

Biruta, who also serves as chairperson of EAPCCO, made the remarks during a ministerial-level meeting between EAPCCO member states and China held in Kigali on Oct. 5. The meeting focused on expanding collaboration in law enforcement and security across the region.

Ahead of the talks, Rwanda and China signed a memorandum of understanding to deepen police cooperation and strengthen existing bilateral ties. The agreement was signed by Biruta and Xu Datong, China's deputy Minister of Public Security of China.

"This high-level meeting demonstrates our shared commitment to ensuring security across our nations," Biruta said. "We appreciate China's continued partnership, which highlights the tangible results that come from mutual collaboration."

Biruta said the participation of senior officials from China and across East Africa underscored Beijing's strong commitment to addressing security challenges affecting both sides, particularly in cybercrime and organized crime.

"I thank all EAPCCO member countries and China for your dedication to building stronger partnerships in justice and crime prevention," he said. "Your contributions remain crucial in ensuring the safety of our citizens and regional stability."

Biruta added that EAPCCO and China aim to promote mutual benefits through capacity building, information sharing, and knowledge exchange, especially in advanced technologies. "Our common goal is clear: to protect our citizens while promoting infrastructure that supports economic growth and social well-being," he said.

He also expressed appreciation to the Chinese government for its ongoing support of regional security initiatives. "Your cooperation demonstrates the importance of working together to confront complex challenges facing our region and the world," he said. "I am confident the outcomes of this meeting will advance peace, security, and stability in East Africa and beyond."

Xu Datong said the meeting reaffirmed both sides' commitment to implementing the new agreement, which covers counterterrorism, combating transnational crime, enhancing police professionalism, and improving international cooperation frameworks.

Under the agreement, China will provide \$137,000 worth of police equipment to each participating country this year and offer training for 400 EAPCCO officers in 2026. Since the partnership began last year, China has conducted 18 training programs for more than 340 officers and granted scholarships to seven police officials for advanced studies.