Rwanda National Police (RNP) and Central African Republic Police have signed a cooperation agreement to formalize their cross-border partnership in various policing and security matters.

The pact was signed in Kigali on Monday, February 14, between Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dan Munyuza and his counterpart of CAR, Director General Zokoue Bienvenu.

Gen. Zokoue and his delegation are in Rwanda since Sunday for a week-long bilateral visit.

The memorandum of understanding, which was part of the bilateral meeting held at the RNP General Headquarters in Kacyiru, provides mutual assistance in fighting transnational organized crime and terrorism, smuggling and trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances as well as their precursors, fighting against currency counterfeiting and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Other areas of partnership include enhancing professional competence, best practices sharing, intelligence sharing in areas of interest; conducting joint or simultaneous operations; fighting cyber criminality, human trafficking, organ trafficking, document fraud; and other areas of cooperation that the parties may identify.

The bilateral meeting was also attended by the Deputy IGP in charge of Operations, Felix Namuhoranye and DIGP in charge of Administration and Personnel, Jeanne Chantal Ujeneza.

IGP Munyuza thanked Gen Bienvenu and his delegation for honouring the RNP invitation to visit Rwanda, which he said that it has provided an opportunity for the two friendly Police institutions to discuss and strengthen cross-border cooperation against security threats.

“Rwanda National Police is proud to be working with brothers and sisters from Central African Republic Police to provide peace and security to the citizens of Central African Republic.

The existing ties between our two countries have gone beyond the usual bilateral cooperation to real friendship and brotherhood. I trust our cooperation will deliver joint actions for us to tackle increasing security challenges in our countries and

African continent at large," IGP Munyuza said.

Rwanda and Central African Republic, he added, have been reliable partners in ensuring safety and security of the people of CAR since 2013, when the Central African country experienced violence.

Rwanda National Police was the first country to deploy a Formed Police Unit (FPU) contingent under the UN Multi-dimensional Integrated mission in Central African Republic (MINUSCA) in September 2014.

Currently, Rwanda maintains close to 500 Police peacekeepers under MINUSCA, including three contingents: a Protection Support Unit (PSU) of 140 officers, FPU contingent of 140 officers and another FPU of 180 officers.

Rwanda PSU is charged with the protection of the SRSG, his two deputies, the Prime Minister of CAR, President of the National Assembly, Minister of Justice and the Head of MINUSCA Police Component.

"I am happy that Rwandan Forces deployed in Central African Republic have very good working relations with Central African Republic security and law enforcement agencies. This close collaboration should continue and be strengthened further," IGP Munyuza said.

To effectively confront the organized security challenges that are transnational in nature, like terrorism, drug trafficking, cyber and financial crimes among other crime, IGP Munyuza said that it requires law enforcement agencies to work closely together to train law enforcement officers and to equip them with necessary knowledge and skills to be able to combat those crimes.

"We should coordinate and regularly share information and intelligence on criminals bent on destabilizing peace in our countries and the continent.

It is the policy of our country to share expertise and experience that RNP has with our brothers in Africa and beyond. This is in the spirit of working together with friendly African countries to strengthen peace and security on our continent," IGP Munyuza reiterated.

On his part, General Zokoue said that CAR has gone through a great crisis and that the national police, which is part of the institutions of defence forces, participated extensively in operations for restoration of order and territorial reconquest in CAR.

“During this crisis, the Rwandan special forces and the Rwandan Police helped us a lot in the recovery and operational defence of our national territory,” Director General Zokoue said.

“I want to reassure you that we are ready to benefit from your long experience… and implementation of substances contained in this memorandum, which will allow considerable momentum between our two institutions,” he added.

Director General Zokoue is also expected to visit different RNP facilities, including training schools.