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EUCAP Nestor organizes workshops for prosecutors, judges and investigators in Hargeisa.

On March 9th and 10th, seven judges, seven prosecutors and twelve investigators from Hargeisa and coastal areas of Somaliland participated in workshops organized by EUCAP Nestor. Purpose of the event, held at the Hotel Ambassador in Hargeisa, Somaliland, was to enhance the ability of prosecutors, judges and investigators to deal with maritime crime. This event is the result of positive cooperation between EUCAP Nestor, the Chief Justice, the acting Attorney General of Somaliland and the Ministry of Interior.

During the gathering, recent examples of maritime criminal cases were illustrated by a Somaliland prosecutor, and discussed with the EU counterparts. EUCAP Nestor’s legal experts delivered presentations on Basic maritime law and the progress so far achieved in Somaliland regarding the creation of a Coast Guard Law. The workshop included sessions on the various stages of criminal investigation – held by the Mission Senior Police Advisor for Somaliland.

This was a lively part of the EUCAP Nestor led activity. “What is the most important fact for an investigating officer to discover on receipt of a complaint or an incident”, asked one of the participants, during the policing session? In reply, the Commander of the Criminal Investigation Department in Hargeisa Lt. Colonel Ismail Hassen said that the primary responsibility of a police investigator on receipt of a complaint is “to first establish whether or not a crime has been committed”. The officer went on, explaining that a proper initial investigation will determine whether the incident or complaint is worthy of further investigation or whether no further action is required. Should the matter be merely recorded as an incident – he added - it may be used for information or intelligence collation. Lt Colonel Hassen finally underlined the importance of respect for Human Rights when performing arrest techniques.
The Hargeisa workshop also included a session on safety awareness training held by EUCAP Nestor security officers. The latter is a relevant part of the program, as both prosecutors and judges are regularly threatened by criminals involved in organized crime such as piracy.

EUCAP Nestor’s legal workshop in Hargeisa aims not only at helping judges, prosecutors and investigators to better deal with maritime crimes, but to hopefully contribute to their own safety.

The EU Mission has previously carried out workshops for prosecutors and judges on maritime crime in Mogadishu and Puntland.

**Background**

EUCAP Nestor is a civilian EU mission, under the Common Security and Defence Policy, with Headquarters in Djibouti which assists host countries in the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean region (Somalia, Djibouti, Seychelles and Tanzania) in strengthening their capacity to ensure maritime security and in particular to fight piracy. This is done through training, advising and mentoring in three competence fields: legal, maritime and police.