

Media Release from the Global Coalition to Fight Financial Crime

31 August 2023

Today the Global Coalition to Fight Financial Crime is delighted to announce the establishment of the African Regional Chapter (sub-Saharan Africa), and its inaugural chair, Xolisile Khanyile.

This completes the existing GCFFC regions: Americas, Europe, Middle East, North Africa and Asia Pacific.

Xolisile Khanyile recognises that fighting financial crime remains a key issue, with financial crime threats persisting and a satisfactory anti-money laundering response still a work in progress across the region. A number of African countries, including Burkina Faso, Cameroon, DRC, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania & Uganda received poor FATF results when evaluated and are now on the FATF “grey list”. In addition, Africa faces numerous financial crime threats supported by corruption, including drug trafficking, organised crime, smuggling, human trafficking and illegal wildlife trade. Fraud, especially fuelled by cyber means, is also on the rise. The GCFFC Africa Chapter will be a bridge between important stakeholders, whose opinions are sought by key policy makers in Africa and beyond. It will be a unique voice comprising true, deep experience formulated from experts and practitioners, from the public and private sectors, think tanks and NGOs, with the aim of promoting best practices and improving the fight against financial crime and AML/ CTF frameworks, across Africa and in partnership with other chapters far beyond.

Xolisile Khanyile was the Head of the South African Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) and Egmont Chair to August 2023. She has spent 28 years dedicated to fighting financial crime, 5 of which were as the head of the FIC in South Africa, supporting and guiding the efforts in combating money laundering, terrorist financing and assisting in the identification of proceeds of crime. She was responsible for the establishment of the first Public-Private partnership in Africa known as the South African Anti-Money Laundering Integrated Task Force (SAMLIT) in 2019, which has to date garnered much success and is recognised internationally for its best practice.

In 2022, she was awarded the prestigious “Financial Crime Fighter of the Year” award from the GCFFC. See: <https://www.gcffc.org/press-release-financial-crime-fighter-2022/>. The citation stated: *“This award is a recognition for Xolisile and voted by her peers in the anti-financial crime community due to her leadership and unwavering commitment to establish the first public-private partnership in sub-Saharan Africa while expanding this partnership across the region and creating unique working groups to tackle wildlife trafficking and human trafficking across the continent and internationally. She was also pivotal in helping to pass a resolution (GA-2022-90-REP-11) at Interpol’s General Assembly in New Delhi as law enforcement agencies globally seek to strengthen a collaborative response to disrupt financial crime and corruption together with FIUs and the private sector. Her leadership was also recognised by the Egmont Group, where she was chosen as the Chair (since July 2022) to drive an ambitious agenda to promote partnerships and increase transparency to make the fight against financial crime more effective. The GFFC recognises that Xolisile’s outstanding leadership will raise the profile of both Africa and Women in leadership roles in the fight against financial crime as she’s a role model for many across our industry.”*

Chair of the GCFFC, John Cusack, stated, *“Xolisile has the credentials, dedication, energy and determination to make such a difference in fighting financial crime, especially in Africa and beyond that are unique and I’m delighted to welcome her to this new and exciting role to lead the GCFFC Africa Chapter, and to build around her those like minded experts that see what is needed and can make a difference”*.

Xolisile Khanyile said *“it is truly a privilege and honour to firstly be part of the GCFFC and more so to lead the establishment of the African Regional Chapter. As a continent, we need to do more to learn from each other and share good practices, fully implement global standards relating to the fight against any form of financial crime, including corruption and organised crime, change the narrative and send a strong message that crime does not pay in Africa. This is not the fight of the public sector alone, the private sector, civil society and everyone that cares need to work in collaboration in the fight against financial crime. Our future is dependent on our ability and willingness to work together, collaboratively and cooperatively with the same goal in mind – making our individual countries, our region, and our continent safer. The GCFFC has the expertise, the know-how, the resources and most importantly, the will, to fight financial crime by identifying weaknesses, advocating for reforms and strengthening the ability of the global AML framework. It is therefore with the utmost pleasure and privilege that I join the GCFFC family in their mission. Thank you to John Cusack, the Chair of the GCFFC, for allowing me to be a part of this exemplary organisation. I look forward to playing my part”*.