

INTERSESSION ACTIVITY REPORT: COMMISSIONER SYLVIE  
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Presented to the 43rd Ordinary Session, held in Ezulwini, Swaziland  
from 7-22 May 2008.

INTRODUCTION

1. This report covers activities carried out in accordance with item 3 of article 87 of the rules of procedure of the African Commission, which requires all members of the Commission to

submit a written report on their different activities, especially on country visits and organisations contacted, at each session. These activities were carried out during the intersession between the 42nd Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights held in Brazzaville Congo, from 15 to 28 November, 2007. I am reporting here both on activities carried out in my capacity as Member of the Commission and as Chairperson of the working group on the Death Penalty.

***I- IN MY CAPACITY AS MEMBER OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS***

2. I carried out the following activities:

On 30th December, in my intervention at the closing ceremony of a seminar on « The drafting of reports for submission to treaty organs », I outlined the relevant provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' rights, highlighted the provision that States submit periodic reports in accordance with article 62 of the Charter and enforce the relevant provisions of this instrument.

Further I underscored the procedures guiding the drafting of such reports. The seminar was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and cooperation, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission in Rwanda, and attended by senior officials from several Ministries who play a pivotal role in the drafting of reports for submission to treaty organs as well as representatives of NGOs.

1. In February, 2008, I was granted an audience by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to report on the activities of the November 2007 session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and urged the Government to make efforts to implement the recommendations of the Commission.
2. In the course of promoting the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, I realised that people are not really familiar with the instrument, hence the need to print and disseminate

the document (in English and French) among tutors who teach human rights in secondary schools all over the country.

3. In January, 2008, I attended a steering committee meeting of the Forum of NGOs active in the area of human rights and the National Human Rights Commission of Rwanda. At this meeting, I reiterated the need to focus on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in the training and sensitisation programmes on international instruments. I also seized the opportunity to urge NGOs having Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to attend the sessions of the African Commission.

## **II- ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SPECIAL MECHANISM IN MY CAPACITY AS CHAIRPERSON OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE DEATH PENALTY.**

4. The working group on the Death Penalty met from 4th to 5th May, 2008, on the sidelines of the 43rd Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Five members of the working group, out of the eight provided for under Resolution **84. ACHPR /Res.78(XXXVIII)05: dated 5 December, 2005** on the composition of the working group on the death penalty, participated in the meeting.
5. The group was tasked with examining the concept paper on the Death Penalty in Africa and adopted the action plan for 2008-2009. The concept paper is expected to reflect the position of the African Commission on the Death Penalty.

### **Review of the concept paper on the Death Penalty in Africa.**

6. Regarding the review of the concept paper on the death penalty in Africa, the Group deemed it necessary to revisit both the format and the substance of the paper.

7. After consideration, the Group agreed to structure the paper differently and a detailed plan was drafted. The research work was distributed among the Group members and a two-man committee and the Secretariat assigned the task of fine-tuning the paper.

### **Review and Adoption of the 2008-2009 plan of Action.**

8. The Group considered the 2008-2009 Plan of Action and agreed on the following activities:

#### **Work plan of the Working Group**

<b>NO.</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>PROPOSED DATE</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
1.	Review of the draft concept paper	May 2008 – 43rd Ordinary Session of the ACHPR	Mbabane-Swaziland
2.	Meeting of the WGDP to consider the draft Paper (a meeting open to all partners.)	November 2008	On the sidelines of the 44 <sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session
3.	Presentation of the draft paper to the ACHPR (renewal of the mandate of the Group.)	November 2008 – 44th ordinary session de la ACHPR	tbc
4.	Meeting of WGDP to finalise the draft paper	March 2009	tbc
5.	Presentation of the final version of the Concept Paper to the ACHPR	May 2009 – 45th Ordinary Session of the ACHPR	tbc
6.	ORGANISATION OF A Regional Conference on the Death Penalty (with all partners)	September 2009	tbc
7.	Presentation of the findings	November,	tbc

	of the ACHPR meeting.	2009- 46th Ordinary Session of the ACHPR	
8.	Presentation of the Report to the AU Assembly	tbc	tbc
9.	Follow-up of the activities of the AU to draft a Protocol on the abolition of the Death Penalty in Africa.	tbc	tbc

**IN MY CAPACITY AS MEMBER OF THE WORKING GROUP ON SPECIFIC ISSUES.**

9. From 15th to 17th February, 2008, I participated in the activities of the Working Group on specific issues on the sidelines of the extraordinary session of the Commission. The rules of procedure of the African Commission were considered.