

41st Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Accra, Ghana

Day 1

16 May 2007

Daily Session Briefing to the Headquarters of the African Union, 15 – 31 May 2007

The 41st Ordinary Session of the African Commission commenced today in Accra, Ghana, with an Opening Ceremony which featured speeches from the Chairperson of the African Commission, Her Excellency Madame Salamata Sawadogo, representative of the African Union, Her Excellency Madame Julia Joiner, representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations, National Human Rights Institutions and AU Member States. The 41st Ordinary Session was officially opened with a speech by the Honourable Joe Garty, the Attorney General and Minister for Justice, who was representing His Excellency, John Agyekum Kuffour, President of the Republic of Ghana.

The Opening Ceremony was very well attended by a large number of state representatives, international, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, and local and national journalists. All members of the Commission were present for the opening ceremony.

In the afternoon the Commission convened in private session to adopt the agenda. Given the number of items on the agenda, the Commissioners agreed that great discipline and focus would be required in order to achieve all of their objectives for this session. The Commission had to adjourned its meeting on the first day to pay a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Ghana

At the State House Her Excellency Madame Salamata Sawadogo thanked President John Kuffour for inviting the Commission to hold its 41st Ordinary Session, especially on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Ghana. She thanked the government and people of Ghana for their hospitality, and briefed President John Kuffour what the African Commission would be doing for the next two weeks. In reply President John Kuffour lauded the efforts of the African Commission to promote and protect human rights and recognised the difficulties still faced by the African Commission to execute its mandate. He pledged his support for the work of the African Commission