

**CLOSING ADDRESS ON THE 45TH ORDINARY SESSION
OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS**

**27TH OF MAY 2009
AT THE KAIRABA BEACH HOTEL**

**BY
HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE
(THE GAMBIA)
MARIE SAINÉ FIRDAUS**

**Your Excellency the Chairperson of the African Commission on
Human and Peoples' Rights,
Colleague Honourable Ministers here present,
Excellencies Commissioners of the African Commission on Human
and Peoples' Rights,
Executive Secretary of the African Commission,
Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,
Senior Government Officials,
State Delegates representing the Member States of the African Union,
Representatives of National and International Human Rights
Organizations,
Representatives of Civil Society Organisations,
Venerable Religious leaders,
Members of the Press,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
All other protocols respectfully observed.**

**It is with pleasure and honour that I stand before you to deliver the
closing statement at the end of the 45th Ordinary Session of the
African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.**

**I have been informed that it has been a hectic but successful two
weeks of deliberation on important issues of human and peoples'
rights in the continent. I therefore hope that the primary objective of**

this forum have been met for the benefit of our peoples whose hope and aspirations rest in our collective efforts to ensure the promotion and protection of their human rights as enshrined in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other human rights instruments.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Commissioners and Commission staff under the leadership of Chairperson Monageng for ably directing the business of the 45th Ordinary Session to a successful completion.

Chairperson, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

As human rights promoters and protectors, a forum of this nature I believe, has provided an opportunity to genuinely and frankly discuss issues of human and peoples' rights concerns, progress made and challenges encountered in the continent by member states in implementing the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. I also believe it has equally provided the opportunity to once again review the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and identify the existing implementation gaps in our respective countries with a view to improving the human rights record in the continent.

To achieve the above, it no doubt requires the collaborative partnership of member states, civil society, and the international

community with the African Commission. It is only through these collaborative efforts that we can hope for an end to unjustified waste of human lives and degraded living engendered by human rights violations. As a Government, we have committed ourselves to this cause and we will ensure that we realise it to the end for the benefit of our people in particular and humanity in general.

I also hope that as you deliberated on the issues over the last two weeks you have come up with ideas as to how you can support, promote and protect the rights of women as well as strategies that can be implemented to improve the human rights situation of women in the continent in line with the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and other related legal instruments. To this end, I will urge all member states that have not ratified the Protocol to do so and those that have so ratified to include in their periodic reports to the African Commission, information on the level of implementation of the women Protocol as required under Article 26(1) of the said Protocol. I Trust that this will help the Commission in assessing the level of women's rights promotion and protection in Africa.

Before I conclude, I wish to once again express my sincere thanks to the Chairperson and Commissioners Nyanduga andwhose terms have ended, for their invaluable contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights in the continent as well as the

development of the Commission's human rights jurisprudence during their tenure of office. I am confident that you will continue to be Africa's human rights advocates and ambassadors. I wish you all the best of luck in your future endeavours and I look forward to interacting with you in other human rights for a. Also to tell you that The Gambia is your home and you are always welcome to visit.

Finally, I wish to thank the Deputy Solicitor General and Staff of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Executive Secretary and Staff of the African Commission, the Immigration Department and Office of the IGP for their effective collaboration in ensuring the successful hosting of this Ordinary Session.

For those of you that are coming from without, I hope you have taken time out of your busy schedule to discover The Gambia and enjoy our hospitality. If not, please do so before you leave.

With these remarks, it is now my singular honour and privilege to declare the 45th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights officially closed.

Safe trip back home

Bon Voyage

Boa Viagem

I thank you all for listening

