

Concept Note

Brainstorming/Consultative Meeting of AU Organs on their working relations

28 – 30 September

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Executive Council Decision EX.CL.236 (VIII) which *calls upon the African Commission on Human and Peoples' and Rights to complete as soon as possible the work undertaken on its relations with the various organs and institutions of the African Union...*, the African Union Organized a Brainstorming Session on the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and a Consultation among AU Organs from 9 – 10 May 2006 in Banjul, The Gambia. From 3 – 5 May 2007, the Department of Political Affairs in collaboration with the African Commission organised a Brainstorming between the African Commission and the PRC in Maseru, Lesotho.

During these two meetings it was agreed that there was need for the African Commission to work closely with other organs of the African Union, especially those having human rights and related mandates. It was the view of participants to this meetings that, the promotion and protection of human rights have to be properly coordinated, given the establishment of other institutions and programmes with similar mandate to the African Commission's.

These meetings were attended by representatives of the Permanent Representative Committee, African Union Commission, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Pan-African Parliament, National Human Rights Institutions and Civil Society Organisations.

It is against this background that the African Commission is organising a three-day workshop to bring together all AU Organs working in the human rights field, to explore how they could work towards the enhancement of the promotion and protection of human rights on the continent.

II. OBJECTIVES

Overall Goal: The overall objective of the meeting is to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa through closer collaboration between the key AU Organs with human rights mandate, as well as better coordination of their efforts and activities.

Specific Objectives: The specific objectives of the meeting are as follows:

- a) Forge a formal relationship between the African Commission and other African Union organs working in the field of human rights, on the one hand, and among these institutions, on the other.
- b) Identify areas of comparative strength and advantage for each institution and work towards enhancing them;
- c) Establish a Forum to promote better understanding of the activities of all the organs and encourage a single human rights position on human rights developments on the continent;
- d) Facilitate the coordination of the promotion and protection of human rights on the continent;
- e) Explore the development of an African human rights strategy that would mainstream human rights in the policies and programmes of the African Union and its Member States

III. TIMING/VENUE

The meeting will take place from 28 – 30 September 2008, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The meeting will be both consultative and participatory to facilitate exchange of experiences. However, there will be some presentations and addresses by experts on the African Human Rights system.

V. PARTICIPATION

The meeting will include the following:

- a) AU organs with a human rights mandate;
 - African Union Commission;
 - African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights;
 - African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights;
 - Expert Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;
 - The Peace and Security Council;

- Pan African Parliament;
- NEPAD/APRM; and
- ECOSOCC.

VI. WORKING LANGUAGE

The meeting will be conducted in the 4 AU languages (English, French, Portuguese and Arabic).

VII. DOCUMENTATION/MATERIALS

The following documents/instruments, among others, will provide the framework for the brainstorming:

- Report of past two Brainstorming meetings;
- The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights;
- ACHPR and AU decisions on Human Rights issues;
- Latest Activity Reports of the various AU Organs with human rights mandate.