Inter-Session Activity Report of the Vice-Chairperson of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

Honourable Commissioner Soyata Maiga

Presented at the 60th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

Niamey, NIGER

08 - 22 MAY 2017
**Introduction:**

This report is presented in accordance with Rule 23(3) of the Rules of Procedure of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) and in my capacity as Vice Chairperson. It covers promotion activities carried out since the 59th Ordinary Session of the ACHPR held from 20 October to 4 November 2016 in Banjul, The Gambia.

**Part I**

**Activities undertaken as Vice-Chairperson of the ACHPR**

**I – Participation in meetings of African Union (AU) Policy Organs**

**Addis Ababa: 22 – 31 January 2017**

1. I participated in meetings of AU policy organs held from 22 to 31 January 2017 in Addis Ababa, including:

   - the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives’ Committee (PRC),
   - the 30th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, and
   - the 28th Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

2. Our 41st Activity Report was presented by the Chairperson to the competent authorities and was subsequently adopted by Decision EX.CL/Draft/Dec.10 (XXX).

**II – Participation in other meetings organized on the margins of the 28th African Union (AU) Summit**

- **29th GIMAC Consultative Meeting: 22 – 23 January 2017**

3. The objectives and recommendations of the GIMAC, a platform of NGOs and networks promoting gender equality and accountability for women’s rights in Africa, will be addressed in detail in the report of Commissioner Lucy Asuagbor, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa. Following the report of the Chairperson, I would like to inform this august gathering that at this occasion, the Steering Committee and women’s organizations presented the WOMEN PIONEER AWARD for the first time to 6 African women including myself and our late Ambassador Fatoumata Siré DIAKITE of Mali.
4. This award recognizes the leadership, innovation and commitment of recipients for the empowerment of the African woman in different fields of life.

5. AU Pre-Summit on Gender: 24-25 January 2017

6. In my capacity as member of the Bureau, I participated in various meetings to discuss matters of joint interest, in particular, with a delegation of the APRM, Danish Cooperation, European Union and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights led by its newly-appointed representative to the AU, Mr. Mahamane Gouro Cissé.

III – Participation in a High-Level Meeting between the ACHPR and the UN Mission on the general situation in The Gambia, including human rights: Banjul, 21 February 2017

7. Commissioner Reine Alapini Gansou and myself represented the ACHPR following the invitation received by our Organ to participate in a high-level bilateral meeting with a UN Mission on the assessment of the general situation in The Gambia, including the human rights situation, following the regime change in this country.

8. The UN Mission was led by Mr. Abdel-Fatau Musah, Director of Political Affairs at the UN Africa Division Bureau and included several high-ranking UN officials in charge of security reform and economic and political affairs from the New York, Addis Ababa, Niamey and Senegal bureaus with the support of the Office for West Africa and the Sahel.

9. The Mission indicated that the UN was in consultation with several stakeholders in The Gambia and in ECOWAS countries to initiate a dialogue process for the prompt elaboration and implementation of an overall support programme to the political, economic and social process as well as other key areas including security and human rights in The Gambia.

10. Discussions focused on the ACHPR’s assessment of the past and current situation of human rights and the conclusions drawn, as well as on possible areas of collaboration with the UN in terms of support to constitutional and judicial reforms, training of the police force, parliamentarians and magistrates on human rights, among others.
11. Joint interventions in the immediate and short-term were identified by the two parties, which agreed to further reflect on and examine in full all opportunities, in partnership with the Gambians, for the consolidation of democracy, political governance, economic growth, security and human rights in The Gambia.

12. In this regard, other meetings will be held with the support of the UNDP Resident Representative in The Gambia depending on the needs and circumstances.

IV – Participation in the Extraordinary Session: Banjul, 22 February – 04 March 2017

13. This Extraordinary Session was marked by the courtesy call paid by the Commissioners and APRM members present in Banjul to the newly-elected Head of State, His Excellency Adama Barrow, the courtesy call and working visit paid by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Gambia to the African Commission, and the working session held between the African Commission and a delegation of the AfDB and the WB on mission in The Gambia to assess the general situation of the country.

14. On 28 February in Banjul, the Commissioner in charge of monitoring human rights in The Gambia, Honourable Jamesina King, and myself represented the ACHPR at a meeting to follow-up and consolidate the outcomes of the High-Level meeting with the UN mission held on 21 February as described earlier in my report.

15. This meeting was convened and chaired by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. The team included the UN Special Representative for West Africa as well as other UN officials. In addition to the ACHPR, the Ambassadors of the United States, European Union and African countries accredited to the Government of the Republic of The Gambia also participated in these discussions. The key objective of the Under-Secretary-General was to obtain a comprehensive view of the situation as well as the needs and challenges facing the new Government with a view to putting forward concrete and relevant recommendations to both his institution and the highest authorities in The Gambia with whom he was scheduled to meet and discuss several urgent matters, including the organization of parliamentary elections in April 2017.
V – Collaboration with NGOs

16. 10-11 April 2017: Paris

The Special Rapporteur and myself participated in a working session with FIDH for the finalization of the draft Guidelines on Sexual Violence incorporating the observations made by Commissioners during consideration of the document at the Extraordinary Session held in February 2017 in Banjul.