MANDATE OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND FOCAL POINT ON REPRISALS IN AFRICA

END OF MANDATE REPORT

PRESENTED BY MADAM REINE ALAPINI-GANSOU, COMMISSIONER AND SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND FOCAL POINT ON REPRISALS IN AFRICA

NOVEMBER 2017
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END OF MANDATE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND FOCAL POINT ON REPRISALS IN AFRICA

by

Madame Reine Alapini-Gansou

Commissioner, Member of the African Commission on and Peoples’ Rights

NOVEMBER 2017
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

After twelve (12) years at the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (African Commission), I am leaving with a feeling of satisfaction for the work done, in particular within the framework of the mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders which I took over upon my arrival in 2005. I left the mechanism only during the two years when I served as Chairperson of the African Commission.

The promotion and protection of human rights, in particular the rights of human rights defenders, is a big challenge, and I am honoured to have risen to the challenge.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to my colleagues at the African Commission who supported me during my two terms as a Commissioner, in particular Commissioner Béchir Mohamed Khalfallah and Commissioner Lucy Ayuk Asuagbor who worked with me in carrying out my mandate of Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

I wish to extend my gratitude to all the partners of the mechanism, mentioned at the end of this report, who assisted the mechanism in meeting its objectives. I wish to thank all of them.

I would like to express my appreciation to States that collaborated with me, in particular the mechanism, and I wish to call upon all States to work in synergy with human rights defenders given that we are all working towards a common goal, that of the effective realisation of human rights for all.

My appreciation also goes to staff members of the Secretariat who assisted the mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals, the Study Group on Freedom of Association and Assembly that I had the honour of chairing, as well as my mandate as Commissioner of the African Commission.

Lastly, I wish to express my gratitude to the Government of Benin which, by putting its trust in my humble person, believed in me and enabled me to give my own contribution towards advancing human rights on the continent.

Reine Alapini Gansou
Commissioner
Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals
Former Chairperson of the Commission
SUMMARY

Since the establishment of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (the African Commission) in 1987, the Commission has committed itself to promoting and protecting human rights without making any distinction between the categories and generations of human rights. It carries out this mandate in accordance with the rights guaranteed by the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights which was adopted in 1981 and came into force in 1986.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights has since 1995 established the practice of Special Mechanisms not only as a result of the urgency required in addressing some human rights thematic issues with the support of civil society but also pursuant to Article 60 which provides that:

The Commission shall draw inspiration from international law on human and peoples’ rights, particularly from the provisions of various African instruments on human and peoples’ rights, the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, other instruments adopted by the United Nations and by African countries in the field of human and peoples’ rights as well as from the provisions of various instruments adopted within Specialized Agencies of the United Nations of which the parties to the present Charter are members.

Thus, through its Resolutions ACHPR/69(XXXV) 04 of June, 2004 and 83(XXXVIII) 05 of 5 December, 2005, the African Commission established the Mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Human Rights Defenders in Africa. This Mechanism was extended in scope to cover the theme of reprisals by the adoption of Resolution ACHPR/Res.273 (LV) 14 of 12 May, 2014; following the “grave concern” expressed by the Commission in the face of frequent and serious reprisals against civil society activists, particularly human rights defenders.

Since its inception in 2004; first of all the Focal Point, then later the Mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders has come a long way and thirteen (13) years after its establishment, its track record speaks for itself. Even though the situation of human rights defenders and their working environment have not always been a bed of roses; the Mechanism must be lauded for the acceptance of the role of defender by the States and the recognition of the importance of their work of promoting and protecting human rights.

The Mechanism has been able to create synergy among the various stakeholders through collaboration and dialogue. It has also contributed, through research and publications, to a better understanding of some rights guaranteed by the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and also to their implementation by both the States and their citizens, and at the same time to the development of the African Commission’s jurisprudence.
INTRODUCTION

1. The Rules of Procedure of the Commission as amended in 2010 refer to the Subsidiary Mechanisms as these special procedures such as the Special Rapporteurs and the Working Committees and Groups. To date, there are about thirteen (13) of them.

2. As already mentioned, this report presents the activities of the Mechanism during the recent mandate of Commissioner Reine Alapini-Gansou, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa, and also reviews the developments of the Mechanism from its inception to date.

3. In order to facilitate its understanding, a presentation for every sphere of activity will be highlighted with a reminder of the background and rationale for the establishment of the Mechanism including a presentation of the mandate and its terms of reference.

4. The report will then focus on the different areas of activities of the mechanism through to the achievements made and the persisting challenges.

5. Finally, a situational analysis will be carried out on the current status of human rights defenders, followed by recommendations to the various stakeholders.
PART I: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MECHANISM

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

6. The establishment of the Mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa has an international and regional background. In 1998, the United Nations adopted a General Assembly Resolution 53/144: Declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally-recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms generally called the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. This Declaration, among others, urges governments, United Nations agencies and organizations, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations to step up their efforts to disseminate and promote the respect for and understanding of this Declaration on a universal basis.

7. Indeed, the place of human rights defenders in the States is quite important as demonstrated by their influence on issues relating to governance, democracy and the Rule of Law; their contribution to the implementation of legal human rights instruments both internationally and regionally is of critical importance. But, paradoxically, these are the people who are subjected to attacks and reprisals by State and non-State actors since they are often misunderstood.

8. Following the adoption of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the United Nations, through a subsequent Resolution No.2000/61 of April, 2000 by the Human Rights Commission, requested the United Nations Secretary General to establish a Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. This was done in August, 2000 with the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on the situation of human rights defenders1.

9. At the African regional level, the situation of human rights defenders in Africa was placed on the Agenda of the 26th Ordinary Session of the African Commission held in Kigali, Rwanda from 1st to 15 November, 1999, and afterwards, a Resolution on Human Rights Defenders tabled in Tunisia, was adopted at the 29th Ordinary Session held from 23 April to 7 May, 2001 in Tripoli, Libya.2

10. After reiterating the importance of the role played by human rights defenders in promoting and protecting human rights in Africa at the 30th Ordinary Session

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1 In August, 2000, Madam Hina Jilani of Pakistan was appointed as the first Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders.
2 http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/29th/resolutions/56/
held in the Gambia from 13 to 27 October 2001), the African Commission appointed Mrs. Jainaba Johm, Commissioner and Member of the African Commission as Focal Point for Human Rights Defenders in Africa at the 34th Ordinary Session held in The Gambia from 6 to 20 November, 2003, before establishing the Special Mechanism on Human Rights Defenders at its 35th Ordinary Session held from 21 May to 4 June 2004. A concrete expression was given to this establishment by the appointment of Mrs. Jainaba Johm as the first Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa by Resolution ACHPR/69(XXXV)04 of 4 June, 2004.

11. Madame Reine Alapini-Gansou succeeded Mrs. Janaiba Johm and pursuant to Resolution ACHPR/Res.83(XXXVIII) 05 adopted at the 38th Ordinary Session held from 21 November to 5 December and subsequently renewed by several Resolutions. She has been the longest serving mandate holder which was also held by Commissioners Béchir Khalfallah (Nov 9-Nov 10) and Lucy Ayuk Asuagbor (Nov 10-Nov 11).

12. The Mechanism of the African Commission’s Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders is the outcome of advocacy actions taken by civil society stakeholders, which since the establishment of the African Commission, have crystallized around the latter institution, through brainstorming on appropriate strategies that would help to take into account the human rights challenges confronting the continent.

13. In this regard, an attempt to define human rights defenders by the United Nations describes them as people who individually or in partnership with others, work towards promoting or protecting human rights. At the African regional level, the Grand Bay and Kigali Declarations establish the recognition of human rights defenders by African leaders.

14. Thus, the defenders are beneficiaries but also indispensable partners of the Mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa.

MANDATE OF THE MECHANISM

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4 ACHPR/125(XXXXII)07
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/42nd/resolutions/125/

ACHPR/Res.202 (L) 11
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/50th/resolutions/202/

ACHPR/Res.248 (LIV) 13
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/54th/resolutions/248/

5 ACHPR/Res149(XLVI) 09
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/46th/resolutions/149/

6 ACHPR/Rés.171 (XLVII) 10
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/48th/resolutions/171/

7 See Fact Sheet No. 29 of the United Nations, Page 2.

8 Adopted in 1999 (Grand Bay) and in 2003 Kigali respectively
15. According to Resolutions No. ACHPR 69 (XXXV) 04 of 4 June, 2004 and ACHPR/Res.273 (LV) 14 of 12 May, 2014, the mandate calls for the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa, to:

- Seek, receive, examine and act upon information on the situation of human rights defenders in Africa;
- Submit reports at every Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights on the situation of human rights defenders in Africa;
- Cooperate and engage in dialogue with States Parties to the Charter, National Human Rights Institutions, relevant intergovernmental bodies, regional and international mechanisms, human rights defenders and other stakeholders;
- Develop and recommend effective strategies to better protect human rights defenders and follow-up on their recommendations;
- Raise awareness and promote the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in Africa.
- Collect information and provide effective response in the event of reprisals to which civil society activists are subjected;
- Document cases of reprisals received by the Mechanism and maintain a database on all of them;
- Advise the Commission on urgent measures to be taken to address specific cases of reprisals;
- Present a report on cases of reprisals at very Ordinary Session of the Commission as part of activity reports of the Special Rapporteur;

16. During the implementation of this mandate, the Special Rapporteur undertakes lots of activities and they include among others:

- Receives information on violations perpetrated against human rights defenders;
- Engages in dialogue with States Parties by submitting confidential communications which others refer to as allegation letters;
- Publishes press releases on individual cases of violations reported to her;
- Undertakes promotion missions to assess the situation of human rights defenders in the State Parties to the Charter;
- Organizes consultations, conferences and seminars as part of capacity building for human rights defenders, either through her own initiative or at the invitation of States, National Human Rights Institutions and civil society organizations;
- Makes recommendations on how the States can implement the United Nations Declaration on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders and takes part in meetings and conferences on human rights defence.
17. By means of a strategic approach based on its action plans from 2006 to 2008; 2012 to 2014 and 2016 to 2018, the Mechanism of the Special Rapporteur took into account the need to cooperate and dialogue with the stakeholders by establishing a proactive and effective system for improved promotion and protection of the rights of human rights defenders on the continent. She also made the commitment to submit reports and make recommendations.

PART II. MEASURES TAKEN BY THE MECHANISM

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANDATE

18. The Mechanism’s implementation takes the form of promotion and protection activities in respect of human rights defenders. This is in addition to cooperation with State Parties and Human Rights Protection Mechanisms regarding human rights defenders of other regional human rights systems through inter-agency cooperation.

19. During recent years, the Mechanism has extended its scope of action by incorporating the conduct of different kinds of research on relevant issues for the implementation of its mandate and by developing legal instruments pursuant to Article 45(1) (b) of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (the African Charter) which tasks the African Commission with the mission “to formulate and lay down, principles and rules .....”.

A. PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

20. The African Commission tasked the Special Rapporteur with the mission of cooperating and establishing dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. The promotion activities it conducts is in keeping with this obligation and it is broken down into relations with the States Parties, NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions and other stakeholders.

a) Relations with the States Parties

21. Regarding its formal activities, the Special Rapporteur has to date conducted seventeen (17) promotion missions in 12 countries: Democratic Republic of Congo (2), Togo (3), Sudan (1), Libya (1), Tunisia (2), Cameroon (2), Senegal (1), Mauritania (2), Algeria (1), Western Sahara (1), Uganda (1) and in Cabo Verde (1) including a fact-finding mission in Mali. This has enabled the Special Rapporteur to maintain dialogue with the political authorities of these States on appropriate strategies for the protection of human rights defenders; and to engage in dialogue with the human rights defenders on their own ability to act effectively and ensure the promotion of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights.
22. She also organized informal meetings with States Parties on the occasion of certain activities with civil society actors. Thus, in 2006, she was able to meet the authorities of the DRC, as well as those of Côte d’Ivoire, Burundi, Rwanda, Angola and Somalia.

b) Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations and National Human Rights Institutions

23. On several occasions, at the invitation of non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions engaged in promoting human rights, the Mechanism has taken part in activities such as seminars and capacity building, conferences throughout the continent. These informal continual cooperation systems have, among others, enabled the mechanism to have an overall view of the situation of human rights defenders and to provide on-the-spot views on topical issues. The reports of works carried out at these events feature prominently in half-yearly reports presented by the Special Rapporteur and also help to identify issues of concern.

24. In 2009, the Special Rapporteur organized a Colloquium (JOBOURG+10) in collaboration with the African Networks of Human Rights Defenders, which event took stock of the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and their activities since the Johannesburg Conference in 1998.

25. Since 2006, the Special Rapporteur has placed special emphasis of her mandate on synergy with civil society stakeholders, and on this score, for want of getting a competitive bureau, for that matter, she has developed a good communication network with human rights defenders whom she encouraged to work through networking. With this strategy, today, the number of sub-regional human rights defence networks is about 45. At the continental level, the Pan-African Network of Human Rights Defenders is consolidating itself gradually.

26. It is against the background of this synergy that the 2nd Colloquium on the situation of human rights defenders in Africa was organized under the codename JOBOURG+18 with the major aim of strengthening the protection of human rights defenders in Africa, 10 years after the setting up of the Special Mechanism and to review the promotion and protection of human rights defenders on the continent and develop strategies and synergies suitable for the current needs in the area of promoting and protecting human rights defenders and the Pan-African Network of Human Rights Defenders after JOBOURG+10. From this Colloquium emerged the Cotonou Declaration.9

9 http://www.achpr.org/news/2017/06/d293/
c) Awareness raising campaign and visibility of the Mechanism

27. To maintain the synergy between the Special Rapporteur and all the stakeholders, she has since 2006, initiated a Newsletter called “The Rapporteur’s Letter. This Newsletter which is a means of communication is specifically aimed at establishing a connection with the community of human rights defenders by ensuring that they actively participate in the implementation of the mandate. Indeed, the Rapporteur’s Letter focuses often on a theme which serves as food for thought for brainstorming by human rights defenders on topical issues and some important activities of the Rapporteur during the period of preparing the Newsletter. Thus, some editions have focused on the right of human rights defenders to demonstrate peacefully in Africa while others have hinged on important themes such as the protection of the rights of women human rights activists, freedom of expression, the notion of a human rights defender. All these topics have featured in this Newsletter.

d) Capacity building

28. To promote a better understanding of the Mechanism and its use by the defenders, the Mechanism got involved in the production of working tools for human rights defenders. In August 2008, following a workshop and in collaboration with several stakeholders, she designed a working guide to enable human rights defenders to easily carry out their work. She also designed a training manual in abridged form for human rights defenders which also captures the main regional and international instruments applicable to human rights defenders. On this score, she presented the profile of the Human Rights Defender and a code of conduct for human rights defenders.

29. The Special Rapporteur organized a number of awareness-raising activities and training for some groups. Thus, in collaboration with some partners, she, among others, organized capacity building seminars for human rights defenders, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo on international and regional legal instruments (2008), a training seminar in Benin for primary and secondary school teachers on the work of human rights defenders (2009), a training workshop for women human rights defenders on investigation techniques, documentation and reporting on gender-based human rights violations in Togo (2014); consultative meeting on the establishment of the strategy of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa, in Benin (2015) and a working consultative meeting on the finalization of the strategy (2016-2018) of the mandate, in Togo (2015).

B. PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

30. The second part of the Special Rapporteur's mandate focuses on activities meant to protect human rights defenders, and implement the Commission's obligation
of constructive dialogue with States Parties. This is a delicate activity as it highlights, in the vast majority of cases, violations of the rights of human rights defenders in the States Parties. The Special Rapporteur uses two main strategies to dialogue with States or the entire Human Rights Community. These strategies are Communications (letters of allegation) and press releases.

a) Communications

31. Communications are confidential letters that the Special Rapporteur issues to States Parties on alleged violations of the rights of human rights defenders. The Special Rapporteur has since 2004 produced more than 500 communications.

32. These communications generally focus on all the rights guaranteed by the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and especially on civil and political rights. The Special Rapporteur notes that these allegations often denounce acts of judicial harassment, abduction of human rights defenders, torture, arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions, killings and murders of human rights defenders as well as various forms of intimidation. These cases of violations are mostly noted in conflict or post-conflict countries and rarely in countries enjoying relative peace and where there is a certain culture of the rule of law.

33. With regard to communications, the Special Rapporteur notes that only 2% of the communications issued were reacted to by the targeted States.

b) Press Releases and Statements

34. Press releases and statements are not confidential documents as they are automatically published on the Commission's website either to inform the entire Community about proven cases of human rights violations and or some burning or topical issues or to commend a State’s implementation of a Special Rapporteur's recommendation.

35. The Special Rapporteur has issued a significant number of press releases and statements relating to cases of various forms of violation of the rights of human rights defenders, especially arbitrary arrests. The number of communications issued during the eight years of the mechanism’s existence is higher than the number of press releases.

36. These two protection tools help to address the situation of one or more human rights defenders, thanks to the information that the Rapporteur receives from human rights organizations or families of victims of violations.

c) Inter-organic cooperation

37. The Special Rapporteur's mechanism has a close working relationship with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, and the
European and American organizations responsible for promoting and protecting human rights defenders in their respective regions. There is a permanent meeting platform which is currently in its 7th edition: the inter-mechanisms meetings for the defence of human rights.

38. These meetings are strategic as they promote the sharing of experiences between UN and regional mechanisms and they are forums wherein strategies to strengthen the protection of the rights of human rights defenders are developed.

39. Joint missions with the UN Mechanism on human rights defenders, particularly the missions to Togo in 2008 and to Tunisia in 2012, fall within the framework of the implementation of this cooperation, which strengthens the mechanism of Special Rapporteur in her mission. Other examples include the Cairo Conference in April 2012 and the Oslo Conference in June 2012, which were attended by Special Rapporteurs from the Commission and the United Nations. This cooperation is also an extension of the Commission's cooperation with the United Nations Human Rights Council in respect of special procedures.

d) Protection against reprisals

40. During its 50th Ordinary Session held from 24 October to 5 November 2011, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted ACHPR Resolution / Res.196 (L) 11 on acts of reprisal and intimidation against all those who collaborate with the African Commission and the African human rights system in general. In 2014, the African Commission’s opinion was sought on the continued deterioration of the working environment of civil society stakeholders working with the African human rights system, which environment was characterized by several cases of violation of their fundamental rights such as arbitrary arrests and detentions, acts of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, extrajudicial killings, acts of harassment, including judicial threats and other forms of intimidation, denial of justice and refusal of medical care while in detention.

41. In order to follow up on the ACHPR Resolution/Res.196 (L) 11, the African Commission by ACHPR Resolution / Res.273 (LV) 14 at its 55th Ordinary Session in 2014 extended the scope of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa to the fight against reprisals.

42. This Resolution makes the Special Rapporteur the Focal Point on issues relating to reprisals and gives her the additional mandate to:
   - Gather information and respond effectively to cases of reprisals against civil society actors;
   - Document cases of reprisals received by the mechanism and keep a database thereof;
   - Advise the Commission on urgent measures to be taken to deal with specific cases of reprisals;
43. Hence, since the 56th Ordinary Session of the African Commission, the Rapporteur's mechanism has been receiving reports and has also been reporting on cases of reprisals against human rights defenders or any other person because of their actual or alleged collaboration with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

44. In order to operationalize this new mandate and contribute effectively to the prevention and fight against reprisals, the Special Rapporteur organized a regional meeting with civil society actors to brainstorm on appropriate strategies to be adopted in order to adequately address the issue of reprisals.

45. Three (3) important documents were adopted at the end of this meeting, namely:

- A form to collect and transmit information relating to allegations of reprisals and intimidation of human rights defenders; and
- A Briefing and guidance note on communication with the African Commission focal point on reprisals.

46. Ces trois (03) documents ont été regroupés sous le nom de Note d’information qui est un document succinct qui fournit des informations sur le mandat du point focal, sa saisine (comment soumettre des cas de représailles) et ses méthodes de travail. Le document fournit ainsi des orientations sur quelles informations et situations sont considérées comme des actes d’intimidation ou de représailles et qui doivent lui être signalées ; qui peut le saisir, le temps que dure la procédure, la confidentialité de la procédure, etc.

47. La Note d’information est le premier d’une série de documents prévus dans la feuille de route du Point Focal which are useful both for victims of reprisals and for States Parties.

C. CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMISSION’S JURISPRUDENCE

48. The Mechanism has greatly contributed to the development of the jurisprudence of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights through, inter alia, the publication of studies, research findings and guidelines on specific rights enshrined in the African Charter pursuant to Article 45 (1) (b), which mandates the Commission to "formulate and lay down principles and rules ... ...", "aimed at solving legal problems relating to the enjoyment of human and peoples’ rights and fundamental freedoms ".

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15 | P a g e
a) Study Group on Freedom of Association and Assembly

49. By ACHPR Resolution / Res.151 (XLVI) 09, adopted at its 46th Ordinary Session, the Commission established the mandate of the Study Group on Freedom of Association. The resolution is the outcome of the Commission's decision to "study the laws governing freedom of association and practices that seek to violate freedom of association in Africa; to ensure wide dissemination of the said study; and to take effective measures to bring States to take into account the conclusions of the study ". The freedom of assembly was added to the responsibilities of the Study Group with the adoption of the ACHPR Resolution / Res.229 (LII) 2012 at the 52nd Ordinary Session. The Study Group produced two important documents, notably:

- The Report of the Study Group on Freedom of Association and Peaceful Assembly in Africa;
- Guidelines on Freedom of Association and Assembly in Africa.

50. The Report of the Study Group on Freedom of Association and Peaceful Assembly in Africa deals with the rights to freedom of association, as an attribute of civil society organizations, with special focus on human rights defenders, as well as the right to freedom of assembly. Political parties, trade unions and other types of organizations, which are also protected by the right to freedom of association, are not handled in this report for practical purposes.

51. This report was officially presented to the public and made available to the general public during the 56th Ordinary Session of the African Commission, held from 21 April to 7 May 2015. It served as a basis for the development of the guidelines on the same theme.

b) Guidelines on Freedom of Association and Assembly in Africa

52. Following the publication of the report of the Study Group, various political, technological and security developments having an impact on the enjoyment of rights, coupled with the excessive restrictions on the rights to freedom of association and assembly, have strengthened the African Commission's awareness of the need to guide States on the measures necessary to ensure the respect, protection and realization of human rights.

53. Resolution 319 (LVII) 15 decided to task the Study Group with the development of the Guidelines on Freedom of Association and Assembly in Africa in order to meet this need.

54. The guidelines seek to clarify and strengthen the obligations of Article 10 on the right to freedom of association and Article 11 on the right to freedom of assembly enshrined in the African Charter. They are hinged on the legal framework of its
two rights, their protection and the acceptable limits that can be imposed on them.

c) Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights while Countering Terrorism in Africa

55. Following the rise of terrorist acts on the continent and the resultant excesses marked especially by violations of human rights both by the perpetrators of acts of terrorism, and also by States in their acts of repression, the African Commission, while recognizing that terrorism is a serious violation of human rights and poses a threat to peace, security, development and democracy, deemed that it was necessary to develop guidelines and establish principles guiding human rights issues and the fight against terrorism whose complex causes call for a comprehensive approach.

56. It is for this reason that the Special Rapporteur was given a mandate to prepare the Counter-Terrorism Guidelines for the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders in Africa by Resolution 274 of 12 May 2014.

57. During its 56th Ordinary Session held from 21 April to 7 May 2015, the African Commission adopted the Principles and Guidelines on Human and Peoples' Rights while Countering Terrorism in Africa. These Principles provide States with advice that would be very useful to them in upholding and guaranteeing their human rights obligations in the fight against terrorism. The Principles and Guidelines seek to achieve four specific objectives, namely:

- Lay emphasis on the victims;
- Contextualize the phenomenon of terrorism;
- Address new concerns; and
- Underscore the importance of cooperation and implementation of the Principles and Guidelines.

58. A resolution on the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines on Human and Peoples' Rights while Countering Terrorism in Africa, ACHPR Resolution / Res. 368 (LX) 2017 was adopted during the 60th Ordinary Session of the African Commission that held from 8 to 22 May 2017.

d) Situation of Women Human Rights Defenders in Africa

59. The African Commission has always been concerned about the difficult environment in which human rights defenders operate, which in many countries is characterized by continued arbitrary arrests and detentions, acts of harassment, including judicial threats and other forms of intimidation, summary and extrajudicial killings or acts of torture as a result of their activities. The Commission had concerns, which were quite rightly justified by the circumstances, to assess the magnitude of the difficulties women defenders
encounter in their daily lives with regard to acts of violence and discrimination because of their gender and the negative impact that it has on their ability to participate actively in political and socio-economic processes in the countries in which they operate.

60. Thus, by ACHPR Resolution/Res.230 (LII) 12, the African Commission decided to assign the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders with the task of preparing a study on the situation of women human rights defenders in Africa, the laws that govern them and discriminatory practices that impede their role in promoting and protecting human rights on the continent.

61. The Report of this study highlights the work of women human rights defenders and their prominent roles in protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. It highlights the human rights violations against them but goes far beyond simple observation. The report recommends that States Parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights be visionaries and overtly raises the issue of gender and work of women human rights defenders in Africa, particularly those working in the domain of sexual orientation and gender identity.

D. SUCCESS STORIES OF THE MECHANISM

62. Since its establishment, the Mechanism has made significant progress, including:

- Continuous recognition of the Mechanism by all States Parties to the Charter through the constructive dialogue undertaken in that regard.
- The Mechanism remains the precursor to the communications procedure (Letter of Allegations) in Africa;
- The Mechanism has, with the help of human rights defenders and others with similar mandates, identified the specific problems of human rights defenders;
- The Mechanism has been involved in the establishment of human rights defenders’ networks at national, sub-regional and continental levels. These networks collaborate effectively with the Mechanism;
- The Mechanism strategically implements activities and tools to promote the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights through its publications and promotional missions;
- The Mechanism carries out a policy of rapprochement with human rights defenders through its periodic meetings. Strengthening cooperation between the Mechanism and its counterparts, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association, the Human Rights Defenders, the Functional Unit of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the European Council Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union, through inter-mechanisms meetings remains a tool for strengthening actions of the Special Rapporteur. This has so far enabled her to collect data on current
issues such as freedom of association, the right to peaceful protest and to freedom of expression;

The creation of the study group on freedom of association is an asset to better understand the positive Rule of Law in Africa with regard to freedom of association and to make recommendations for the improvement of the legislative framework; and

The almost regular publication of the Rapporteur's Letter promotes the Mechanism, and remains a real channel of communication and exchange with the various actors.

E. MAIN CHALLENGES

63. In spite of the progress made by the Mechanism, numerous challenges still persist. In addition to the challenges of implementing the assigned missions, there are also those affecting human rights defenders, particularly in the conduct of their advocacy and human rights promotion activities.

64. On the challenges relating to the implementation of the assigned missions, the Special Rapporteur notes:

- The permanent need for technical, material and financial support for the Mechanism. Despite the specific budget line allocated by the African Union, the constant demands of the Mechanism require better support for the effective implementation of the assigned missions.

- The inability of the States Parties to act as a follow-up to the recommendations and communications sent to them within the purview of protecting the rights of human rights defenders constitutes a serious obstacle to uncovering the truth and to establishing the evidence of the facts reported to her. The Special Rapporteur continues to seek appropriate means to better investigate cases of alleged human rights violations by human rights defenders.

- The absence of responses from States Parties to requests for promotional visits is also a hindrance to the implementation of the missions of the Special Rapporteur, although more and more States Parties welcome these visits.

65. On the challenges relating to the work of Human Rights Defenders, the Special Rapporteur notes:

The difficult environment in which Human Rights Defenders work

From the cases of human rights violations pointed out in communications and convincing information gathered, it appears that human rights defenders in a number of African States have been victims of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, acts of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, violence and arbitrary arrests. Human rights defenders and their families are often threatened with death and
intimidation. This reinforces the environment of fear and suspicion in which they are already living and leaves them with serious psychological and mental effects. The lack of adequate and effective judicial or police responses to these different situations creates a climate of impunity that encourages and perpetuates these violations;

Reprisals against Human Rights Defenders (especially when they witness human rights violations)
Reprisals include personal threats or threats against human rights defenders’ family members, defamation campaigns, death threats, physical attacks, kidnappings, judicial harassment, killings and other forms of harassment or intimidation by the police, including travel bans. These measures to silence human rights defenders and prevent them from speaking out are human rights violations which must be dealt with. The African Commission has repeatedly reiterated in its previous Resolutions that States Parties should take appropriate measures to stop the reprisals against all those who collaborate with the African system and more particularly the Mechanism of the Special Rapporteur. However, the Mechanism continues to receive information on reprisals, particularly against human rights defenders who collaborate with it.

Restriction of the exercise of freedom of association and peaceful protest and access to funding
The Special Rapporteur is very much concerned about the situation of Human Rights Defenders on issues related to specific rights to freedom of association and the right to peaceful protest. She notes that human rights defenders continue to suffer restrictions imposed by some States Parties to the African Charter in these areas. In addition to these restrictions already noted in the previous reports, there are significant financing restrictions used by the States to destroy the essential role played by civil society. These restrictions are in the form of legislative measures and other requirements that prohibit or restrict any possibility of receiving funds from foreign or external sources;

Use of anti-terrorism legislation and practices against human rights defenders
In response to the security, social and economic problems created by terrorism and violent extremism, many African countries have enacted legislation and other anti-terrorism measures, many of which contain provisions that seriously undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the possibility of imposing the death penalty and permitting long and arbitrary preventive detention. The freedoms of association and assembly are also severely restricted by some of these laws. In many countries, these laws, policies and measures are enforced in the absence of judicial control, or with limited judicial control. Counter-terrorism measures are increasingly being used to hinder the activities and
work of human rights defenders unduly described as terrorist groups when they challenge the negative impact of the fight against terrorism or when they advocate good governance, democracy or the protection of human rights in general.

**Capacity Development Gap on the part of human rights defenders**

Human Rights Defenders continue to feel the need to develop their knowledge on human rights legal instruments in general and those of the African system in particular. This state of affairs was confirmed in the course of the assessment made by these Human Rights Defenders themselves during a forum which took place prior to this Session;

**The specific case of women human rights defenders**

Women human rights defenders continue to face violation of their rights in a much larger proportion than their male counterparts. Their rights are undermined owing to violence against women in private life and in society, before being subjected in some States to restrictions on rights related to religious and especially political reasons in some States Parties.

**Specific challenges faced by certain categories of human rights defenders**

Various political, social and contextual factors such as patriarchy, gender stereotypes, heteronormativity, militarization, religious and other forms of extremism and globalization undermine the activism and work of certain categories of human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, advocates working on the right to land, conflict and post-conflict States, on issues related to health, HIV, sexual orientation, identity and gender expression, sexual rights and reproductive health. Addressing the underlying and structural causes of human rights violations affecting these defenders, in particular, should be a priority. This requires the repeal of laws, the abandonment of policies and the eradication of practices that create or reinforce violence, discrimination and stereotypes.

### F. PROSPECTS

66. The various action plans of the Special Rapporteur towards the implementation of her mandate and the follow-up of the actions already taken so far have been formulated and developed. These action plans, which have successively been part of the synergy, collaboration, and defence of human rights defenders, have contributed to the sustainability of the actions already taken and the consolidation of progress made.

67. With regard to the action plans and what has been done so far, in terms of prospects, it is advisable to envisage actions that will make it possible to meet the challenges that have just been outlined. Briefly, these prospects are divided into two parts based on the promotion and protection of the rights of human rights defenders as provided for by ACHPR Resolution No. 69 (XXXV) 04 of 4 June 2004 and countering reprisals contained in Resolution ACHPR / Res.273 (LV) 14:
a) Protection of the rights of human rights defenders

68. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur intends to:

- Continue sending Individual Communications to States and publishing Press Releases to raise awareness among stakeholders;
- Conduct an evaluation of the protection of human rights defenders through the follow-up of communications exchanged with States Parties;
- Set up a warning mechanism for cases of violations of the rights of human rights defenders.

b) The mandate to promote the rights of Human Rights Defenders

69. In this connection, the Special Rapporteur intends to:

- Pursue and improve the capacity-building actions of Human Rights Defenders, especially through the re-publication and updating of the working tools of human rights defenders;
- Conduct an assessment of the work of human rights defenders with a view to guiding the strategies of the Mechanism in order to strengthen their activities;
- Continue with the exchanges and discussions with Human Rights Defenders to identify relevant topics through training, awareness-raising actions and advocacy;
- Continue with the constructive dialogue with States Parties through promotion missions. This dialogue remains a tool for preventing violations of the rights of human rights defenders;
- Strengthen collaboration and cooperation with similar bodies, particularly with the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders; the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and similar regional special mechanisms. This will be achieved not only through inter-organizational exchanges instituted since 2008, but also through inter-organizational cooperation which promotes joint missions in States Parties;
- Maintain its communication and information strategy through the newsletter "THE LEETER OF THE RAPPORTEUR", which still needs the expertise of Human Rights Defenders and financial and technical partners;
- Ensure the effective implementation of the recommendations of the various studies on freedom of association, human rights and terrorism in Africa, the right to protest and police action, adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights;
Assist in the development of guidelines on the protection of women human rights defenders, as a continuation of the study on women human rights defenders, with indicators for monitoring and surveillance of the measures taken by States;

Continue to scrutinize legislation and policies that impose restrictions on civil liberties and reduce the role and operational milieu of civil society actors.

Continue to strengthen collaboration with all human rights defenders as well as the dialogue with States and other stakeholders;

Provide annual updates on the issue of reprisals with a view to calling for the gradual establishment of a reprisal warning mechanism, including when it is directed against human rights defenders collaborating with the African Commission or against its staff.
ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN AFRICA

70. The issue relating to a better recognition of human rights defenders as development actors is still a problem in Africa. Their protection is even a more serious issue.

71. An analysis of the situation of human rights defenders in Africa shows that they continue to be victims of various forms of serious human rights violations. For example, some groups of human rights defenders including women human rights defenders, human rights defenders working in thematic areas such as land rights, conflict and post-conflict States, on issues related to health, HIV, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sexual and reproductive health rights continue to be subjected to various forms of harassment.

72. Moreover, Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) working on the theme of extractive industries are at high risk for both State actors and non-State actors. On another level, HRDs working on election-related issues and electoral processes in their countries are at risk.

73. The situation of young human rights defenders involved in various social protests leaves much to be desired in our continent. A good number of them are already languishing in jails for having spoken out on issues related to the political life of their countries. Others have resorted to forced exile as the ultimate solution.

74. It is therefore important that special attention be paid to the situation of HRDs on our continent and that States accept that dialogue be instituted if it has not yet been done, and that such an action be continued and strengthened if it has already started on the situation of HRDs in their country.

75. In this respect, it is already proper to commend the States which have taken steps to provide a legal framework for the protection of human rights defenders. Some countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso, the DRC, Sierra Leone and Niger are already showing this desire to offer better protection to HRDs by engaging in the process of drafting a protection law. The State of Côte d'Ivoire has shown the example by adopting a protection law and issuing its implementing decree. This now allows for a gradual and effective implementation of the said law.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

76. Thirteen years after the establishment of the Mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa, many things have been achieved. But challenges persist. Already, having been charged with reprisal issues, in as much as this new responsibility bears testimony to the dynamism of the Mechanism and the stronger commitment of human rights defenders, it is also a reminder of the obstacles which impede the full enjoyment of human rights by all Africans.

77. Whilst the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights is celebrating thirty years of its operations (Nov1987-Nov2017), the review of the implementation of the mandate becomes all the more important in the light of the institution’s performance.

78. Indeed, the contents and conclusions of the 25 previous intersession reports produced by the Special Rapporteur to date at the African Commission bear testimony to the unflinching dynamism and determination of the African Commission to promote and protect the human rights of all African without any compromises.

79. In this same vein, the Mechanism attempted with more or less success to fulfill the mandate entrusted to it. In spite of the challenges encountered and the achievements recorded by the Mechanism, it can be said that the balance sheet has been more or less satisfactory. Thus, the Special Rapporteur has noted that:

- By their work and determination, the human rights defenders have over the last thirty years, had a tangible and very positive impact on the work of the African Commission. While being indispensable partners as a result of the expertise they bring to bear to the Commission, they are the first beneficiaries of the Commission’s actions and particularly the Mechanism’s actions;
- The Mechanism is an important tool at the service of human rights defenders in Africa;
- A great amount of progress has been achieved thanks to the field work and community-based actions taken by the Mechanism since its establishment in 2004.

80. In this regard, in an attempt to preserve the gains of protecting human rights defenders in particular, and human rights in general, the Special Rapporteur would like to make the following recommendations to both the State Parties and the various stakeholders involved in the promotion and protection of human and the rights of human rights defenders on the continent:
To the African Union and other regional and sub-regional organizations:

- Recognize the important role played by human rights defenders towards the improvement of human rights, democracy, the Rule of Law and sustainable development in Africa and encourage the States Parties to the African Charter of Human and Peoples’ Rights and the African Union organs to carry out awareness-raising campaigns on the fundamental role played by human rights defenders.

- Create spaces for dialogue among the States, human rights defenders and other major stakeholders on the challenges, good practices and progress concerning the protection of human rights defenders.

- Encourage and support total collaboration among the national, regional and international human rights mechanisms and to refrain from undue interference in the work of these mechanisms.

- Undertake to improve the political environment for the work of human rights defenders by enhancing the opportunities for their effective participation in the development of regional policies and the decision-making processes, and by providing access to information in a timely and accessible manner.

To the States Parties:

- Implement the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and all the relevant human rights protection instruments, in particular by taking measures to incorporate it into the legal, legislative or regulatory framework;

- Maintain permanent and constructive dialogue with the Mechanism especially by following up on the requests for promotion visits and by responding at the earliest possible time to the recommendations made in the Communications, Statements and other press releases;

- Undertake dialogue and consultation with the human rights defenders, and recognize them publicly and support their advocacy and information campaigns.

- Improve the socio-political environment in order to facilitate the work of human rights defenders who are ultimately their indispensable partners in promoting and protecting human rights;

- Abrogate the punitive and restrictive laws and do away with policies and practices that jeopardize the rights to freedom of association and assembly; laws which stigmatize and discriminate against some categories of human
rights defenders based on their sex, their state of health, gender and other statuses.

- Adopt laws that are more compatible with the unfettered exercise of the right to the freedom of association and assembly;

- Refrain from any forms of reprisals against those who collaborate with the African human rights protection system. Such reprisals, as a matter of course, have a negative impact on the work of the Commission to the extent that the latter will be unable to gain any positive contributions from human rights defenders, where necessary.

- Adopt effective measures to prevent violations of the rights of human rights defenders, and where necessary, award damages for the harm suffered by the latter and refrain from criminalizing or taking any other destructive measures against these defenders, including reprisals and restrictions.

- Ensure that these responses to terrorism are effective but do not bring about excessive restrictions to the civil society space and that they are done in accordance with the Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Terrorism in Africa.

To the National Human Rights Institutions:

- Utilize their promotion and protection mandates effectively to hold the States to account regarding violations perpetrated against human rights defenders and intervene in the interest of those who may fall victim to human rights violations.

- Establish focal points on human rights defenders and ensure that they have adequate resources and collaborate actively with all human rights defenders

- Give special attention to human rights defenders facing increased risks.

To Human Rights Defenders:

- Continue with and encourage the capacity building initiatives, particularly through seminars, joint actions with the Mechanism and establish networks to disseminate the best protection strategies of their rights;

- Conform to the ethics and the professional standards of human rights defenders;
Pursue the constructive dialogue with the States for the improvement of their working environment, particularly through their involvement in the legal reform processes in respect of rights and freedoms;

Continue with the collaboration with national, regional and UN human rights protection mechanisms in order to prevent and address human rights violations committed against human rights defenders.

Establish and strengthen the national and regional human rights defenders networks as a means of promoting intersectoral collaboration and approaches which pave the way for the establishment of alliances with different groups such as women, the youth and human rights activists working on issues such as HIV, sexual orientation, the right to reproductive health, among others.

Develop innovative systems to involve the general public, all government sectors and other opinion leaders, including the media in the work of human rights defenders.

To the media, religious, traditional and local community leaders:

Commit themselves to dialogue with all the human rights defenders and support their efforts to advance the course of human rights, the Rule of Law, social change and development.

Refrain from incitement to hatred against human rights defenders or against civil society organizations and promote reporting and responsible information which advance the work of human rights defenders.

The traditional, religious and local community leaders should contribute to the elimination of any impediments to the work of human rights defenders and civil society organizations. They must, in particular, promote access by human rights defenders to the communities and should prevent negative practices which are the source of discrimination against women human rights defenders working in specific thematic areas and with all people, particularly stigmatized people such as sex workers, people being discriminated against as a result of their sexual orientation and persons living with HIV.
ANNEXES

PUBLICATIONS OF THE MECHANISM

- The RAPPORTEUR’S Letter (continuous)
- The Situation of Women Human Rights Defenders in Africa (2014)
- Principles and Guidelines on Human and Peoples’ Rights while Countering Terrorism in Africa (2015)

PRESS RELEASES

- Press Release on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Democratic Republic of Congo issued on 29 June, 2017
- Joint Communiqué with the Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa concerning the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Freedom of Expression and Assembly in Burundi issued on 2 May, 2015
- Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in Africa issued on 27 May, 2015
- Press Release on the Assassination Attempt on Mr. Pierre-Claver Mbonimpa issued on 5 August, 2015
- Press Release on the Arrest and Detention of Human Rights Defenders in Egypt issued on 27 June, 2014
- Press Release by the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa on the sentencing of 25 Egyptian Activists on 11 June, 2014 by a Cairo Tribunal in Egypt issued on 30 June, 2014
- Press Release on the Closure of the Salmmah Women’s Center Organization in Khartoum, Sudan, issued on 4 July, 2014


Press Release on the Abduction of Human Rights Defenders, Female Mediators Riziki and Angélique Navura in the Democratic Republic of Congo, issued on 13 August, 2014


A Press Release on the Draft Bill on Associations and the Press Act in Kenya, issued on 5 December, 2013

RESOLUTIONS

376: Resolution on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Africa-ACHPR/Res. 376 (LX) 2017
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/60th/resolutions/376/

http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/19th-eo/resolutions/336/

315: Resolution on the Renewal of the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/57th/resolutions/315/
274: Resolution on the Drafting of Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/55th/resolutions/274/

273: Resolution on Extending the Scope of the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/55th/resolutions/273/

248: Resolution on the Renewal of the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/54th/resolutions/248/

230: Resolution on the need for a study on women human rights defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/52nd/resolutions/230/

229: Resolution on the extension of the deadline for the study on freedom of association in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/52nd/resolutions/229/

202: Resolution on the Appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/50th/resolutions/202/

171: Resolution on the Appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/48th/resolutions/171/

149: Resolution on Appointing a Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/46th/resolutions/149/

125: Resolution on the Renewal of the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/42nd/resolutions/125/

119: Resolution on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/42nd/resolutions/119/

83: Resolution on Appointing the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/38th/resolutions/83/

69: Resolution on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in Africa  
http://www.achpr.org/fr/sessions/35th/resolutions/69/
PROMOTION MISSIONS

- Democratic Republic of Congo (2),
- Togo (3),
- Mauritania (2),
- Tunisia (2),
- Cameroon (2),
- Sudan (1),
- Libya (1),
- Senegal (1),
- Algeria (1),
- Western Sahara (1),
- Uganda (1),
- Cabo Verde (1)

FACT-FINDING MISSIONS

- Mali
- Burundi

JOINT PROMOTION MISSIONS WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR (SR)

- Togo (2008)
- Tunisia (2012)

PARTNERS OF THE MECHANISM

- International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
- Frontline - International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
- Open Society for West Africa (OSIWA)
- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
- World Organization against Torture (OMCT)
- African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS),
- Associação Justiça, Paz e Democracia (AJPD)
- East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)
- Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA)
- West African Human Rights Defenders Network (ROADDH/WAHRDN)
- Human Rights Defenders Network of Central Africa (REDHAC)
- Amnesty International
## Number of Communications issued by the mandate per country 2015-2017

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