62\textsuperscript{nd} Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

Inter-session Activity Report

By

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Chairperson of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

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Introduction
This report is presented in accordance with Rules 23(3) and 72 of the Rules of Procedure of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (the Commission). It provides an update of the activities carried out since the 61st Ordinary Session held from 1st to 15 November, 2017, in Banjul, The Gambia, in my capacity as Chairperson and Member of the African Commission.

Part 1: Activities undertaken as Chairperson of the African Commission

I. Coordination of Activities at the Commission and Supervision of Work at the Secretariat

2- In accordance with Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, I coordinated promotion and protection activities of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (the Commission) and supervised the work at the Secretariat during the period under review. In this regard, the necessary guidance was provided on various issues.

II. Participation in Meetings of Policy Organs of the African Union from 26 June- 4 July, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia

3- A delegation of the African Commission, which included my good self, Commissioner Lawrence Murugu Mute, Vice Chairperson of the Commission; Commissioner Maya Sahli-Fadel; Commissioner Solomon Ayele Dersso, took part in the 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) held from 22 to 29 January, 2018 in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia. The delegation was assisted by members of staff from the Secretariat.

4- During the Summit, I took part in the 35th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives’ Committee (PRC) held from 22 to 23 January, 2018; the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Executive Council (EC) held from 25-26 January, 2018; the 30th Ordinary Session of the

5- During the Ordinary Session of the PRC, I presented the 43rd Activity Report of the Commission, followed by extensive debate during which some States Parties expressed serious concerns about the Commission’s failure to implement the EC’s Decisions. Other questions relating to country/situations on allegations of human rights abuses were clarified by us.

6- The debate opened on the Report before the EC touched on the timeliness and legitimacy or not to establish a Working Group open to States at the level of the PRC, as suggested by a Group of States whose mandate would have been to exercise control over the work of the Commission, its Rules of Procedure, code of conduct of Commissioners, etc. This proposal was not accepted by the EC, which however, recommended that a retreat be held, within the shortest possible time, between the Commission and the PRC, with the aim of reaching and developing a better understanding of their respective roles and mandates.

After considering the draft PRC Decision and discussions between the members, the EC adopted the 43rd Activity Report by Decision No. EX.CL/Dec.995(XXXII).

III. Participation in parallel meetings and side events organised on the margins of the AU Summit

A. Third Meeting of the Steering Committee on PANAF, 21 January, 2018, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia

7- I took part in and presided over the Third Meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) on PANAF held on 21 January, 2018 in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting was attended by representatives of the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), the PAP, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the EU delegation, PANAF Focal
Points, other AU Staff, Key Experts and Observers. During the meeting, every Organ had, among others, the opportunity to present the progress made as part of their project implementation.

B. Meeting between the Commission and Mr. Mahamane Cissé Gouro, Chief of Africa Branch, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 26 January 2018 in Addis-Ababa

8- Accompanied by the Vice Chairperson and Commissioner Maya Sahli-Fadel, we held a meeting with the Chief of the Africa Branch of OHCHR, Mr Mahamane Cissé Gouro. We held discussions particularly on the implementation of the Addis-Ababa Road Map as well as on follow-up of the Consultative Meeting on Human Rights in Conflict Situations held in Banjul and the way forward.


9- I took part in the Tenth Meeting of the Bureaux of the Court and the Commission held on 27 January, 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

10- The points discussed during the meeting included, among others, the state of implementation of decisions adopted at the 9th Meeting of Bureaux and the 6th Annual Joint Meeting; the preparation and the modalities for the organization of the Seventh (7th) Annual Joint Meeting of the Court and the Commission; update of the joint activities; the Ten-Year human rights action plan; and the two organs’ interaction with the African Governance Architecture (AGA).

11- As part of the celebrations to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), I participated as a moderator in the High-Level Consultation on the ratification of the Maputo Protocol organised on 29 January, 2018 by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (HCHR), through its East Africa regional Bureau.

12- This commemoration was organized under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Ghana and Chairperson of the African Union Committee on Gender and Development, H.E. Nana Akufo-Addo. This consultation was also attended by other high-ranking authorities including the Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union, various Ambassadors accredited to the African Union, representatives of African Union Organs in charge of human rights and representatives of specialized UN agencies.

E. Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and La Francophonie, 29 January 2018, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia

13- On the margins of the 30th Summit of the African Union, I signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights on 29 January 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. La Francophonie was represented on that occasion by Mr. Boubacar ISSA ABDOURHAMANE, Permanent Representative of La Francophonie to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.
14- It should be noted that this cooperation falls within the context of revitalization of the partnership between the African Union and la Francophonie and the purpose is to forge ties between the OIF and ACHPR in areas of common interest, with specific reference to the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

F. Meeting with the Deputy-Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC),
   31 January 2018, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia

15- After the Summit, we had an interactive session with the Deputy-Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), His Excellency Kwesi Quartey, as part of meetings he organised with the delegations of all the AU Organs present in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting with the Commission provided an opportunity for me to present the challenges confronting the Commission in the discharge of its human rights promotion and protection mandate, in particular, with regard to staffing constraints at the ACHPR Secretariat faced by these different personalities. The concerns expressed were contained in a correspondence No.ACHPR/CHAIR/AUC/622/18, dated 3 April 2018 addressed to the Deputy-Chairperson of the AUC for measures to be taken.

IV. Participation in other meetings and activities

A. Participation in the 23rd Extraordinary Session of the Commission
   13-22 February, 2018, Banjul, The Gambia

16- I presided over the 23rd Extraordinary Session of the Commission held from 13-22 February, 2018, Banjul, The Gambia. During the session, the Commission considered and adopted, in particular, Decisions on Communications, Concluding Observations on States’ Periodic Reports
on the implementation of the African Charter and the Maputo Protocol, the report on promotion missions and the continuation of the review of its Rules of Procedure. During this Session, the Commission held discussions with the African Union Commission (AUC) team on the project dubbed “Study on Policy Coherence at the AUC”.

B. Participation in meetings prior to and on the margins of the 62nd Ordinary Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
8 - 14 March, 2018, New York, United States of America

17- In lieu of and at the request of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa, Commissioner, Lucy Asuagbor, who could not attend, I took part in meetings and parallel events organised by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences, Dr. Dubravka Šimonović and UN-Women, on the margins of the 62nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held from 12 to 23 March, 2018 in New York, USA. It included, in particular the meeting of the Group of Experts on Violence against Women in Politics (8 to 9 March, 2018), the Consultation and Strengthening of Cooperation among the UN and Regional Human Rights Mechanisms (12 March 2018); the high-level panel on strengthening of cooperation between UN and Regional Mechanisms in charge of violence and discrimination against women (13 March, 2018), the side event on the theme “Combating Violence against Women in Politics” (13 March, 2018) and the high-level side event on essential services for women and girl victims of violence (14 March, 2018).

18- During these meetings and events, I made presentations on the role of the Commission in the fight against violence perpetrated against women and made recommendations for the effective promotion and protection of human rights on the continent and beyond.

19- I also participated in the meeting between the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. António Guterres with heads of mechanisms in charge of women’s rights, held on 13 March, 2018.

20- I took part in the joint dialogue between the African Commission, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IAHRC) and the United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms, organised by the CIDH. The dialogue provided the platform to discuss issues relating to sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex issues and other human rights issues of common interest. The objectives of the dialogue were mainly to identify the challenges, share good practices and develop strategies and areas of collaboration with a view to eradicating violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

D. Meeting with the Chairperson of PANAF, 3 April 2018, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia.

21- I participated in the meeting between the African Commission and the PANAF Bureau organised on 3 April, 2018 as part of the implementation of the Executive Council Decision adopted at the 32nd Ordinary Session on the 43rd Activity Report of the African Commission (DOC. EX.CL/995(XXXII), which urgently requests the holding of a joint retreat between the Permanent Representatives Committee and the ACHPR to resolve different concerns expressed on the relations between the ACHPR and the Policy Organs and Member States in order to find modalities for improving coordination and collaboration with the Policy Organs and the Member States.

E. 2nd Regional Workshop on the ACHPR Campaign on Decriminalisation of Abortion in Africa 10 - 11 April, 2018, Nairobi, Kenya

22- I participated in the second regional workshop on the Campaign by the African Commission on Decriminalisation of Abortion in Africa, organised by IPAS. This workshop brought together the African Commission, members of the African Coalition on Safe Abortion, the
African Union Commission, members of the Pan-African Health Committee, National Human Rights Institutions and the Africa Region. The purpose of the workshop was mainly to enable stakeholders to consider the progress made and the challenges faced in the implementation of the campaign. The workshop also provided the opportunity for the sharing of experiences and developing better advocacy strategies for the campaign.

F. Participation in the International Conference on Human Rights Protection as a Factor for Peace Consolidation in West Africa

19-23 April 2018, Bamako, Mali.

23- At the invitation of the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice, I participated in the International Conference on Human Rights Protection as a factor for the consolidation of peace in West Africa. I made a presentation at this conference on human rights protection and consolidation of peace in West Africa. During the conference, I addressed issues relating mainly to the mandate of the ECOWAS Court of Justice in the area of human rights as a means for the establishment of peace, economic integration and human rights protection by Regional Courts, and I provided a brief comparative analysis of the regional and sub-regional human rights protection systems and the collaboration between the African Commission and the ECOWAS Court of Justice.