

## Communique on the 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

1. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child finalized its 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session which was held virtually from 21 March to 01 April 2022.
2. The Session was attended by Representatives of children, Representatives of Member States, Representatives of UN Agencies, and Representatives of Civil Society Organizations.
3. The Opening Ceremony of the Session had remarks from:
  - Representative of children, child Maitre Alamin Ahmed;
  - Representative of the CSO forum, Mrs. Felistus Motimedi;
  - Representative of UN Agencies, Dr. Edward Adda, UNICEF representative to the AU on behalf of the UN Community,
  - Executive Director of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), Mr. Gilbert Sebihogo;
  - President of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, Hon. Justice Imani Aboud;
  - Chairperson of the PRC Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Democracy and Governance, H.E. Ambassador Taonga Mushayavanhu,
  - Director of the Department of Health, Humanitarian and Social Affairs, Mrs. Mariama Cissé, on behalf of the Commissioner of the Department, H.E. Amb Minata Samaté Cessouma; and
  - Chairperson of the Committee, Hon Joseph Ndayisenga.
4. During its seating for the 38<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session, the Committee adopted various decisions as highlighted below:
5. The Committee considered:
  - The first periodic report of the State of Eritrea;
  - The first periodic report of the Republic of Uganda; and
  - The initial report of the Republic of Seychelles.
6. The Committee considered and made rulings and decisions on the below Communications:
  - i. Communication No: 0016/Com/004/2020 in the matter between African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) on behalf of Ms. Umjumah Osman Mohamed against the Republic of the Sudan;

- ii. Communication No: 0012/Com/001/2019 in the matter between Legal and Human Rights Centre and Centre for Reproductive Rights (on behalf of Tanzanian girls) against the United Republic of Tanzania;
  - iii. Communication No: 0013/Com/001/2020 in the matter between APDF and IHRDA on behalf of AS a minor against the Republic of Mali;
  - iv. Communication No: 0015/Com/003/2020- Abbas Mohamed AL-Nour Musa Al-Emam, Modathir Alrayah Mohamed Badawi, and Fadul Almoula Aljaili Nourallah, by The Legal representatives (a group of lawyers): Taha Fadul, Nisreen Mustafa, Somia Shampaty and Nawras Elfatih against the Sudan;
  - v. Communication No :0018/Com/002/2021 on behalf of Fadimatou Mohamadou & 9 others against the Republic of Cameroon;
  - vi. Communication No. 004/Com/001/2014 concerning the Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa against the Republic of Malawi; and
  - vii. Communication No 0017/Com/001/2021 submitted by Child Rights and Rehabilitation Network, Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa and Center for Human Rights (On Behalf of Children Affected by Witchcraft Accusations in Nigeria) v Federal Republic of Nigeria.
7. The Committee considered and adopted as amended the following documents:
    - The Continental Study the Status of Teenage Pregnancies in Africa; and
    - Guidelines on Safe Return to Schools After/During the Covid-19 Pandemic.
  8. Furthermore, the Committee decided to Develop Guidelines on Violence Against Children.
  9. Moreover, the Committee Endorsed the Child Friendly Version of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which is developed by Save the Children and Plan International.
  10. The Committee considered and adopted as amended Resolutions developed by its various Working Groups namely:
    - Resolution no 16/2022 on the Implementation of Decisions and Recommendations of the Committee;
    - Resolution no 17/2022 on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights in the Digital Sphere in Africa;
    - Resolution no 18/2022 on Integrating a Child Rights-Based Approach to Climate Change Responses; and
    - Resolution no 19/2022 on the Situation of Children with Albinism in Africa
  11. The Committee decided to undertake fact finding missions through its Working Groups in the following manner:
    - Fact finding by the Working Group on Children's Rights and Business to Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Guinea and the Republic of Benin;
    - Fact finding by the Working Group on Climate Change to the Republic of Angola and the Central African Republic.
    - Fact finding by the Working Group on Children with Disabilities to the Republic of Malawi and the Republic of Burundi; and

- Fact finding by Working Group on Implementation of Decisions to Cameroon and Senegal to follow-up the implementation of the decision of the Committee on its Communications Procedure.
12. The Committee granted an Affiliate Status to the National Human Rights Commission of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia after evaluating its application documents.
13. The Committee identified thematic areas and provisions of the Charter on which it will develop General Comments namely;
- The Right to Adequate Nutrition of Children on article 14(2)(c) of the Charter; and
  - The Right to Education of Children on article 11 of the Charter.
14. The Committee also identified themes for Days of General Discussions to be held in the upcoming Sessions of the Committee. The themes are:
- Children's rights in the digital world;
  - The Rights of Children with Disabilities; and
  - Early Childhood Development and Investment in Early Years.
15. The Committee adopted as amended the report of the 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session.
16. The Committee decided to hold its upcoming Session on 10-21 October 2022.

**Done virtually at the 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session on 01 April 2022.**