

AUC Chair appoints Special Envoy on Children Affected by Armed Conflict:

Ambassador Jainaba Jagne becomes the first AUC Special Envoy on CAAC.

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ACERWC-IHRDA partnership for Legal Justice :

Building an effective ACERWC and advancing jurisprudence in Africa.

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#AUSummit elects members for 5 years term:

Seven members were elected by the Executive Council: 3 new members and 4 re-elected for a last term.

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ACERWC Tribune

Volume V - Issue: 001 April. 2026

DAY OF THE
16 JUNE
AFRICAN
CHILD

Ensuring universal access to

water,
sanitation,
hygiene

for every child in Africa

#DAC 2026: PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST IN AFRICA'S WASH AGENDA

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The Day of the African Child (DAC) 2026 is being commemorated at a time when water and sanitation have been elevated as a continental priority. The African Union has declared the **Theme of the Year 2026** as **"Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063"**, reflecting growing recognition that water security and safe sanitation are fundamental to Africa's sustainable development, resilience and social transformation. In alignment with this continental priority, and recognising the central importance of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) to children's survival, development and well-being, the African Committee of Experts on

the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) adopted the **theme for DAC 2026: "Ensuring universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene for every child in Africa"**.

The theme highlights that access to WASH services is not only a development concern but a fundamental children's rights obligation under the ACRWC. Ensuring universal access to WASH is essential to address disparities affecting vulnerable and marginalised children, including girls, children with disabilities, children living in poverty, and those in rural, conflict-affected or climate-vulnerable contexts. It also reflects the indivisibility and interdependence of children's rights, as access to WASH is directly linked

to the enjoyment of a wide range of substantive rights and many contexts. Available, accessible, safe, affordable, acceptable and quality WASH services underpin the right to health by preventing waterborne diseases and reducing child mortality; the right to nutrition through improved food security and hygiene; and the right to education by improving school attendance, retention and learning outcomes, particularly for girls. Adequate sanitation and closer access to water also contribute to protecting children from violence, abuse and exploitation, ensure accessibility for children with disabilities, and remain critical for children in humanitarian settings such as displaced and migrant children, and children affected by conflict, emergencies or climate-related crises or in conflict with the law, including those in police

custody, remand homes, or detention facilities.

By placing children at the centre of the broader continental agenda on water, DAC 2026 calls for renewed commitment by Member States, development partners and stakeholders to accelerate progress towards universal, equitable and child-responsive WASH systems. This requires integrated, adequately resourced and climate-resilient policies, alongside the meaningful participation of children in planning and monitoring services that affect them. Ensuring safe water, sanitation and hygiene for every child is essential not only for protecting children's rights today but also for securing Africa's sustainable future. ■

Advancing Intergenerational Solidarity, Inclusive Governance, Sustainable Peace, and Security in Africa: for an Africa fit for children

Dear Children and Stakeholders...

It is with great honour and responsibility that I address you for the first time as Chair of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC). The theme I wish to set out in this editorial is intergenerational solidarity and its relationship to governance, peace, and security, a theme I believe must guide our work in the years ahead.

Protecting children's rights demands policies that look beyond the present. Governments are often constrained by short political cycles; children are not. What we do today shapes the continent they will inherit. Intergenerational solidarity places children at the centre of governance: not only as rights-holders deserving protection now, but also as future custodians of Africa's development.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child provides the normative foundation establishing binding obligations to protect children and uphold their best interests in all decisions affecting them, while also mandating the Committee to hold states accountable and

foster child-sensitive governance. This vision aligns with our continental ambitions. Africa's Agenda for Children 2040 calls for an Africa where every child survives, thrives, and participates. Agenda 2063 places children and youth at the heart of "The Africa We Want," recognising that investing in children today is the most direct path to inclusive governance, sustainable peace, and resilient institutions tomorrow.

Integrating children's rights into governance, peace, and security frameworks is particularly crucial in the African context, where conflict, displacement, violent extremism, and political instability continue to affect millions of children. Policies that adopt an intergenerational perspective emphasize prevention by strengthening social protection systems, inclusive education, community participation, and child protection mechanisms. These investments help address root causes of instability, including inequality, marginalization, and weak governance structures.

Achieving the aspirations of our Agendas for children requires a generational compact - a shared commitment by governments, institutions, and communities- to ensure that today's

policies safeguard the rights and dignity of Africa's children, and thereby secure the continent's peaceful and prosperous future.

As I begin my tenure, I am guided by one conviction: this Committee must listen to children, speak for children, and hold states to account on their behalf. I look forward to working with the Committee, the Secretariat, State Parties, NHRIs, and civil society in that pursuit. The Africa our frameworks envision is within reach, if we honour our commitment to the generation that will inherit it. ■

STRUCTURE OF THE BUREAU 2025 -2027



Hon. Sabrina Gahar
Chairperson of the ACERWC



Hon. Ghislain ETSAN
Vice-Chairperson of the ACERWC



Hon. Poloko Ntshwarang
Rapporteur of the ACERWC

ECHOES OF THE ACERWC PARTICIPATION AT THE AU SUMMIT

The February 2026 African Union Summit, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, provided an opportunity for the ACERWC delegation, led by its Chairperson, Hon. Sabrina Gahar, to carry out several activities aimed at strengthening the promotion and protection of children's rights on the continent. One of the highlights of this participation was the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Pan-African Parliament. This agreement aims to strengthen cooperation between the two organs of the African Union in order to promote greater consideration of children's rights in legislative processes and public policies in Africa. In particular, it should promote parliamentary advocacy for the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and encourage the harmonization of national legal frameworks related to child protection.

On the sidelines of the Summit, statutory meetings were also held at the technical and political levels of the AGA-APSA Platform, whose Committee's term as the President was coming to an end. These meetings

provided an opportunity to take stock of the two-year chairmanship, which helped strengthen the integration of children's rights into discussions on governance, democracy, and human rights in Africa and promote a more cross-cutting approach to child protection within continental governance mechanisms, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms.

The Committee also held several bilateral meetings and strategic consultations. An important meeting took place with H.E. Ambassador Édouard Bizimana, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Integration, and Development Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi, who will chair the Executive Council of the African Union for the year 2026. Discussions focused on the need to make children's rights a priority of this presidency and to strengthen the attention given to child protection issues on their agenda.

The ACERWC also held discussions with H.E. Sofiane CHAIB, Algeria Secretary of State to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in charge of the National Community Abroad, to strengthen cooperation and promote the



effective implementation of the ACRWC. A working meeting was held with the UNICEF Liaison Office to the African Union, providing an opportunity to explore new opportunities for collaboration in the areas of advocacy and monitoring the implementation of the Charter in States Parties with the support of UNICEF country offices. Finally, the Committee met with the new African Union Special Envoy on Children Affected by Armed Conflict to identify avenues for cooperation aimed at strengthening the protection of children in conflict situations.

Through these various initiatives, the ACERWC reaffirms its commitment to using all available platforms to promote and protect children's rights in Africa. ■

Reflections on ACERWC's Work in 2025

Dr. Ayalew Getachew Assefa
Executive Secretary Ag. ACERWC Secretariat



The year 2025 marked by significant milestones in advancing the rights and welfare of African children.

Throughout this period, our collective efforts have been guided by the vision of an Africa fit for its children, and I am pleased to report tangible progress alongside persistent challenges that we continue to address together.

In 2025, the ACERWC convened its 45th and 46th Ordinary Sessions, bringing together Member States, AU organs, civil society organizations, National Human Rights Institutions, and, most importantly, children themselves. These sessions provided crucial platforms for dialogue, technical guidance, and strategic planning. We commemorated the 35th Anniversary of the African Charter, under the theme “*Reflect – Renew – Recommit*,” fostering continental reflection on achievements, emerging challenges, and priorities for the next decades.

The Committee advanced its standard setting mandate by finalizing and adopting two General Comments: on Article 11 of the Charter (Right to Education) and on Article 25 (Children Without Parental Care). The AU Child Safeguarding Policy, adopted in 2025, reflects the Committee’s commitment to promoting child protection standards across AU structures.

State Party reporting showed an

encouraging trend, with submissions from Burundi, Eritrea, Egypt, The Gambia, Kenya, and Mauritania. Nevertheless, challenges persist, including delays, lack of consultation with children and non-state actors, and limited implementation of recommendations. To address these, the Committee organized bilateral engagements, launched the Targeted Reporting Mechanism, and convened a State Party Forum on Reporting to advocate for timely and effective reporting. I am happy to report that we are currently piloting of the Targeted Reporting Mechanism, designed to ease reporting burdens and improve compliance.

As part of its monitoring work, the Committee conducted a follow-up mission to Burundi to assess implementation of its 2018 Concluding Observations. Demonstrating the Committee’s commitment to accountability, compliance, and evidence-based recommendations, a fact-finding mission to Nigeria has also been conducted in the context of Communication No: 0017/Com/001/2021 concerning alleged systematic violations of the rights and welfare of children accused of witchcraft. The Mission was a success as the Committee engaged both federal and state authorities, civil society, UN agencies, and children.

The Committee celebrated the 2025 Day

of the African Child (DAC) in Lilongwe, Malawi, under the theme “Planning and Budgeting for Children’s Rights: Progress Since 2010,” bringing together over 250 participants—including more than 100 children—who actively contributed to discussions and developed an Outcome Statement highlighting recommendations for governments, AU organs, and civil society. Equally important, the Committee conducted a careful evaluation of its Strategic Plan (2021-2025) and, drawing on lessons learned for the development of its Strategic Plan 2026-2028.

These activities collectively reinforced the Committee’s mandate to advance children’s rights, promote child participation, and strengthen regional and continental partnerships in Africa. I am confident that, together with States, children and partners organizations, we can continue to translate normative commitments into measurable outcomes for African children.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our partners—Member States, AU organs, civil society, development partners, and children themselves—for your unwavering collaboration and commitment ■

AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS YEAR BOOK: ADVANCING SCHOLARSHIP AND DIALOGUE WITHIN THE AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM

The African Human Rights Yearbook (AHRY) is an important platform for reflection and scholarly engagement on the African human rights system. It is published annually by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR), and the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights (AfCHPR). The AHRY features articles and case commentaries analysing developments in normative standards, jurisprudence, and the evolving challenges of human rights implementation.

Each year, the AHRY invites submissions in three categories, (i) articles on aspects of the African human rights system; (ii) articles engaging with the African Union’s (AU) theme of the year; and (iii) case commentaries analysing the jurisprudence of the ACERWC,

ACHPR, or AfCHPR. The most recent edition, [Volume 9 of the African Human Rights Yearbook](#), featured 30 peer-reviewed articles that reflect the diversity of current scholarship and, indeed, the sustained academic engagement the AHRY has fostered since its [first volume in 2017](#).

The ACERWC, AfCHPR, and ACHPR have jointly issued a [Call for Papers for Volume 10 \(2026\)](#). Academics and practitioners are invited to submit articles and case commentaries by 31 July 2026. Submissions are also encouraged to engage with the [African Union’s 2026 theme](#), to which the ACERWC has aligned the theme of the [2026 Day of the African Child](#), offering an opportunity to explore the intersections between water, sanitation and hygiene, children’s rights, and the role of the African human rights system in advancing these critical priorities ■

AUC CHAIR APPOINTS SPECIAL ENVOY FOR CAAC



The ACERWC welcomes the appointment of H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne as the AU Special Envoy for CAAC. This appointment is particularly timely in light of the ongoing

conflicts across several African countries and their adverse impacts on children’s rights and welfare. Effective continental coordination and leadership therefore remain critical in advancing sustained protection efforts for children in conflict situations.

The mandate of the Special Envoy aligns closely with the objectives of the ACERWC and Aspiration 9 of Agenda 2040. In this regard, enhanced advocacy, improved coordination among AU organs and Member States, and strengthened accountability mechanisms are essential to safeguarding the rights and welfare of children affected by armed conflict.

The ACERWC, through its Special Rapporteur on Children in Conflict Situations looks forward to working closely with the Special Envoy in advancing the protection of children affected by armed conflict in Africa ■

ADVANCING THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL & PSYCHO-SOCIAL DISABILITIES

In a bid to strengthen the protection and promotion of the rights of Africa's most vulnerable children, the Working Group on Children with Disabilities of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) developed and adopted a Resolution No. 41/2025 on the Protection, Promotion, and Fulfilment of the Rights of Children with Intellectual and Psychosocial Disabilities, which was adopted by the ACERWC during its 46th Ordinary Session.

The Resolution emerged from a panel discussion held during the Child Rights Symposium commemorating the 35th Anniversary of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which spotlighted the plight of these children and called for action to improve the protection of their rights. The panel highlighted the plight of children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities and called for urgent action to improve the protection of their rights. While the Charter explicitly mentions mental disability under Article 13, children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities

continue to endure unique forms of abuse, including forced sterilization, institutionalization, profound stigma, and societal marginalization often stemming from limited understanding of the nature of their impairments.

Building on the momentum and recommendations from the 35th-anniversary panel, Resolution 41/2025 presents a targeted effort to address the unique and often compounded challenges faced by children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. The resolution explicitly acknowledges that general measures for children with disabilities are frequently inadequate to meet the specific needs of children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities considering practices that disproportionately affect them such as institutionalization and denial of legal capacity. The Resolution calls for legal reform to explicitly prohibit discrimination and recognize the decision-making capacity of these children by establishing supported decision-making regimes that ensure their participation based on their evolving capacity. It calls States

to eliminate institutionalizing based on disability, ensure the inclusion of children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in child participation and decision-making platforms, provide inclusive education, and disability friendly health services including preventing non-consensual medical interventions such as forced sterilization.

The resolution further calls upon a wide range of stakeholders, including National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), and the media, to intensify advocacy, strengthen the capacity of parents and self-advocates, and ensure a specific focus on intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in all programmes and projects.

The adoption of Resolution 41/2025 translates the dialogue at the 35th-anniversary symposium into a concrete, actionable framework to ensure the rights, dignity and participation of children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities across Africa. ■

ACERWC SUBMITS LANDMARK OBSERVATIONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE TO THE AFRICAN COURT

On 27 January 2026, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) submitted its formal observations to the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR) in the ongoing proceedings on Advisory Opinion No. 001/2025; a submission that marks a significant moment in the intersection of child rights and climate justice on the continent.

The advisory opinion proceedings were initiated on 2 May 2025, when the Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU), together with a coalition of civil society organisations, including the African Climate Platform, Natural Justice, Resilient40, and the Environmental Lawyers Collective for Africa, petitioned the AfCHPR to clarify the human rights obligations of African Union Member States in the context of the climate crisis. The petition invites the Court to interpret key regional instruments;

including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Maputo Protocol, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), as they relate to climate change.

The ACERWC's observations were developed under the leadership of its Working Group on Children's Rights and Climate Change, established in 2020, and offer a comprehensive child rights analysis of state obligations in the face of the climate emergency. Notably, the submission frames the climate crisis explicitly as an African Child Rights Crisis, a framing that centres the disproportionate burden borne by children across the continent, and outlines concrete measures that Member States must adopt in fulfilment of their obligations under the ACRWC and complementary international and regional treaties.

The upcoming Advisory Opinion carries particular weight in the broader global climate accountability and litigation landscape. It forms part of an unprecedented wave of parallel advisory opinion proceedings before international courts, following opinions already issued by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (2024) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (2025), with the International Court of Justice having rendered its own opinion in July 2025.

When issued, the AfCHPR's advisory opinion, informed in part by the ACERWC's child-rights based analysis, is expected to set a normative standard for how African states must integrate children's rights into their climate governance frameworks, strengthening accountability across the continent. ■

ADDRESSING REPARATIONS TO CLOSE THE GAP ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

An important milestone in strengthening the implementation of the ACERWC decisions and recommendations has been the adoption of the Guidelines on Reparations, which development was led by the Working Group on Implementation of Decisions and Recommendations and adopted during the Committee's 45th Ordinary Session.

The ACERWC recognizes that its decisions arising from communications could result in better implementation of the rights enshrined in the Charter if it provides adequate reparations for the harm suffered. A victim-oriented approach that removes or redresses the consequences of the wrongful acts or prevents and deters violations is key to the full realization of children's rights.

In this regard, reparations are central to ensuring effective remedies for child victims and to achieving a final result that effectively addresses and rectifies the

violations. The Guidelines on Reparations seek to ensure that reparative measures are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART), thereby easier for States to understand, implement and report on, and thus strengthening both implementation and follow-up. They further provide guidance to applicants to substantiate their claims with sufficient and credible evidence clearly demonstrating the link between the harm suffered and the State's failure to fulfil its obligations under the ACERWC to strengthen the success of the claim.

By clarifying the forms of reparations and the criteria for their determination, the Committee seeks to ensure more child-centered, victim-oriented, adequate, comprehensive and measurable reparations in its decisions, while also bridging the gap between decisions and their effective implementation on the ground. ■

ENSURING ACCESS TO REMEDIES FOR VICTIMS OF CORPORATE-INDUCED CHILD RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Across Africa, business activities continue to shape economic growth and development. However, children remain vulnerable to harm linked to corporate conduct, including child labour, environmental degradation, pollution, land dispossession, and exploitation in sectors such as mining, agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and the digital environment, among others. While prevention remains essential, meaningful and accessible redress mechanisms are equally vital where violations occur. Ensuring that children have access to effective, timely, and child-sensitive remedies when their rights are violated is therefore essential.

In response to these challenges, the Working Group on Children's Rights and Business has developed a Policy Brief on Access to Remedies by Victims of Corporate-Induced Child Rights Violations. The Policy Brief focuses on a critical dimension of corporate accountability, ensuring that children who suffer harm have access to effective, timely and child-sensitive remedies.

The Policy Brief outlines a range of remedies that should be available in

cases of corporate-induced violations of children's rights. These include restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, criminal and administrative sanctions, guarantees of non-repetition, and environmental remediation. It calls on States Parties to remove procedural and practical barriers to justice, strengthen cross-border cooperation, and integrate children's rights into National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights. The Policy Brief also encourages businesses to undertake human rights due diligence, establish operational grievance mechanisms and adopt measures to prevent and address harm to children.

Access to effective remedies is a fundamental component of children's rights protection in business contexts. Strengthened redress mechanisms contribute to accountability, the prevention of violations and the restoration of rights. The Policy Brief therefore reinforces accountability for business-related child rights violations by clarifying the scope of available remedies, supporting more effective responses to harm, and strengthening the protection of children's rights across Africa. ■

EXTERNAL EXPERTS JOIN ACERWC WORKING GROUPS

The ACERWC has appointed four external experts to the various Working Groups. The External Experts will serve a two-year term from January 2026 to December 2027.

The ACERWC looks forward to their valuable contributions in advancing its mandate during their tenure.

WG ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS & BUSINESS



Dr. Chairman Okoloise



Prof. Iyabode Ogunniran



Dr. Martha Mutisi



Ms. Mary Chavula

WG ON CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



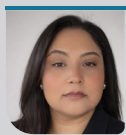
Dr. Dagnachew Wakene



Dr. Basirat Razaq-Shuaib



Dr. Shimeles Tsegaye



Dr. Sharna-Lee Clarke

WG ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS & CLIMATE CHANGE



Prof. Ademola Jegede



Mr. Retta Getachew



Dr. Aderomola Adeola



Mr. Malama Mwila

WG ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS



Prof. Nsongurua Udombana



Prof. Fatima-Zora Sebaa Delladj



Prof. Serges F. Mboumege



Ms. Lydia Winyi Kembabazi

EMPOWERING AFRICA'S GIRL LEADERS: TRAINING GIRL PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

On 25 November 2025, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), in collaboration with the GIZ AWARE Project, brought together fourteen Girl Parliamentarians from six African countries for a high-impact, one-day training in Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho. The young leaders, aged 13 to 17, represented Chad, Uganda, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, and Lesotho, gathering ahead of ACERWC's 46th Ordinary Session to address barriers to the meaningful participation girls' participation in political decision-making across Africa.

Despite continental commitments through the AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2018-2028 and ACERWC's 2022 Guidelines on Child Participation, girls continue facing exclusionary social norms, limited

knowledge of human rights mechanisms, and insufficient platforms for engagement. This training was designed to respond directly to these persistent challenges.

Through interactive, child-friendly sessions facilitated by experts from ACERWC, the Pan African Parliament, the Centre for Reproductive Rights, and World Vision International, participants gained comprehensive knowledge of the African human rights architecture, practical advocacy skills, and strategic communication techniques. The training further promoted peer learning and solidarity, with girls sharing their leadership journeys and identifying collective strategies for overcoming systemic barriers.

The training's immediate impact was evident when participants delivered a powerful Outcome Statement at the

Child Rights Symposium commemorating the 35th Anniversary of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The statement addressed critical issues, including education access, violence against girls, healthcare barriers, justice system failures, and challenges in children's participation, concluding with concrete demands for legislative, budgetary, and institutional action by parliamentarians.

As one participant powerfully declared, "We are not the leaders of tomorrow, we are leaders today." This training affirmed this principle, demonstrating that when equipped with knowledge and provided with enabling platforms, girls are fully capable of engaging substantively with decision-makers and contributing meaningfully to the development of policies that affect their lives and futures.

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN IN AFRICA: IHRDA AT THE FOREFRONT OF LEGAL ADVOCACY WITH ACERWC



As one of the first organizations to be granted observer status by the Committee, the Institute for Human Rights

contributing to the development of the Committee's new Strategic Plan.

Knowledge Leadership and Policy Influence

On the knowledge production and normative framework front, a cornerstone of recent collaboration is the study [Building Tomorrow: Child Rights Mainstreaming in National Policies and Action Plans on Human Rights and Business in Africa](#) launched in November 2025 at a regional conference in Maseru. This research examines integration gaps in child protection in action plans on business and human rights, and offers practical recommendations for states and businesses. A collaborative initiative with the Committee, this work complements the [ACERWC's 2023 Study on Children's Rights and Business in Africa](#) and features a foreword by Hon. Hermine Kembo Takam Gatsin, the Chairperson of the Working Group on Child Rights and Business.

Reflecting on the depth of this collaboration, IHRDA Executive Director Dr. Musa Kika noted:

"Our partnership with the ACERWC is a cornerstone of our mission. By combining our technical expertise with the Committee's continental mandate, we are building a more robust protection framework that ensures the rights and welfare of every African child are not just recognized on paper, but realized in

practice."

Advancing jurisprudence and state engagement on the situation of African children

For decades now, IHRDA remains a proud user of the Committee's communications mandate to seek justice for children across the continent. Since IHRDA filed its first-ever case before the Committee in 2009, IHRDA's case docket has risen to 10 of the 28 Communications ever received by the Committee. Six of these cases focus specifically on girls' rights. IHRDA has been a party to three of the four amicable settlements concluded by the Committee to date (involving Malawi, Burundi, and Botswana).

To expand usage of the communications mandate, IHRDA continues to lead capacity-building efforts such as the recent November 2025 litigation training at the CSO Forum in Maseru on the sidelines of the 46th Ordinary Session, and the training of lawyers on utilizing the Committee's communications procedure such as an October 2025 training of the Gambia Bar Association. In Nairobi, Pretoria and Addis Ababa in 2025, IHRDA partook in conversations and training aimed to support CSO partners and lawyers to meaningfully use the communications procedure. This work will continue in 2026 and beyond.

Dr. Musa Kika, Executive Director IHRDA

and Development in Africa (IHRDA)'s collaboration with the ACERWC remains one of its most strategic engagements, towards the full implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child continent-wide.

Building an effective ACERWC

Beyond direct African Union backing, the ACERWC can only be strong to the extent that actors in the child protection value-chain continent-wide invest in its strengthening, and in activating and utilizing its mandate. Thus, through a six-member consortium project in which IHRDA is a partner, IHRDA has an operative MOU with the ACERWC in which technical capacity is being extended to its Working Groups. In total, at least six technical staff have been seconded to, among others, support the operationalization of the Committee's Working Groups, together with supporting the participation of at least eight external experts across three critical Working Groups - Child Rights and Business, Children with Disabilities, and Implementation of Decisions. In 2025, IHRDA also had the chance to participate in the consultations

ACERWC WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS



Hon. Satang Nabaneh.

Feb 2026 - Feb 2031

Satang Nabaneh, LL.D., Ph.D., is a Gambian legal scholar and human rights practitioner with expertise in the African human rights system, child rights and protection, and gender justice.

She is Research Professor of Law at the University of Dayton Human Rights Center, co-founder of Think Young Women (TYW), and founder of Law Hub Gambia. Her work has been featured in The New York Times, Reuters, and Time, and she is the editor of Female Genital Mutilation: Politics of Criminalisation (PULP, 2025). She has received several international honors, including being named a 2025 Women Have Wings Laureate and receiving the 2023 Women in Law–Austria Justitia Award. She was also recognized by The Africa Report as one of the “10 African Scholars to Watch.”



Hon. Albab Tesfaye.

Feb 2026 - Feb 2031

Albab Tesfaye has nearly 15 years of experience advancing human rights and the rule of law across multilingual and multicultural settings within the African Union, United Nations, and national human rights institutions. She has extensive experience in human rights monitoring and investigation, victims support, mainstreaming child rights, institutional reform, transitional justice, and early warning and emergency response.

She served at the Secretariat of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (2013–2020) and is an Expert Member of its Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Africa (2024–2026). She holds LL.B and LL.M degrees from Addis Ababa University, Loyola University Chicago, and the University of Pretoria.



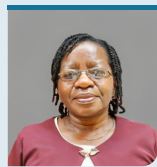
Hon. Wael Abdel-Razek.

Feb 2026 - Feb 2031

Prof. Wael Abdel-Razek is the Secretary General of Egypt's National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and a Professor of Hepatology at the National Liver Institute, Menoufia University, with over 100 peer-reviewed publications. He brings over 20 years of expertise bridging clinical science with child welfare policy.

As a public health strategist, he is widely recognized for directing mass national health campaigns, including a school program screening 13 million students annually for Hepatitis C and malnutrition. Furthermore, he oversaw early detection initiatives for hearing impairment and hereditary diseases in 5 million newborns. He is dedicated to translating the African Charter's legal frameworks into scalable, operational realities.

MEMBERS RE-ELECTED FOR A SECOND TERM



Hon. Anne Musiwa

First elected in 2021, served as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee from November 2021 to November 2023 and as Rapporteur from November 2023 to November 2025. She also served as Special Rapporteur on Children without Parental Care, where she led the development of the Study on Children without Parental Care and the General Comment on Children without Parental Care.



Hon. Wilson Almeida Adão

Hon. Wilson Almeida Adão, first elected in 2021, served as Chairperson of the Committee (Nov 2023- Nov 2025). He also served as Special Rapporteur on Children in Vulnerable Situations from 2021 to 2024, after which he was appointed Special Rapporteur on Budgeting and Investment for Children in April 2025.



Hon. Robert Doya Nanima

Hon. Robert Nanima, first elected in 2021, served as Special Rapporteur on Children in Conflict Situations. In this role, he led the Committee's work on children in conflict situations, including representing the Committee during the AU Peace and Security Council open sessions.



Hon. Joseph Sunday Sinnah

Hon. Joseph Sunday Sinnah was elected in 2024 to complete the term of the late Hon. Theophane Nikyema. He also served as Special Rapporteur on Child Justice, contributing to the Committee's work in promoting and safeguarding children's rights in the justice system.

Thank you Hon. Karoona and Hon. Aboubekrine



Honorable Karoona completes her term

Elected in 2021, Hon.

Karoona made significant and commendable contribution to advancing the mandate of the ACERWC, demonstrating strong commitment to the promotion and protection of children's rights across the continent.

In her capacity as Special Rapporteur on Birth Registration and Nationality, she played a key role in highlighting critical

gaps, promoting legal identity for children, and advocating for strengthened national systems in line with regional and international standards.

She also served as Country Rapporteur for Angola, Burundi, Congo, and Zimbabwe, where she closely followed up on the implementation of the Charter, engaged with State Parties, and contributed to strengthening accountability and compliance with child rights obligations.

Honorable Aboubekrine ends his 2nd term

Initially elected in

2020 to complete the term of the late Hon. Mohamed Hmeyada, Hon. Aboubekrine was re-elected in 2021 to serve a second term on the Committee.

During his tenure, he made significant contributions to the advancement of children's rights, notably in his capacity as Chairperson of the ACERWC Working Group on Children with

Disabilities, where he championed greater inclusion and protection for children with disabilities.

He also served as Special Rapporteur on Health, playing a key role in promoting children's well-being across the continent. In addition, he served as Country Rapporteur for Algeria, Comoros, Niger, SADR, and Senegal, where he supported the monitoring of State compliance with the Charter.

OUTGOING MEMBERS