Thematic Recommendation on Children in Africa
TREC/001/05/09

We, participants to the Forum on the Participation of NGOs in the 45th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights held at the Kairaba Beach Hotel in Banjul, The Gambia from 9-11 May, 2009

Recalling the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, The African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, the AU Declaration on an Africa fit for Children among many treaties and declarations

Considering the Resolutions of the African Commission on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Women and Girls Victim of Sexual Violence made during the 42nd Ordinary Session; and on the situation of Women and Children in Africa

Concerned about the increasing vulnerability of millions of children on the African continent due to poverty and its acute impact on the children, their families and society as a whole and the insufficient political will to protect them

Noting that to effectively address children’s rights issues on the continent, diverse, wide reaching and strong partnerships are required

Hereby recommend that the African Commission to

- **Work** effectively with the media to circulate information on children, and also circulate information on the work of the various national child networks

- **Multiply** its collaborative efforts with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child by:
  - Establishing a formal relationship with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)
  - Designating a Focal Point on the Rights of Children in Africa, who would be the main contact point between the two treaty bodies;
  - Attending the Committee’s sessions;
• **Address** the issue of children’s rights in a cross-cutting manner through its own mechanisms by:
  o Carrying out joint missions with ACERWC members in the implementation of the mandates of Special Rapporteurs, during promotional and investigative missions;
  o Sharing information on children’s rights stemming from the consideration of state party reports, with the ACERWC;
  o Taking into account progress of State implementation of other child rights/human rights treaties while examining state reports;
  o Making children’s rights a cross-cutting theme in the special mechanisms of the Commission;

• **Accord** high priority to the Call for Accelerated Action and the Plan of Action on Africa Fit for Children on its agenda and work in collaboration with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Department of Social Affairs in implementing these commitments.

• **Permit** child rights defenders to visit detention centres and observe trials involving children.

**Further call on the African Commission to urge Member States to**

• **stop** the use of child soldiers and to ensure that children are protected in conflict situations and never used shields in war.

• **ensure** Pro-Child budgets that prioritise issues concerning children.

• **encourage** the nine African Governments that have not ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child to do so immediately

• **establish** special mechanism, structures and policies within the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of Women Peace and Security.

• **implement** the STOCKHOLM AGENDA on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and the Agreed Conclusions of the World Congress 111, Rio De Janeiro 2008, on Commercial Exploitation of Children (CSEC).

• **give** recognition to EU provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by ensuring Children with Disabilities are given special recognition and protection within all thematic areas.

• **Ensure** children are at the lowest possible risk of morbidity and mortality, including Mother to Child Transmission of HIV, by providing highest possible level of health and counselling services.
• **Ensure** the right of the child to optimal health, nutrition and care including enactment and enforcement of a national code of marketing of breastmilk substitutes, particularly with regard to current global economic crisis and risk of food insecurity.

• **Ensure** that Children’s right to health is assured through access to *ethical* public private interaction (PPI) programmes on food, nutrition, child’s health and development.

Done on 11 May, 2009 – Banjul, The Gambia
ACDHRS                   ACHPR

Thematic Recommendation on the situation of Natural Resources in Africa
TREC/002/05-09

We, participants of the Forum on the Participation of NGOs Forum in the 45th Ordinary Session of The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the 19th African Human Rights Book Fair, held at the Kairaba Beach Hotel in Banjul, Gambia, from 9-11 May 2009;

Brings to your esteemed attention the vast minerals, timber and oil potential in Africa and the opportunities such potentials present for transforming the social and economic conditions of the people into building their productive capacity and improving quality of lives.

Noted that following the launch of structural adjustment, there has been an upsurge of extractive sector activity especially in the area of mining, oil, gas and timber extraction.

Concerned that the upsurge of extractive sector activity has resulted in alleged cases of gross human and peoples' rights abuses and torture such as unlawful killing, rape, displacement, loss of livelihood, and also a systematic increase in disrespect to the economic, social and cultural rights of people, including the right to education, to health, to food and to adequate housing;

Deeply worried that the exploitation of natural resources has fuelled many conflicts in Africa resulting in human rights abuses;

Disturbed that the legal framework to address the problems associated with extractive sector human rights abuses by Multinational companies as well as States and their agents have left victims without effective remedy;

Thus:

Recognizing that the provisions of the Constitutive Act of the African Union require the promotion and protection of human rights and obligates member states to promote the socio-economic development of Africa and raise the standard of living of African people;

Further recognizing that the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights in its preamble, affirms the right to development and that civil and political rights cannot be disassociated from economic, social and cultural rights in their conception as well as universality and the satisfaction of economic, social and cultural rights is interdependent from for the enjoyment of civil and political rights;
Recalling that the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights guarantees the protection and promotion of individual and collective rights;

Further recalling that international and regional standards including the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights expressly states in Article 21 that all peoples shall freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources, which shall be exercised in the exclusive interest of the people, and in no case shall the people, be deprived of it and in case of spoliation, the dispossessed people shall have a right to lawful recovery of its properties as well as to an adequate compensation;

Also recalling that the African Charter states in Article 24 that all people shall have the right to a general satisfactory environment favourable to their development;

Hereby call on the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights to adopt a resolution to:

1. Condemn the pattern of human rights violations resulting from extractive sector activity, in particular mining, oil, gas, fisheries and timber by state and non state actors including multinational companies in Africa.
2. Appoint a Special Working Group on Natural Resource Exploitation and Human Rights to work with civil society to investigate into the human rights violations in Africa’s natural resource exploitation.
3. Declare that individuals and groups who are victims of human rights violation resulting from unlawful exploitation and destruction of natural resources are entitled to effective remedies;
4. Request member states to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights to ensure transparency and responsibility in public policy regarding the receipts and payments, extraction management and utilisation of the wealth of mineral resources;
5. Request member states to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ rights to ensure that environmental policies are formulated as an integral part of the central development process taking into consideration the paradigm of sustainable development;
6. Ask member states to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights to ensure that there is a broader level of consultation into civil society organisations and other affected communities when developing policies on the extraction and management of natural resources;
7. Request transnational corporations to publish what they earn and to ensure that their operation does not result in human rights violation.

Done on 11 May 2009, Banjul- Gambia
Thematic Recommendation on Prevention and Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

TREC/003/05-09

We, participants of the Forum on the Participation of NGOs Forum in the 45th Ordinary Session of The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the 19th African Human Rights Book Fair, held at the Kairaba Beach Hotel in Banjul, Gambia, from 9- 11 May 2009,

Considering that the African States have recognized the absolute and intangible character of the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as enshrined in article 5 of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights,

Considering the usefulness and importance of the Robben Island Guidelines and Measures for the Prohibition and Prevention of Torture, Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in Africa, which were adopted by The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights in October 2002 and endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in 2003,

Recalling the establishment of the Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the Robben Island Guidelines by the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights in 2004,

Recognising the need to reinforce the mandate of the Follow-up Committee on the implementation of the Robben Island Guidelines for an effective prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment,

Concerned by the continued prevalence acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and the need to act for the prevention of such acts,

Recommend to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to:

A. On Torture:

1. Incorporate the prevention of torture in the mandate of the Follow-up Committee on the implementation of the Robben Island Guidelines;

2. Change the name of the current Follow-up Committee on the implementation of the Robben Island Guidelines into the “Committee for prevention of torture in Africa”;


3. **Include** within the mandate of the "**Committee for prevention of torture in Africa**", inter alia, the possibility of in–country missions which could include preventive visits to places of detention, redress and support for victims

4. **Urge** Member States to establish National Preventive Mechanism and to report to the Commission on the implementation strategies for prevention of torture and redress for victims

**B. On Prisons:**

1. **Call on the African Commission to Urge** Member States
   i. to create awareness on the rights of the prisoners; on their human rights as well as best prison practice amongst staff
   ii. to set up mechanism to address the issue of the poor conditions of treatment of awaiting trial prisoners, Juvenile, Women, HIV prisoners and other vulnerable groups in prison and their families.
   iii. to carry out steps to divert mentally ill persons from prisons to therapeutic settings
   iv. to ensure that detainees and human rights defenders have access to medical care
   v. to increase subvention to prisoners
   vi. to develop strategies which would seek to address decongestion of prisons, and to particularly accelerate the hearing of cases of detainees to enable them to either be charged or dismissed

2. **Urge** the Commission to set up a special mechanism to support the work of the Special Rapporteur on Prison including set up a working group to assist him/her in the discharge of his mandate.

3. **Request** the Commission to develop a compendium on good prison practices in Africa and this should also include facts and figures on imprisonment and condition of detention in Africa.


Done on 11 May, 2009 – Banjul, The Gambia
Thematic Recommendation on the African Court of Human Rights and Justice
TREC/004/05-09

We, participants of the Forum on the Participation of NGOs Forum in the 45th Ordinary Session of The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the 19th African Human Rights Book Fair, held at the Kairaba Beach Hotel in Banjul, Gambia, from 9-11 May 2009 hereby adopt a resolution encouraging AU Member States to:

8. Move expeditiously to ratify the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights;
9. At the time of ratification make the declaration under Article 8(3) of the Protocol that would allow individuals and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) direct access to the Court;
10. Prior to the entry into force of the Protocol on the African Court of Justice and Human Rights and during the transitional period, ensure that the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights is fully operational and resourced.

Done on 11 May, 2009 – Banjul, the Gambia
Thematic Recommendation on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons

TREC/005/05-09

We, the participants to the Forum on the Participation of NGO’s in the 44th Ordinary Session of the in the 45th OrdinarySession of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights held in Banjul, The Republic of the Gambia from 9 to 11 May 2009

Call on the African Commission to

1. Urge the Government of the Republic of South Africa to develop clear and coordinated interdepartmental strategies to prevent a recurrence of xenophobic violence, ensure greater protection of foreign nationals and provide greater protection to Somali nationals
2. Urge all States Parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights to adopt and ensure the effective implementation of legislation and policies regarding the detention of non-nationals in accordance with relevant international human rights norms and standards
3. Urge all States Parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, in particular, Mauritania, South Africa and Senegal to ensure that Status Determination processes are fair, reasonable and accessible

Call on the African Commission to urge the African Union to:

- Continue efforts to bring peace to the Darfur region of Sudan, including calling for full deployment of the hybrid forces to protect civilians and calling for all parties to participate seriously in the peace talks to end the conflict in the Darfur
- Request Member States to ensure equitable gender representation within the African Union peace keeping force and that the Code of Conduct effectively responds to sexual violence perpetrated by members of the African Union peace keeping force

Request the Special Rapporteur on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons to endeavor to conduct official visits to South Africa and Mauritania as a matter of urgency.

Done on 11 May, 2009 – Banjul, The Gambia
Country Recommendation on the Situation in Somalia  
CREC/006/05-09

We, the participants at the Forum on the participation of NGOs at the 45th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in The Gambia, resolve as follows:

**Considering** that Somalia is party to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, has adopted all the international and regional instruments for the protection of human rights and humanitarian law ratified and domesticated by the former Democratic Republic of Somalia;

**Welcoming** the appointment of a government of unity through the UN-brokered Djibouti Peace Process, between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) as a key step to a wider peace process that will include all parties involved in the conflict;

**Welcoming** the withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops from Somalia in January 2009;

**Deeply concerned** by the continued violations against civilians notably arbitrary arrests, prolonged detention, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, extra-judicial executions and denial of access to medical treatment and food in internally displaced camps;

**Deeply disturbed** by the extent of sexual and gender-based violence being carried out by all actors involved in the conflict;

**Deploring** the recent and continuing targeting and kidnapping of aid workers rendering it particularly difficult for these groups to carry out their vital work;

**Condemning** the involvement and responsibility of all actors involved in the conflict, notably the TFG and ARS forces, and the insurgents, especially Al-Shabab, in the deteriorating human rights situation;

**Deeply concerned** by the lack of accountability for past and present violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law, clearly exacerbating the conflict;

**Concerned** by the alleged implications of the AMISON peacekeeping troops in indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas;

**Further considering** Somalia’s obligations under the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders), particularly to ensure the rights of human rights defenders to
assemble, associate, express themselves and participate in the government of the country and the conduct of public affairs;

Deeply disturbed by the widespread violations of freedom of expression and the systematic attacks being committed against human rights defenders, particularly journalists;

Deeply concerned by the situation of women human rights defenders in Somalia or defenders involved in women’s rights and issues, that are perceived as culturally sensitive, and who as a result face additional gender-specific risks and violations in their human rights work;

Noting that harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders, including journalists, obscures the actual and deteriorating human rights situation and thereby undermines efforts to bring these violations to the attention of the international community;

The NGO Forum calls upon the ACHPR to take all necessary measures to adopt this recommendation

1. Calling on the new Government of Unity to allow for the establishment of an independent international commission of inquiry in order to ensure prompt, impartial, effective and independent investigations into all cases of human rights violations, both past and present, particularly those affecting human rights defenders;

2. Encouraging the new Government of Unity to establish accountability mechanisms which conform with international standards of independence and impartiality in order to bring an end to impunity and ensure that all actors responsible for current and past abuses are held accountable for their actions;

3. Calling on the TFG and the ARS to ensure the observance of the provisions of the Djibouti Peace Accords and to extend the national dialogue to include the remaining armed groups within the Accords;

4. Calling on all actors involved in the conflict to immediately end attacks on humanitarian workers and to allow for humanitarian access;

5. Calling upon the TFG, ARS and insurgents to bring an immediate end to arbitrary arrests, harassments, systematic attacks and targeted killings of all human rights defenders, and more particularly journalists;

6. Encouraging new Government of Unity to ensure the protection of defenders and to create an enabling environment for them to pursue their legitimate work;

7. Calling on the African Union, in collaboration with the United Nations Security Council, and other relevant UN bodies, to support the establishment of an international commission of inquiry to investigate the human rights and humanitarian law violations committed

8. Encouraging all member States of the African Union to provide support - logistical, political and financial - to entities and bodies that can monitor and report on past and current human rights abuses and can help to establish impartial and independent accountability mechanisms;
9. Encouraging the AU members to ensure the AU troops also offer protection to civil society by ensuring the protection of key institutions notably the independent media outlets.

10. Calling on the African Union to ensure that mechanisms are established which will ensure that the members of the TFG forces and AMISON responsible for violations of human rights and humanitarian laws are held to account;

11. Recommending to AU member States to ensure that all HRDs in particular journalists that have been forced into exile can pursue their vital work by providing them with assistance, and protection;

12. Calling upon the AU members to ensure that the AU troops currently stationed in Somalia extend the protection they are currently offering to include the protection of civilians, particularly internally displaced persons.

13. Call Upon the ACHPR to prepare a full report on the situation of human rights on Somalia at its 46th Ordinary session.

Done on 11 May, 2009 – Banjul, The Gambia
Recommandation pour une étude sur la liberté d'association
TREC/007/05-09

Nous, organisations non-gouvernementales d'Afrique réunies à Banjul du 9 au 11 mai 2009,
à l'occasion du Forum de participation des ONG à la 45ème Session de la Commission
Africaine des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples;

Rappelant que l'article 9 de la Charte Africaine des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples
(CADHP) reconnaît à toute personne le droit d'exprimer et de diffuser ses opinions dand le
respect des lois et règlements;

Rappelant également que la garantie de ce droit est un gage de démocratie et de
développement des pays africains;

Notant que l'article 10 de la CADHP reconnaît à chacun le droit de constituer librement des
associations avec d'autres;

Réaffirmant que la garantie de la liberté d'association est intrinsèquement liée au droit de se
réunir librement avec d'autres comme stipulé par l'article 11 de la CADHP et les autres
instruments internationaux des droits de l'Homme;

Reconnaissant que l'article 25 de la CADHP impose à tous les Etats l'obligation de
promouvoir et de respecter les droits et libertés contenus dans la Charte;

Reconnaissant en outre que les articles 60 et 61 de la CADHP reconnaissent les
instrument régionaux et internationaux relatifs aux droits de l'Homme et les pratiques
africaines conformes aux normes internationales relatives aux droits de l'Homme et des
peuples, en tant que principes de référence importants pour l'application et l'interprétation de
la Charte africaine;

Rappelant la résolution A/RES/144 de l'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies du 8
novembre 1999 adoptant la « Déclaration sur le droit et la responsabilité des individus,
grupes et organes de la société de promouvoir et protéger les droits de l'Homme et les
 libertés fondamentales universellement reconnus »;

Rappelant aussi la « Déclaration et le Plan d'Action de Grand Baie » adoptés par la
première Conférence ministérielle de l'Organisation de l'Unité Africaine sur les droits de
l'Homme en Afrique, tenue du 12 au 16 Avril 1999 à Grand Baie (Maurice);
Rappelant également la « Déclaration de Kigali » adoptée par la première Conférence des ministérielle de l'Union Africaine sur les droits de l'Homme en afrique, tenue le 8 mai 2003 à Kigali (Rwanda);

Conscients du fait que les droits des Défenseurs des droits de l'Homme, en tant que droits de l'Homme, sont par nature interdépendants, indivisibles, inaliénables et indissociables des droits de l'Homme reconnus et garantis notamment par la Déclaration Universelle des droits de l'Homme, le Pacte international relatif aux droits civils et politiques et celui relatif aux droits économiques, sociaux et culturels, la Convention sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes et son Protocole facultatif et tous les autres Pactes internatioanux et Conventions relatifs aux droits de l'Homme;

Convaincus du rôle crucial des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme dans la préservation des principes d'égalité, de paix, de liberté, de dignité, de justice, de solidarité et de démocratie dans les société africaines;

Convaincus également que les atteintes à la liberté d'association des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme ,ettent en péril les valeurs démocratiques dans nos sociétés africaines, notamment la garantie du respect de la promotion et de la protection des droits de l'Homme et des libertés fondamentales en Afrique;

Préoccupés par la constance et la gravité des violations des droits des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme;

Déterminés à assurer la promotion, la réalisation et la protection des droits des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme afin de leur permettre de jouir pleinement et librement de tous leurs droits humains;

Soulignant la responsabilité qui s'impose à tous Etat africain de protéger toutes les personnes vivant sous sa juridiction;

Convaincus que la réalisation d'une étude continentale sur la liberté d'association en Afrique contribuera à améliorer la situation très précaire des droits de l'Homme sur le continent;

Recommandons à la Commission Africaine des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples:

1. de procéder à une étude sur les lois qui régissent la liberté d'association et sur les pratiques visant à enfreindre la liberté d'association en Afrique;
2. d'assurer une large diffusion de ladite étude;
3. de prendre des mesures efficaces pour amener les Etats à tenir compte des conclusions de ladite étude.

Banjul- Gambia, le 11 Mai 2009
Thematic Recommendation on the Situation of Women and Girls in Africa
TREC/008/05-09

We participants of the Forum of NGOs in the 45th Ordinary Session of The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the 19th African Human Rights Book Fair, held at the Kairaba Beach Hotel in Banjul, The Gambia from 9-11 May, 2009

Recognising the various violations to women’s human rights in Africa

Reaffirming women’s equality in protection, freedom of expression as well as all other rights included in international, regional instruments

Considering that the African Women’s Protocol has entered into force and has been ratified by only 27 states to date

Furthermore, not all states that have ratified have started the domestication and implementation process

Concerned with the violence which women are subjected to such as: rape, sexual exploitation, harassment, particularly in situations of armed conflict

Reaffirming women’s equality in protection, security, freedom of expression, assembly and political participation in sub-regional, regional and international agreements

Recall articles 3 and 9 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa which require states parties to adopt and implement appropriate measures to ensure the protection of every woman’s right to respect her dignity and protection of women from all forms of violence, particularly sexual and verbal violence; guarantees women the right to participate in the political and decision-making process including taking specific positive action to promote participative governance and the equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation and other measures.

Taking note that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in articles 5, 8, 9, 11, 19 and 20 completely forbid torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of anyone; guarantees everyone including women, the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights; forbids arbitrary arrest, detention or exile; guarantees everyone the right to freedom of opinion, expression, assembly and association.
Hereby recommend that

1. Civil society organisations mobilise governments to
   • submit reports on the SDGEA;
   • support for the African women’s decade 2010-2020;
   • support the Violence Against Women campaign;
   • collaborate in the search for funds for campaign and the popularisation of the SDGEA and VAW;

2. The African Commission urge States to
   1. Adopt the good practice of protocols at sub-regional level like the SADC protocol on gender and development;
   2. Adopt holistic approaches to empower women by developing informal ways to reach those who have access to grassroots such as Imams, trade union leaders and other gatekeepers;
   3. Incorporate HR education into school curricula and de-mystify religious notions that contradict and impact on women’s rights;
   4. Formulate budgets to incorporate support the work of CSO’s on popularisation of the protocol;
   5. Enforce joint reporting of state and CSOs on thematic issues;
   6. Encourage men to actively engage in the gender and violence against women debate and to urge them to campaign for women’s rights within initiation, schools and around issues of circumcision;
   7. Dedicate one AU Summit to the Decade for African Women’s Rights;
   8. Pay special attention to the specific risk and violations faced by female Human Rights Defenders;

3. The Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa to
   1. set up a special taskforce to look into the situation of women and girls in regards to HIV and AIDS;
   2. investigate issues relating to women prisoners in Guinea Conakry with particular reference to possible creation of separate cells for women prisoners; sexual violence against women; overcrowding and on women in prisons ostracised from their communities; women living with children from prison; and rape in prison;
   3. raise concern and attention about the situation of women in Sudan urging the AU to protect women inside and outside camps;
   4. urge the Sudanese government to recall all international essential aid services providing health services, particularly reproductive health and food security, that have been expelled by the current government.

Done on 11 May, 2009 – Banjul, The Gambia