

[ACHPR 66 | How do Commissioners implement their mandates?](#)

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As provided by article Articles 23 (3) and 72 of the Rules of Procedure of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, each of the 11 Commissioners presented their activity reports. These reports summarise the work accomplished by each one of them according to their mandates since the last ordinary session of the African Commission. ISHR used this opportunity to deliver a statement following the report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders.



From 20 to 27 July, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Commission or ACHPR) has been reviewing [activity reports](#) of the members of the Commission and special mechanisms.

Final reports of outgoing Commissioners, namely Soyata Maiga, Lucy Asuagbor, Lawrence Mute and Yeung Kam John Yeung Sik Yuen were the first ones to be presented. As these Commissioners have officially left their functions, these reports were presented by seating Commissioners.

On 23 July 2020, the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders and focal point on reprisals in Africa, Pr Rémy Ngoy Lumbu, presented [his report](#) compiling the activities implemented under his mandate since the 65th Ordinary Session of the ACHPR held in Banjul, the Gambia. During his presentation, he confirmed that his mandate will present its first report on reprisals before the end of this year.

In her statement, ISHR's Africa Programme Manager, Adélaïde Etong Kame, also focused on the reprisals some defenders face for cooperating or wanting to cooperate with African human rights mechanisms. She noted that cases of intimidation and reprisals featured in [ISHR submission](#) to the Focal Point range from States maligning and stigmatising defenders to banning them from travel and detaining them. Such reprisals violate human rights and fundamental freedoms that regional and international systems are obliged to promote and protect. Moreover, they also seriously impede bodies and mechanisms' abilities to discharge their mandates effectively, threaten their integrity, and undermine the credibility of their work in the field of human rights.

"The ACHPR and States must do more to prevent and ensure accountability for intimidation and reprisals against those who cooperate or seek to cooperate with the African human rights system" said Etong Kame.

"The primary duty to prevent and remedy reprisals lies with States—who must do more to prevent, investigate and ensure accountability for reprisals. In that regard, the task for the Focal Point and the ACHPR is now to take up these cases and ensure they are addressed with the perpetrating governments. Otherwise, reprisals will 'work' to dissuade engagement, and perpetrators will be emboldened" concluded Etong Kame.

Watch the statement here (in French):

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Photo: ISHR

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