

**ACHPR/Res.230 (LII) 2012: RESOLUTION ON THE NEED FOR A STUDY ON THE
SITUATION OF WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN AFRICA**

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Commission), meeting at its 52nd Ordinary Session held from 9 to 22 October 2012 in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire;

Recalling its mandate to promote and protect human and peoples' rights in Africa in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Charter);

Noting that Article 45(1)(a) of the African Charter gives the Commission the mandate to "collect documents, undertake studies and researches on African problems in the field of human and peoples' rights" with a view to promoting and protecting human and peoples' rights on the continent;

Noting further the *Grand Bay Declaration and Plan of Action* adopted by the first OAU Ministerial Conference on Human Rights in Africa held from 12 to 16 April 1999 in Grand Bay (Mauritius); and the *Kigali Declaration* adopted by the African Union Ministerial Conference on Human Rights in Africa held on 8 May 2003 in Kigali (Rwanda);

Reiterating the commitment made by Member States of the African Union in the Grand Bay Declaration to implement the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders;

Noting Resolutions ACHPR/69(XXXV) 04 on the protection of human rights defenders in Africa, **ACHPR/Res.119 (XXXII) 07** and **ACHPR/Res.196 (L) 11** on the situation of human rights defenders in Africa;

Further noting the duties of States Parties to the African Charter, in particular the duty to guarantee the security of persons living in their territories, and the freedoms of assembly, association and expression of human rights defenders;

Concerned about the difficult environment in which human rights defenders work notably women human rights defenders which is characterised in many countries by constant arbitrary arrest and detention, acts of harassment, including judicial harassment, threats and other forms

of intimidation, summary and extrajudicial executions, and even acts of torture as a result of their activities;

Considering that women human rights defenders are victims of violence and discrimination which impacts on their ability to actively participate in the socio-economic and political processes in the countries in which they operate;

Concerned by the numerous obstacles on the activities of human rights defenders, including the trend of criminalizing their activities , in particular those who collaborate with regional and international human rights promotion and protection institutions;

Determined to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights of women human rights defenders in order for them to fully and freely play their role in promoting and protecting human rights on the continent;

Reaffirming the crucial role that women human rights defenders play in preserving the principle of equality, dignity, freedom, justice, peace, solidarity and democracy in African societies;

Convinced that the undertaking of a study on the situation of women human rights defenders and women working on issues of women's rights and gender equality will contribute to improving the precarious situation of the rights of women human rights defenders in Africa;

Further convinced that such a study will help in developing appropriate strategies for protecting women human rights defenders on the continent;

Decides:

- I. To task the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders with conducting a study on the situation of women human rights defenders in Africa, the laws governing them and discriminatory practices aimed at restricting their role in promoting and protecting human rights on the continent; and
- II. That the Report of the study be submitted for consideration by the

Commission in October 2013.

Adopted at the 52nd Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire, 9 to 22 October 2012