



Statement by Alliances for Africa at the 69th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

Observer Status Number 235

Honorable Chairperson of the ACHPR,

Alliances for Africa is an international African led non-governmental human rights, peace and sustainable development organization. AfA works with partners in, around and beyond the continent of Africa. Alliances for Africa is a member of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR), a coalition of 63 organizations working on women's rights in 32 countries in Africa. SOAWR was formed with the principal objective of advocating for the ratification, domestication and implementation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol).

Honourable Chairperson, one year since the start of the Tigray War, reports of sexual violence against women and girls point to the continued use of rape, sexual slavery, sexual humiliation and other forms of sexual abuse as a weapon in this conflict. This is in addition to the humanitarian crisis that has been exacerbated by attacks against humanitarian agencies and their workers, blockades and the looting and destruction of essential humanitarian supplies. While we acknowledge the continued work of the Commission of Inquiry on the Situation of the Tigray Region of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia ("Commission of Inquiry"), we urge the African Commission to continue using its good offices to press for the immediate end to all violations and abuses of international human rights law and humanitarian law, with a special emphasis on the need to end all forms of violence against women and girls. **The use of sexual and gender-based violence, reportedly committed against women and girls as well as men and boys, as a weapon of war must be unequivocally condemned and thoroughly investigated and documented by the Commission of Inquiry, with a view of contributing to accountability under international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international criminal law. We urge the ACHPR to widen the scope of the Commission of Inquiry to cover trends, patterns and dynamics that point to the use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war by all parties to this conflict. Further, we urge the Commission of Inquiry to independently and regularly provide progressive reports and updates of its work in line with its mandate under ACHPR Resolution 482 of 2021 as well as expand its mandate to investigate violations of**



international humanitarian, human rights and criminal law until the end of the Tigray War, hence doing away with the need to renew the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry every three months. Lastly, we urge the African Union, AU member states and multilateral partners to avail resources to the Commission of Inquiry for the purpose of engaging the services of experts that may aid its work.

Honorable Chairperson, African Union member states committed to achieve universal ratification of the Maputo Protocol by 2020. Regrettably, to date, four months after the end of the African Women's Decade, 13 AU member states are yet to ratify the Maputo Protocol. **We urge the remaining 13 AU member states – Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Madagascar, Morocco, Niger, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan – to urgently ratify the Maputo Protocol in order to ensure that the women and girls in these countries enjoy their rights as enshrined in the Protocol.** Additionally, it is concerning that only 17 of the 42 state parties to the Maputo Protocol have reported on the Maputo Protocol, almost 18 years since its adoption. **Alliances for Africa and the SOAWR Coalition urge the ACHPR to continue to encourage Member States to comply with their reporting obligations under Article 62 of the African Charter and Article 26 of the Maputo Protocol. Further, we urge the Commission to adopt and popularize the Guidelines on Shadow Reporting under the African Charter and the Maputo Protocol.**

I thank you.

Done in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria on 10 November 2021.

The SOAWR Coalition is comprised of:

1. Action for Development (ACFODE)
2. African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS)
3. African Women's Development Fund
4. African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)
5. Akina Mama wa Afrika
6. Alliances for Africa
7. Association des Juristes Maliennes (AJM)
8. Association des Juristes Sénégalaises



9. Association of Egyptian Female Lawyers (AEFL)
10. Atwar Organization for Research and Social Development (Atwar)
11. BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights
12. Cellule de Coordination sur les Pratiques Traditionnelle Affectant la Santé des Femmes et des Enfants (CPTAFE)
13. Center for Health Human Rights and Development (CEHURD)
14. Center for Human Rights – University of Pretoria
15. Center for Reproductive Rights
16. Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW)
17. Centre for Justice Studies and Innovation (CJSI)
18. Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVSR)
19. Coalition on Violence Against Women
20. Collectif des Associations et ONGs Féminines du Burundi
21. Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative
22. Equality Now
23. Fahamu Networks for Social Justice
24. Federation of Women Lawyers Kenya
25. Fondation Pour l'Égalité/ CIDDEF
26. Forum Mulher
27. Girl Child Network
28. Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development (GLIHD)
29. Human Rights Law Service (HURILAWS)
30. IGED Africa
31. ICJ Kenya
32. Inter-African Committee (IAC) on Harmful Traditional Practices
33. Inter-African Network for Women, Media, Gender Equity and Development (FAMEDEV)
34. Ipas Africa Alliance for Women's Reproductive Health and Rights
35. Jossour
36. KADIRAT
37. Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)
38. Make Every Woman Count
39. Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre/ NGOGCN
40. NAFGEM Tanzania



41. NGO Gender Coordination Network
42. Oxfam GB
43. People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA)
44. Question de Femmes
45. Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance
46. Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement (RFLD)
47. Sister Namibia
48. STEWARD Women
49. Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA)
50. Tomorrow's Child Initiative
51. Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre (TLAC)
52. Uganda Women Network (UWONET)
53. Union Nationale Des Femmes Djiboutiennes
54. Voix de Femmes
55. WANET
56. WLSA ZAMBIA
57. Women in Law and Development in Africa
58. Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia
59. Women of Liberia Peace Network
60. Women's Advocacy and Communication Network
61. Women's Counselling and Information Centre (WCIC)
62. Women's Rights Advancement & Protection Alternative (WRAPA)
63. Young Liberian Women Organization for Improvement (WOFIM)