NATIONAL SENSITIZATION SEMINAR ON THE AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES’ RIGHTS: ACCRA, 12 DECEMBER 2011

CLOSING REMARKS BY HON. JUSTICE GERARD NIYUNGEKO,
PRESIDENT OF THE COURT
Honourables Judges,

Dear Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. In the course of this day, we have been able to acquire ample knowledge on the workings of the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights. We discussed the establishment, composition, mission, role and functioning of the Court. We also discussed its current situation regarding its judicial function both in contentious and advisory procedures. Apart from that, we equally discussed the role and responsibility of each of the organizations and institutions represented in this seminar, in promoting the Court and the judicial system of human rights protection on the continent, in general.

2. I am truly satisfied with the way in which our proceedings were conducted, and the depth of our reflections in exploring ways and means by which we can, individually and collectively, submit applications to the Court, either in contentious matters or as requests for advisory opinions. It has emerged clearly from our discussions that each participant is conscious of the fact that the success or failure of the Court is a collective responsibility. As can be seen from the conclusions we have just adopted, I believe we can rightly say that the objectives of this seminar have been attained.

Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. On behalf of my Colleagues and fellow Members of the African Court, permit me to once more express my gratitude to the Government of Ghana, for having accepted to host this seminar.
I would also like to address my thanks to each and every one of you, not only for having honoured the invitation to attend this seminar, but also for your enthusiastic and momentous contributions to the proceedings.

Allow me to particularly thank the resource persons, speakers and panelists, who prepared papers on the various topics, as well as all the people who were kind enough to accept to act as moderators in various sessions of the seminar.

I would also like to thank the media outlets which provided and will continue to provide the media coverage necessary for the success of this seminar.

Permit me to also express gratitude to the relevant staff of the Court Registry for their work in preparing for this seminar, and for having successfully managed the secretariat, not forgetting ....who accepted to be the Focal Point of the Registry in the preparation of the seminar.

Lastly, on my personal behalf, I would like to thank my colleagues, Judges of the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, for their commitment and determination to promote the Court on the continent.

**Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

4. I would like to end by expressing the wish for you all to be able to honour all the commitments you have undertaken so that the judicial protection of human rights on the continent, incarnated by the Court, can soon become a reality. I
hope we will meet again, either within the framework of other activities aimed at promoting the Court, or at the seat of the Court, when some of you submit cases to it. We therefore hope to be able to strengthen the cooperation ties established during this seminar.

It is with such wishes that I declare closed the proceedings of the National Sensitization Seminar on the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, held in Accra, Ghana, on 12 December 2011.

Thank you for your kind attention.