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AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS
COUR AFRICAINE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET DES PEUPLES

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

**Statement by the President of the Court (Justice Sylvain ORÉ) at the Donor
Coordination Meeting**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

26 September, 2016

1. Dear Friends and colleagues, it is my singular honour to be speaking to you during this very important round-table consultation. In fact, this is my first official meeting outside the seat of the Court since my election as President of the Court on 5 September 2016.
2. When the Registrar informed me about this meeting, I told him that given the cooperation we have had, we are having and will continue to have with partners, I will attend the meeting, even if just to express the appreciation of the Court to you and potential partners for the work we have all been doing during the past ten years of the existence of the Court.
3. Let me from the onset sincerely thank Ms. Karin Pluberg and GIZ for the initiative to organise this meeting to bring together friends of the African Court and of the African human rights system, to brainstorm on how to further support the promotion and protection of human rights on the continent.
4. I wish to also express a special thanks to all of you for coming to this meeting. I understand today is a public holiday here in Ethiopia, and with your usually very busy weekly schedules, you could have chosen to use this day for a

deserved rest, yet you chose to spend it with us because of your interest in the Court and in the protection of human rights on the continent.

5. I also recognise and thank our colleagues from the Department of Strategic Planning and the Department of Administration and Human Resources for their valuable support in this process.

Dear friends and colleagues, rest assured that we highly appreciate this gesture and do not take your presence here for granted.

6. I do not need to talk to you about the Court or the African human rights system because I know you are all very conversant with all of these. What I can tell you however, is that the African Court is and remains, at least for now, the only judicial arm of the African Union charged with the protection of human rights on the continent.
7. There is no denying the fact that human rights play in very important role in the socio-economic and political development of societies, and more importantly, that Courts have an even greater responsibility to ensure the protection and enjoyment of human rights.
8. Evidence abound the world over, including here in Africa to establish the intrinsic relationship between human rights and development, human rights and peace, human rights and democracy, human rights unity/integration, etc. Most, if not all, the hot spots on the continent today, are as a result of a violation or perceived violation of one human right or another.
9. That is why institutions such as the African Court were established. Of course, I am not saying that the Court will change the human rights situation of the continent overnight, but we believe that our vision of 'an Africa with a viable human rights culture' can be attained if the Court is given the required technical, moral, political, financial and other necessary support.

10. For the past 10 years, we have worked together with some of you and we have achieved a lot, and we believe we can achieve even greater things if we continue working together as the Court enters the second decade of its existence. Over the past ten years, the Court has built a reputation in the human rights domain and has won the trust and confidence of not only the people it was established to serve, but also of you our partners and other human rights stakeholders.
11. Our 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan (which will be presented to you shortly) seeks to build on this momentum and to further entrench the culture of human rights on the continent. That is why the Plan is focused on enhancing the judicial procedure of the Court to ensure, inter alia, greater access to the Court, boost the case management procedures to promote transparency and reduce the time for finalization of cases, ensure timely remedies are provided to victims of human rights violations, provision of legal aid to indigene applicants to ensure justice for all, etc.
12. The Strategic Plan is pragmatic, achievable and flexible, and provides room for all our partners and other stakeholders to work with us to ensure its effective implementation.
13. We hope this meeting, the first such meeting the Court has been involved in, will give our current and potential partners the opportunity to appreciate the work of the Court and its role in the African human rights architecture, and provide space for constructive engagement as we celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Court, Year 2016 as African Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the rights of women, and as we look forward to the development of the Ten Year Action and Implementation Plan on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the African Decade on Human Rights.
14. Dear friends and colleagues, the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human and peoples' rights is and should remain our collective responsibility.

15. I thank you for your friendship, I thank you for your commitment and I thank you for your partnership with the African Court.