

SOULEYMANE CAMARA V. REPUBLIC OF MALI

APPLICATION NO. 014/2021

**JUDGMENT ON
JURISDICTION AND ADMISSIBILITY**

24 SEPTEMBER 2026

A DECISION OF THE AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

Arusha, 24 September 2026, The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Court) today issued a Ruling in the case of *Camara Souleymane v. Republic of Mali*.

On 20 April 2021, Camara Souleymane (the Applicant) filed an Application before the Court against the Republic of Mali (the Respondent State). He alleged violation of the following rights: the rights to equality before the law and to equal protection of the law, guaranteed by Article 3(1) and (2) of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Charter); the right to dignity, guaranteed by Article 5 of the Charter; the right to have his cause heard, under Article 7(1) of the Charter; and the rights guaranteed under Articles 14(1), (2), (3)(d) and (e), 16, 19 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

The Applicant prayed the Court to declare that it has jurisdiction, declare the Application admissible, find that the Respondent State violated the Protocol, the Charter and other human rights instruments, and order the Respondent State to pay compensation in the amount of Eight Hundred and Fifty Million (850,000,000) CFA francs for the serious violation of his honour and dignity.

The Respondent State, for its part, prayed the Court to declare the Application inadmissible for lack of standing, arguing that the Applicant had no legal capacity to institute proceedings. It further contended that it did not violate any provisions of the Protocol or the Charter, and consequently, prayed the Court to dismiss the Application as unfounded, and order the Applicant to pay costs.

No objection was raised regarding the Court's jurisdiction. Nevertheless, the Court examined *proprio motu* whether the requirements relating to its jurisdiction were met. It considered in turn its material, personal, temporal and territorial jurisdiction, and concluded that all requirements were met. The Court therefore held that it had jurisdiction to hear the Application.

With respect to admissibility, the Respondent State raised an objection on the ground that the Applicant lacked standing to institute proceedings. It argued that the Applicant merely invoked international human rights instruments in abstract terms without demonstrating a personal and direct grievance.

The Applicant prayed the Court to dismiss the objection, arguing that the fact of having personally and directly been a victim of the Respondent State's alleged violations established a sufficient causal link to confer standing before the Court.

At the outset, the Court, while noting that standing is not explicitly required under the Charter or the Rules of Court, affirmed its obligation to address the issue. It recalled the provisions of the Protocol and its established jurisprudence, whereby individuals or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are not required to demonstrate a personal interest in order to institute proceedings before the Court. However, the Court noted that because the alleged violations stemmed directly from criminal proceedings initiated against the Applicant, it recognised his unquestionable standing. Accordingly, it dismissed the objection.

Regarding the admissibility requirements under Article 56 of the Charter, and restated in Rule 50(2) of the Rules, the Court noted that no objection to admissibility was raised. However, the Court satisfied itself that those requirements were met. In this respect, the Court examined successively the requirements under Rules 50(2)(a), 50(2)(b), 50(2)(c) and 50(2)(d) of the Rules, and found that they were met. As regards the exhaustion of local remedies under Rule 50(2)(e) of the Rules, the Court found that although the Applicant asserted that he appealed the Assize Court's judgment of 8 April 2021, he failed to submit any supporting evidence, such as a copy of the notice of appeal or proof of filing, demonstrating that the remedy had in fact been pursued. The Court therefore held that the Applicant did not exhaust the available local remedies. Consequently, the Application did not meet the admissibility requirement under Rule 50(2)(e) of the Rules.

Having found that the Application did not meet the requirement of Rule 50(2)(e) of the Rules, and recalling that the admissibility requirements are cumulative, the Court considered it unnecessary to examine compliance with remaining admissibility requirements. It accordingly declared the Application inadmissible.

The Court ordered each Party to bear its own costs.

Further information on this case, including the full text of the African Court judgment, is available on the website: <https://ajudata.african-court.org/details-case/0142021>

For any further questions, please contact the Registry via the following e-mail address registrar@african-court.org

The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights is a continental court established by African countries to ensure the protection of human and peoples' rights in Africa. The Court has jurisdiction over all cases and disputes brought before it concerning the interpretation and application of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and any other relevant human rights instrument ratified by the State concerned. For more information, please visit our website: www.african-court.org