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<p align="center">AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS COUR AFRICAINE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET DES PEUPLES</p>		

PLACEMENT POLICY OF THE AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

(Adopted by the Court at its 72nd Ordinary Session held from 12 February to 8 March 2024)

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PREAMBLE

At its 33rd Ordinary Session held from 26 May to 13 June 2014, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (hereinafter referred to as the "Court"), adopted its 1st Placement Policy, which has been in operational since 2014. It subsequently revised the Placement Policy in 2020 and 2024.

The Placement Policy provides for various placement opportunities to Students; Young Graduates; Interns; AU Youth Volunteers; Fellows; Researchers; Professionals seconded by AU Member States and organizations. The objective of the Placements is to allow the candidates to develop a greater understanding of the Court; develop new skills, knowledge and experiences; gain up to date knowledge of current working practices of the Court; increase opportunities for career development and progression; and to establish networks.

The placements are conducted in hybrid format to include onsite placements; remote/virtue placements as well as mixed placements where the candidates are supervised by experienced staff of the Court.

The placements are open to both citizens and non-citizens of African Union (AU) Member States and range between a period of two (2) weeks to six (6) months.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Court offers placements within the Court in relation to predefined workload, and with due regard to the relevance of the needs periodically expressed by its Units within the Registry.
2. The candidates can be placed under the Office of the President, Office of the Registrar; Audit Unit; Judicial Affairs Unit; Legal Aid Unit; Research and Capacity Building Unit; Compliance and Monitoring of the Decisions of the Court Unit; Library Unit, Archives, Documentation and Reproduction Unit; Language Unit; Court Clerks; Protocol Unit; Security and Safety Unit; Communication Unit; Medical Unit; Human Resource and Administration Unit, Finance and Accounting Unit, Procurement, Travel and Stores Unit and Information Technology Unit.

II. DEFINITION OF PLACEMENT

3. A placement is a professional learning experience that provides an opportunity for the recipients/candidates to gain both theoretical and practical working experience and to develop skills in areas of relevance to their career interests under the guidance of a qualified staff member.

III. GENERAL TYPES OF PLACEMENTS

4. There are several types of placements for applicants depending on their interests and career goals. These include: Internship programs, AU Youth Volunteers Program, Fellowships, Student attachments, Researchers, Secondments etc. The persons occupying the various category of these placements shall be referred to as candidates.

IV. PLACEMENTS AT THE COURT

5. **Internships:** The Court offers placements to students and graduates in different fields of the work of the Court.
6. **AU Youth Volunteer:** These placements are directly facilitated by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the beneficiaries are placed under the various African Union Organs. This continental development program recruits and works with youth volunteers, across all 54 countries of the AU. It promotes volunteering to deepen the status of young people in Africa as key participants in the delivery of Africa's human development targets and goals. Candidates who are deployed to the Court receive a living stipend from the AUC.
7. **Fellowships:** The Court may also admit Fellows under its African Court Legal or Judicial Fellowship Programme on terms specifically designed for the Fellowship Program in collaboration with external academia, judicial or other international organizations. Under some of the fellowships, the candidates receive a living stipend from the recommending organization.
8. **Student Attachments:** Students from high schools or other learning institutions may also be periodically placed at the Court for short periods on work experience or field attachments upon request from the learning institutions. The field work attachments are offered as a way of assisting the students to apply what they have been taught in class in practice. This attachment provides them an opportunity to develop their oral analytical argumentative, theoretical and practical application skills.
9. **Researchers:** The Court also welcomes Researchers who express interest to undertake research in the work of the Court. The Court often designates one staff member from the relevant unit who acts as a focal person to facilitate contacts with officers of the Court when necessary.

10. **Secondments:** Under this framework, the Court may also welcome persons that are seconded by Member states or from national judiciaries, civil societies, non-governmental institutions and other bodies. The secondment by Member States will be managed as per the provisions of the African Union Rules and Regulations. The candidates may receive a living stipend from the seconding institution or organization.

V. MODALITIES OF IMPLEMENTING THE PLACEMENTS

A. Virtual / Remote Working Placement

11. This option provides the candidates with an opportunity to work remotely from outside the Court premises without having to incur the costs of travel and accommodation. Candidates under this type of placement will undergo a weekly debriefing or as determined by their supervisors remotely, to check on their progress against their individual work plans. Failure to do so may lead to the suspension of the program.

B. Field Work/Field attachment

12. This option provides the candidates with the opportunity to physically report to the Court premises. These candidates work onsite and are provided a station within the Court premises to undertake their functions.

C. Mixed or Hybrid Placement

13. This option combines elements of both remote working and on site working at the Court premises. Under this placement, terms and conditions for remote working apply. Pending the development of the specific terms and conditions for this placement, the placement agreement between the Court and candidate will apply.

VI. PRINCIPLES OF THE PLACEMENT POLICY

14. Placement at the Court shall in as much as possible be guided by the principles of equitable national, geographical and gender representation. The Court, therefore, encourages applications from candidates who have the requisite qualifications without distinction as to gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social background, skin colour, religious convictions, sexual preference or orientation or any other status.
15. The Court may, however, adopt specific measures to ensure equal opportunities for applicants with disabilities or other vulnerabilities.

VII. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PLACEMENTS

16. For placement in Legal Division, applicants must have completed a first-degree in law from a recognized University or institute of higher education. A Master's or PhD degree in law will be an added advantage;
17. At least be in the final stage of their studies at recognized university or have graduated from a recognized University or Institute of higher education in the case of other applicants. They must have knowledge pertaining to the field in which they wish to intern;
18. Candidates are expected to have a very good record of academic performance;
19. For those still in school, they must provide a letter from the University or Institute in which the student/candidate is registered. This letter should include a brief description of the career interest of the applicant;
20. Be computer literate;

21. Be able to work in a diverse multilingual and multicultural environment.

VIII. APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURE

22. Applications for Placements should contain the following documents:
 - a) A motivation letter/statement of interest stating the purpose of the application, and indicating the field(s) of interest of the applicant;
 - b) Curriculum vitae as well as copies of relevant University Degree(s) and/or diplomas, certificates, recommendation letters, any other relevant documentation and recent photograph;
 - c) The relevant completed placement form of the African Court from the Courts website (online submission);
 - d) Applications for internship should be sent as per the information provided on the African Court Website.

IX. SELECTION

23. Candidates will receive an automated acknowledgment of receipt of their placement applications, which will be stored in a database maintained and managed by the Registry.
24. Candidates will be notified about the status of their application within a period of thirty (30) days following the Registry acknowledgment of receipt.
25. In case a qualified prospective applicant is not immediately accepted for a particular period due to various considerations, he/she will be placed on roster in the Courts Data Base and may subsequently be offered a placement.
26. Any candidate admitted for placement shall receive a letter of acceptance from the Office of the Registrar together with a commitment form to abide

by the terms and conditions of the placement. Where the applicant accepts the offer, he/she will return a signed copy of the letter and the form to the Registry as soon as possible or within thirty (30) days before the expected date of commencement of the placement.

27. In cases where the successful candidates are unable to work on site, they may be allowed to work remotely/virtually by their designated supervisors or engage in a hybrid placement as necessary and under the conditions specified for working remotely.

X. APPLICATION DEADLINE

28. Applications are received thorough out the year. However, the African Court encourages prospective applicants to apply at least six months prior to the envisaged commencement date of the placement.

XI. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The African Court

29. The Court shall ensure that successful candidates:
 - a) Receive adequate supervision while working at the African Court;
 - b) Are provided with a conducive working environment, working space, working tools, and other services required for the effective discharge of their functions;
 - c) Are placed under the supervision of a qualified staff member;
 - d) Are regularly assessed by their supervisors and provided with a performance report;
 - e) Are paid in a timely manner their monthly allowances where applicable by the Court for the duration of their placement;

- f) The Court shall not be liable for any injury, disability, or death suffered by the successful candidates, or for any medical or hospital expenses which may be incurred in the course of his/her placement. All candidates are therefore advised to secure travel medical, life and other insurance packages.
- g) The Court shall not be responsible for any physical or material damage that the intern may cause to a third party, except if the said damage occurred in the exercise of duties as assigned by the African Court.
- h) The Court will issue placement certificates or reports as applicable at the end of tenure of the candidate and after receiving the placement reports.

B. The Candidates

30. All candidates are required to:

- a) Treat the placement as a professional and learning exercise, and shall, to that end, observe all relevant internal rules, instructions, directives, policies, and regulations governing the functioning of the Court, in particular rules concerning security, health, and safety as well as confidentiality;
- b) Refrain from any conduct that could tarnish the image of the Court and not engage in any activity that is incompatible with the mandate, interests and integrity of the Court;
- c) Sign a confidentiality form prior to taking up placement and maintain high a sense of discretion in exercising their duties within and outside the Court;
- d) Refrain from sharing, discussing, tweeting or blogging any information acquired through participation in meetings, discussions or activities about the Court with a third party, or have it published or broadcast even after the conclusion of the placement, except with the formal written consent from the Registrar.
- e) Submit to their supervisor, a report on the placement at the end of their tenure, with proposals on how to improve the placement program of

the Court by using the African Court placement evaluation form and attaching any other relevant reports.

31. Any candidates participating via on-site placement within the premises of the Court is required to:
 - a) Show proof of funds or provide a letter of self or organizational sponsorship for the duration of the stay period.
 - b) Provide proof of health insurance coverage to cover his or her medical expenses during the period of placement.

XII. SUPERVISION

32. Candidates shall work under the supervision of a qualified staff member of the Registry or Office of the President.
33. Supervisors shall in collaboration with the candidate develop a coherent work plan for placement and monitor its implementation.

XIII. DURATION OF INTERNSHIP

34. Due to a large number of applications for placement received by the Court, and in order to give opportunity to as many applicants as possible, the duration of placement will be limited to between one (1) to three (3) months.
35. This period may be extended upon request by either party, and upon the approval of supervisor and or seconding institution, for another period not exceeding three (3) months and not renewable.
36. A candidate who needs to extend his/her period of internship must complete a placement extension form which will have to be endorsed by the 1st and

2nd Supervisors. The 1st supervisor must provide reasons justifying any proposed extension.

37. Depending on the needs, candidates who completed their internship with the Court previously may be allowed to re-apply and if the opportunity is available be taken.

XIV. WORKING HOURS AND ABSENCES

38. Students on filed attachment shall be required to work for the duration specified by the organizations as per their academic requirements. This consideration will also apply to specific categories of candidates as per the agreement between the Court and the sponsoring organization.
39. Unless specified, all other candidates shall be required to work forty (40) hours per week as per the AU Rules and Regulations and practice directions of the Court with a one-hour break from 13: 00hrs to 14:00hrs, if working on site from the seat of the Court. Candidates admitted to work remotely will also observe this one (1) hour break period according to their time zones.
40. Any absence from the placement must be duly authorized by the Supervisor. When a candidate is absent without justification or without notification for a period of three (3) working days or more, the Court may decide to immediately terminate the placement without further notice.

XV. HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

41. In case of sickness, the candidate shall notify the supervisor about his/her absence with copy to the HR and Administration Unit immediately or as soon as possible, in any case, not later than seventy-two (72) hours from the date they fell ill.

42. In case of absences longer than three (3) working days for medical reasons, the candidate must provide a medical certificate indicating the probable length of absence.
43. Candidates who abscond duty for more than fourteen (14) working days without justification, will have their placement terminated as well without notice.

XVI. LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

44. Only candidates with placements at the Court lasting for three (3) months and more will be entitled to leave.
45. During this placement period, a candidate shall be entitled two (2) days of leave per month, acquired pro rata to the months spent on internship.
46. Leave requests shall be made on a leave application form and submitted to the supervisor for approval.
47. Approved leave forms shall be kept on file by HR and Administration Unit.
48. Any leave not taken by the end of the placement will be forfeited.

XVII. REMUNERATION

49. Currently, the Court is not able to provide candidates with a stipend, nor is it able to provide reimbursement for expenses incurred prior and during their placement periods.

50. Should the Court secure funds to support placements, the terms and conditions for granting paid placements will be set out in an addendum to this Policy.

XVIII. OFFICIAL MISSIONS

51. In exceptional cases closely related to the tasks performed during the placement period and upon request from the Office of the President, Registrar, Head of Division or Head of Units as may apply, candidates may be sent on a mission or authorized to travel for official duty. Such requests can only be authorized by the Office of the President and Registrar. Self-sponsored participation to Session and other activities of the Court will have to be authorized by the Registrar.
52. All expenses related to the said mission shall be charged to the budget line of the requesting Unit or hosting Division/Unit.

XIX. MEETINGS, SESSIONS OF THE COURT AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

53. Candidates shall attend the staff meetings, Unit and other meetings as well as the activities of the Court including Court Sessions, upon authorization of the supervisor or other hierarchy as the case may be.
54. The Registrar/Head of Division or Unit may determine the type of meetings and activities that candidates may be required to attend.

XX. TERMINATION OF PLACEMENT

55. Placement ends at the date agreed by the Court, candidate or institution seconding the candidate. However, placements can be terminated earlier at

any time by either party giving a two-week written notice which will state the reasons for the termination.

56. The Court however reserves the right to terminate a candidate's placement for extremely poor personal conduct and malicious and other unacceptable practices inside and outside of the Court that have a bearing on the Court's image.

XXI. GROUNDS OF TERMINATION

57. The Court will terminate the placement of any candidate on the following grounds among others:
 - a) Failure to abide by the Rules and Regulations of the Court including those in various policies such as harassment policy;
 - b) Failure to meet the expectations set out in the individual Annual Workplan;
 - c) Poor performance of tasks assigned to him/her;
 - d) Unethical or unacceptable behaviour which has a bearing on the Court's image; and
 - e) Mismatch between the intern's skills and the requirements of the roles.

XXII. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

58. In the event of a dispute arising in the course of the placement, the candidate and first supervisor, will be expected to resolve their differences amicably. In case they fail to do so, the second supervisor will be called in to intervene, failing which the matter will be referred to the Human Resources Unit and subsequently to the Registrar. During these interventions, the Human Resources Unit shall provide technical assistance.

XXIII. PLACEMENT TRACKING MECHANISM

59. The purpose of the tracking mechanism is to ensure that former interns continue to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information and data of which they became aware or were involved during their internship and for as long as it is important not to disclose it without the express authorization of the Registrar.
60. To this end, candidates who leave the Court may or may not provide information about their future plans and where they go after their placement with the Court. This information may be included in their final evaluation reports which they complete.
61. Lastly, candidates who feel that they do not have the information and data deemed confidential are encouraged to express this to their superiors at the end of their internship.

XXIV. CERTIFICATE OF PLACEMENT

62. A certificate shall be awarded to candidates on the successful completion of their placement. The said certificate will be designed with a unique feature which will guarantee authenticity.

ANNEXES

- i. Placement forms
- ii. Internship Terms and Conditions Form
- iii. Internship Evaluation Report Form
- iv. Terms and Conditions for African Court Stipend Grant
- v. Terms and Conditions for Remote/Virtual working placement