



COMMUNIQUE

1. The Second Retreat between the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Commission) and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Court) was held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 2 – 3 June 2025, in a hybrid format (hereinafter referred to as “the Arusha Retreat”).
2. The Arusha Retreat was co-chaired by Hon. Justice Modibo Sacko, President of the Court and Hon. Remy Ngoy Lumbu, Chairperson of the Commission, and was attended by Honourable Commissioners of the Commission and Judges of the Court.
3. The main objective of the Arusha Retreat was for the Commission and the Court to discuss how to improve their complementary relationship and consider progress made in enhancing their collaboration since the last Retreat, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 10 to 14 October 2022 (hereinafter referred to as the “Addis Ababa Retreat”).
4. The two African Union (AU) human rights organs examined the status of implementation of the Complementarity Roadmap for 2023-2025, adopted during the Addis Ababa Retreat, and noted the following key achievements:
 - i. Different staff exchanges were organised whereby legal officers, financial officers, interpreters and clerks from the Commission, Court and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) mutually enhanced each other's capacity in handling cases and improving registry functions.
 - ii. The publication of the African Human Rights Yearbook, Volume 6 (2022) and Volume 7 (2023), underscoring the AU human rights bodies' collective commitment to promoting human rights awareness and scholarship across Africa, fostering a culture of respect for human dignity and equality.
 - iii. Various desk-to-desk interactions between the Commission and the Court to provide assistance to each other in terms of research on vital human rights issues and to share experiences and information on key jurisprudential developments.
 - iv. The different AU human rights bodies were also amply represented and greatly contributed to the mutual success of various major activities, including the 6th African Union Judicial Dialogue, the Commission's Pre-

Session Forum of State Parties and the Court's Mid-Term Strategic Plan Implementation Review (2021-2023) and Planning (2024-2025) Retreat.

5. The Commission and the Court also recognised that much still needs to be done to advance complementarity and enhance the protection of human rights in Africa. To this end, the participants in the Arusha Retreat agreed to:
 - i. Extend the duration of the Complementarity Roadmap beyond 2025 up until 2028, and to include the different areas of complementarity in their respective Strategic Plans (2026-2028). Also, in the context of AU- wide strategic planning, the Commission and the Court agreed to closely collaborate to ensure appropriate human rights mainstreaming of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063, as mandated by the Executive Council.
 - ii. Ensure even greater participation of the ACERWC in the existing complementarity relationship between the Commission and the Court.
 - iii. Renew the Framework for Staff Exchange signed in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2022, that will expire in 2025, to continue to foster mutual learning and cooperation.
 - iv. Continue the collaboration to develop an African Jurisprudence Database (AJUDATA) as a comprehensive and accessible repository of the jurisprudence of the Commission and the Court, as well as other international judicial mechanisms in Africa.
 - v. Jointly mobilise support to solicit the appointment of an African Union (AU) Champion for human and peoples' rights and to operationalize the AU Legal Aid Fund.
 - vi. Pursue state engagement to ensure pan-continental ratification of all AU human rights treaties.
 - vii. Jointly develop promotional material on the advantages of amicable settlement procedures and ensure greater acceptance of this mechanism across the continent.
 - viii. Collaborate on initiatives for information sharing regarding the implementation of their decisions, including joint databases, reporting and national focal point mechanisms.
6. During the Arusha Retreat, the Commission and the Court also adopted Guidelines on Submission and Transfer of Cases to record the mutual agreements of the two institutions and streamline these procedures. These Guidelines provide as well how the two institutions would work together to ensure the implementation of their decisions.
7. The Commission and the Court have further decided to examine and adopt, as soon as possible, the provisions to be included in the Guidelines, concerning respective considerations and criteria for submitting and transferring cases.

8. The Commission and Court concluded the Arusha Retreat by reaffirming their commitment to continue strengthening their relationship and to work with all relevant stakeholders, including Member States, AU organs and other key human rights actors to protect human rights in Africa.

**Done this 3rd day of June 2025
Arusha, Tanzania**

**Hon. Remy Ngoy Lumbu,
Chairperson of the Commission**

**Hon. Justice Modibo Sacko,
President of the Court**

