



## CONCEPT NOTE

**FORUM ON THE PARTICIPATION OF NGOS IN THE 65<sup>TH</sup> ORDINARY SESSION  
OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND  
39<sup>TH</sup> AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS BOOK FAIR  
17-19 OCTOBER, 2019  
BANJUL, THE GAMBIA**

**THEME: THE YEAR OF REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED  
PERSONS: TOWARDS DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN AFRICA -  
MOVING FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION**

### Introduction

The Forum on the Participation of NGOs in the Ordinary Sessions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Commission), also known as the 'NGOs Forum' is an advocacy platform coordinated by the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies to promote advocacy, lobbying and networking among and between human rights NGOs, for the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa.

The NGOs Forum shares updates on the human rights situation in Africa by the African and international NGOs community with a view of identifying responses as well as adopting strategies towards the promotion and protection of human rights in the continent.

The African Union declared 2019 as '**The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: towards durable solutions for forced displacement in Africa.**

It would be recalled that the NGOs Forum held in Sharm El Sheikh, Arab Republic of Egypt in April, 2019 focused on the 2019 AU theme.

In a bid to keep civil society actors engaged on such an important continental discussion, the October 2019 session of the NGOs Forum will focus on the same theme but specifically focusing on implementing commitments into action. The discussions will contribute to adopting strategies for monitoring the implementing of related Conventions and Treaties as signed by Member States.



**Objective:** The objective of the NGOs Forum is mainly to foster closer collaboration between and among NGOs and with the African Commission and other African human rights mechanisms, for the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights in Africa.

**The general content of the *Forum* will cover three (3) main thematic areas namely:**

**1) Status of Human Rights and Democracy in Africa** (update from sub-regional Focal Points on the general situation of human rights in Africa, with a focus on the Forum theme)

**2) Special Interest Groups Discussions** (Kindly note that the list of not extensive, new interest groups are welcome)

1. Prisons, Conditions of Detention / Policing in Africa
2. Rights of Women in Africa
3. Human Rights Defenders /Freedom of Association and Assembly in Africa
4. Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa
5. Prevention of Torture in Africa
6. Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa
7. Indigenous Populations/Communities in Africa
8. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Africa
9. Death Penalty and Extra-Judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Killings in Africa
10. Rights of Older Persons and People with Disabilities in Africa
11. People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and those at Risk, Vulnerable to and Affected by HIV
12. Extractive Industries; Environment and Human Rights Violations
13. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)
14. Peace and Security in Africa
15. Rights of Youth and Children
16. Enforced Disappearances
17. Independence of Judges and Lawyers
18. Corruption

**3) Networking for Human Rights in Africa** (sharing experiences, best practices and lessons learnt on the impact of the theme on the continent. A series of panel discussions on general human rights related issues will be organized within the main agenda of the NGOs Forum as well as at side events, and even extending to the margins of the Ordinary Session.

**Language:** The deliberations of the Forum would be in English and French with simultaneous interpretation facilities.



**Participants:** Representatives from African civil society/NGOs, international NGOs from Africa and beyond working on youth, democracy, human rights and the rule of law issues, academia, media, etc.

**Expected Outcomes:**

- Adoption of Recommendations and Resolutions to be forwarded to the African Commission for its consideration during the 65<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session
- Adoption of strategies for monitoring the implementation of the Kampala Convention on the Rights of Refugees and other related Treaties and Conventions
- NGOs Statement at the official opening of the 65<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session (highlighting deliberations of the NGOs Forum)
- Report of the NGOs Forum and African Human Rights Book Fair
- Presentation of alternative reports on the situation of human rights in countries whose States reports are to be examined during the said Ordinary Session