



Information Brochure

FORUM ON THE PARTICIPATION OF NGOS IN THE 73rd ORDINARY SESSION
OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND
17-18 OCTOBER, 2022
BANJUL, THE GAMBIA

THEME: HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: A MULTI-
DIMENSIONAL APPROACH IN ADDRESSING CONFLICT, CRISIS AND
INEQUALITY

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.

OBJECTIVE: The objective of the NGOs Forum is to foster collaboration between and among NGOs within the African Commission as well as other African Human Rights mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa.

The African Union declared 2022 as *"Strengthening Resilience in Nutrition and Food Security on The African Continent: Strengthening Agro-Food Systems, Health and Social Protection Systems for the Acceleration of Human, Social and Economic*

Capital Development”; ¹ New evidence has shown that the persistence of the burden of malnutrition has very significant consequences for physical, mental, cognitive and physiological development of African children; hence it has become a critical human rights issue that goes far beyond the already existing volatile public health impact. At the same time, evidence shows that malnutrition leads to decreased social and economic development of nations and becomes a very important political and economic development issue.²

In a bid to keep civil society actors engaged on important continental discussions, the NGOs Forum will focus on the above mentioned theme specifically focusing on implementing commitments into action. The discussions will contribute to adopting strategies for monitoring the implementation of related Conventions and Treaties as signed by Member States.

The general content of the Forum will cover four thematic areas namely:

1. **Conflict**: The African continent is undergoing a profound and unprecedented change at the military, climate and political levels. States such as Chad, Guinea, Mali, and Sudan are still dealing with the aftermath of coups d'état that occurred in the last 18 months whilst Kenya, Somali and Angola are engaged in electoral conflicts. These takeovers have fuelled instability in the Maghreb, East Africa and the Horn. Resolving the deadlock between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) remains a key priority in 2022.
2. **The Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement**: The AfCFTA will create the largest trading block in the world. With all 55 African countries signing on, this agreement will be the world's largest by number of countries. However in relation to agriculture and agri-business, there is a need for the ³protection and empowerment of the welfare of Small Market Enterprises.
3. **Digital rights and security**: A lot of African countries have been experiencing internet or social media shutdowns. Digital rights and security are increasing under threat, with some countries suffering disruptions to communications on more than one occasion.
4. **The Environment, Climate Change and Gender Based Violence**: Climate change is recognized as a serious aggravator of gender-based violence. Around the world, climate change-induced crises have also been shown to worsen domestic violence,

¹ [Launch of the African Union Theme for 2022 Statement by Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission H.E Dr. Monique Nsanzabaganwa | African Union](#)

² [2022: The Year of Nutrition | African Union \(au.int\)](#)

³ [The Challenges and Benefits of African Continental Free Trade Area \(AfCFTA\) - Tekedia](#)

whether in relation to sexual and reproductive health or discrimination against indigenous communities. Africa is acutely aware of the need for climate action, but such action should also support the region's development and industrialization ambitions. Increase in forced migration, climate induced migration remains key in African migration issues to watch in 2022.

5. **Post Covid 19 Strategies and Civic Space for Human Rights and Good Governance**

The Covid-19 pandemic has unleashed a parallel crisis for civic space. Many of the emergency laws and other extraordinary measures adopted in response to the virus restrict fundamental rights and freedoms. Covid-19 reinforced the relevance of the right to an adequate standard of living. The impact of the pandemic has been felt particularly hard in situations in which the right had not previously been guaranteed. Low vaccine demand due to vaccine apathy, vaccine hesitancy and lack of coordination between governments, stakeholders and donors are some of the key challenges in the administering of post-Covid vaccines in Africa

PROPOSED TOPICS AND PANELS: In the form of panel discussion, the sub-regional focal points will deliver updates on the general situation of human rights in Africa, with a focus on some of the various sub-themes of the Forum (from the last forum held in April 2022) to participants on emerging trends and case studies on the State of human rights.

Proposed topics for panel discussions include the following:

1. Democracy, rule of law, Issue of human rights defenders in the sub region.
2. Gender Based Violence, Civic space in some of the environmentally challenged states and Freedom of Expression and Good Governance in Africa.
3. Multi-sectoral approach to addressing Good Governance and Human Rights;
4. Good Governance
5. Digital rights and security
6. Africa's free trade agreement in the context of Human Rights in the regions
7. Post- Covid

Various Panels in the NGOs Forum will seek to reaffirm and reiterate the importance of collaborating with NGOs in combating challenges confronting the African continent including evidence based research that reveals the centrality of NGOs in the mitigation of Conflicts, crisis and elimination of inequality.

Recommendations from the two-day event will be forwarded to the ACHPR as the contribution of African Civil Society to the work of the 73rd Ordinary Session.

Language: The deliberations of the forum will be in English, French, Arabic and Portuguese with simultaneous interpretation facilities.

Participants: Representatives from African Civil Society Organizations, International NGOs from Africa and beyond working on democracy, rule of law, governance, human rights, peace and security and the pool of resource persons will also provide much need expertise in the panels.

Expected Outcomes:

- Document general trends and Situation of human rights, democracy and rule of law in Africa.
- Networking and partnership building with and amongst participants/stakeholders
- Adopting Recommendations and resolutions where necessary to highlight them at the opening of the 73rd Ordinary Session.⁴
- Report of the NGOs Forum

Visa: Participants are encouraged to make the necessary visa arrangements, where required, before departing from their respective countries to The Gambia. Where participants do not have Gambia Diplomatic Representation in their countries of residence, the ACDHRS would endeavor to facilitate the issuance of gratis visa on arrival to such participants, provided the ACDHRS is informed well in advance and provided with the requisite information to facilitate the process. The Forum Secretariat would endeavor to provide Letters of Support if and when requests are made on time.

Accommodation: The Forum Secretariat would share names of hotels and guest houses as well as negotiated room rates to participants. Further information will be shared in due course.

Registration: All participants must complete and submit the registration form **online** which can be found at: <http://www.acdhers.org/registration-form/> no later

⁴ Amnesty International Report 2021/2022; The State of the World's Human Rights

than **Friday, 30th September, 2022** providing all the details as contained in the form. The African Centre is not obliged to process registration forms received after the deadline.

Registration fees: All participants are required to pay a subsidized registration fee of **\$150.00** (one hundred and fifty Dollars) or its equivalent in Gambian Dalasis, Euros, Pounds or CFA. The said amount contributes towards expenses relating to the conference package (conference room, tea and coffee, lunch, water, interpretation equipment and interpreters' fees, projector, documentation, stationery and other administrative logistics/support) provided during the Forum **only**.

Furthermore, note that the said amount must be paid by **ALL** participants in cash at the registration desk.

Panel Request: Kindly complete the panel request form online as detailed as possible on or before **Monday, 19th September, 2022**. Please note that the African Centre is not obliged to receive and process panel requests received after the deadline. Partners are required to contribute at least an amount **US\$300.00** (three hundred US Dollars) for all approved requests as their contribution towards the organization of the NGOs Forum.

Please note that for panel requests to be considered by the Steering Committee of the NGOs Forum, all request must be framed around the theme of the Forum.

Administrative Fees for side events: Partners that wish to organise side events and require the assistance of the African Centre should please note that an administrative fee of **US\$500.00 (five hundred US Dollars) is payable** to the African Centre by the said Partner. However, if the African Centre is informed of the organisation of the side event only for its information, then the Partner would not be required to pay such a fee. However, if the organisers so wish, the Secretariat would share details of such activities to all registered participants.

Please disseminate this information to your networks as widely as possible.

For more information, please email: csec@acdhrs.org / library@acdhrs.org