

## RESOLUTION N° 18/2022 OF THE ACERWC WORKING GROUP ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE TO INTEGRATE A CHILD RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH INTO CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

**The Working Group on Children's Rights and Climate Change of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child during its second meeting held virtually on 15 March 2022;**

**CONSIDERING** Articles 32 and 42 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) establishing the Committee on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) and its mandate, which are *inter alia* to promote and protect the rights and welfare of the child, formulate, and lay down principles and rules aimed at protecting the rights and welfare of children in Africa, and where necessary give its views and make recommendations to Governments;

**RECALLING** Article 38(1) of the ACRWC that authorizes the ACERWC to establish its own Rules of Procedures, which the ACERWC developed and revised in 2013 and 2015, respectively;

**CONSIDERING** Rule 58 of the Revised Rules of Procedure, which allows the ACERWC to establish special mechanisms, which includes working groups, and assign specific tasks or mandates to either an individual member or group of members concerning the preparation of its sessions or the execution of special programs, studies and projects;

**RECALLING** the ACERWC Resolution on the establishment of a Working Group on Children's Rights and Climate Change adopted during its 35<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session held from 31 August to 08 September 2020;

**COGNISANT** of the key role that the Working Group on Children's Rights and Climate Change play in the process of promoting a child rights-based approach to climate change action in the continent and to thereby ensuring that children's rights and welfare is protected from the impacts of climate change;

**TAKING COGNISANCE** of the phenomenon of climate change as one of the most pressing existential threats to human beings, and its devastating consequences ranging from toxic air pollution and chemicals to unprecedented global biodiversity loss, environmental exposures posing grave and systemic threats to collective and individual human rights including the rights and welfare of the child;

**DEEPLY CONCERNED** by climate change impacts on least developed and developing countries, in which most African countries fall into, due to among other things, their relatively limited capacity to respond to climate change including low climate financing, and high reliance on land and water resources for survival;

**NOTING** with concern that climate change impacts have disproportionate consequences on the enjoyment and realization of children's rights and interests presently, and the significant intergenerational implications for the future generations;

**NOTING** further with concern that climate-related impacts affect children's most basic rights and directly undermine a broad spectrum of their rights including the right to life, survival, development, participation, access to clean water and nutritious food, to enjoy the best attainable standard of health, and their right to education which is also correlated with increasing in child labour, child marriage, and other violations of their rights as recognised in the ACRWC;

**MINDFUL** of the combined impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, armed conflicts, and climate change crisis in exacerbating existing challenges, particularly socioeconomic inequalities and gender disparities;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the challenges faced by Member States and national institutions in their efforts to ensure that any given activity conducted within their territories, whether by public and private entities, does not endanger human health, natural resources, and the ecosystem;

**UNDERLINING** Article 1 of the ACRWC and General Comment No. 5 of the ACERWC on State Parties' obligations to undertake the necessary legal, policy, budgetary, administrative and other appropriate measures to ensure the full realisation of all children's rights as stipulated in the ACRWC;

**REAFFIRMING** Member States' obligations under Article 43 of the ACRWC to submit their reports to the ACERWC on the measures they have taken to give effect to the provisions of the ACRWC and on the progress made in the enjoyment of these rights;

**MINDFUL** of the ACERWC's role to monitor the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of the child, through issuing recommendations to Governments on approaching climate change in a child-right based manner;

**HEREBY AGREE AND CALL UPON STATE PARTIES TO:**

- I. Incorporate a child-rights-based approach to climate action, ensuring that the specific risks faced by children are taken into account in the development and implementation of climate policies and programmes, paying particular attention to the needs of those children who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as girls, indigenous groups and children with disabilities;
- II. Ensure that actions taken to counteract the impacts of climate change uphold the rights of children anchored in the ACRWC, including the best interests of the child;
- III. Undertake all the necessary legislative, policy, administrative, and institutional measures to address the effects of climate change on children's rights, particularly in critical sectors such as food and nutrition, water, sanitation, education, and social protection;
- IV. Conduct climate impact assessments on children's rights and develop data collection methods that are accurate, standardized, and disaggregated, as well as

- V. data collection techniques that accurately identify children's climate risks so that policy can respond properly to such risks;
- VI. Mobilize and allocate sufficient resources, including human resources and child-sensitive budgeting, to address the impact of climate change on children's rights, including through public-private funding and international cooperation;
- VII. Ensure and enhance children's meaningful participation in relevant decision-making processes relating to climate adaptation and mitigation policies and programmes, and conduct systematic awareness-raising campaigns, producing appropriate material, such as a child friendly version on the issue of climate change;
- VIII. Establish appropriate mechanisms to monitor the protection and promotion of the broad spectrum of the rights of children as enshrined under the ACRWC and relevant international standards in the context of climate change;
- IX. Adopt and implement the standards and policies of the African Union pertaining to climate action in Africa, and align national climate change strategies and programmes with the African Union Green Recovery Action Plan 2021-2027;
- X. Establish child-sensitive monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms based on disaggregated data and child-sensitive targets, and report on the progress made towards integrating child-sensitive approaches into their climate actions;
- XI. Ensure that child rights-based approaches to climate change interventions are coordinated in close collaboration with relevant sectors at the national, continental and international levels, particularly non-governmental organizations and the Regional Economic Communities;
- XII. Fully integrate climate change considerations and its consequences on the children's rights into their country reports and report on progress made to establish the impacts of climate change on the rights and welfare of the child.

**Done on 01 April 2022 during the 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the ACERWC held virtually from 21 March 2022-01 April 2022.**