

ACHPR/Res.110(XXXX)07:RESOLUTION ON THE HEALTH AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission), meeting at its 41st Ordinary Session in Accra, Ghana, from 16 to 30 May 2007:-

Recalling the entry into force of the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa* (the Protocol) on 25 November 2005,

Noting that only twenty (20) State Parties to the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights* have ratified the Protocol,

Considering the inherent difficulties in implementing the Protocol, notably those regarding its domestication, as well as harmonisation of national laws with its content,

Recalling that Article 14 of the Protocol specifically protects the health and reproductive rights of women;

Concerned that female genital mutilation is a harmful practice which affects the reproductive health of women and continues to exist in some countries in spite of legislation outlawing it;

Further Concerned about the disproportionate impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic on women, especially on the African continent;

Concerned Also about the problems relating to reproductive health care and the quality of services available to women in Africa, including the inability of existing healthcare institutions to provide adequate pre post-natal care for mothers and babies (especially in cases of complications), the high rate of maternal mortality in a number of African countries, and the prohibition of abortion except where necessary to save the woman's life:

1. **Congratulates** States which have ratified the Protocol, and urges them to take all the necessary measures to domesticate and harmonize their national laws in order to give full effect to the rights enshrined in the Protocol;
2. **Urges** States which have not yet ratified the Protocol to do so promptly and without reservations;
3. **Further Urges** States to protect the health and reproductive rights of women as stipulated in the Protocol;
4. **Congratulates** States which have adopted laws prohibiting female genital mutilation, and encourages them to implement specific programs to create awareness in all sectors of society and ensure eradication of this harmful traditional practice;

5. **Urges** those States that have not yet outlawed female genital mutilation to do so without delay;
6. **Calls On** States to take appropriate measures to protect women from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS;
7. **Requests** States to reduce the maternal mortality rate and to take adequate measures to provide effective access for women to reproductive health services, including access to lawful medical abortion in accordance with the Protocol.