

ACHPR/Res. 347(LVIII) 2016: Resolution on the Human Rights issues affecting the African Youth

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Commission), meeting at its 58th Ordinary Session held in Banjul, Islamic Republic of The Gambia, from 6 to 20 April 2015;

Recalling its mandate to promote and protect human and peoples' rights in Africa under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Charter);

Recalling the African Youth Charter which provides a comprehensive framework for the protection and promotion of the youth, as well as the strengthening of the capacity and leadership of the youth in order to meet the needs and aspirations of young displaced persons, refugees and youth with special needs;

Recalling further Goal 15 of the African Union Agenda 2063 for an engaged and empowered youth in Africa, and other AU standards and mechanisms for the youth, including the NEPAD Strategic Framework for Youth and the commitments made during the commemoration of Africa Youth Day on 1 November 2015;

Considering the recognition by States Parties that the youth are the greatest resource and an asset for sustainable development, peace and prosperity;

Further considering that the youth provide a unique contribution to the development of democracy and the rule of law in Africa;

Noting with concern the human rights situation of the youth, many of whom are marginalised as a result of inequality in income and wealth and lack of access to decision-making institutions, as well as the high illiteracy rate, unemployment and underemployment which forces them to go into exile, through clandestine means, risking their lives;

Concerned further by the vulnerability of the youth, some of whom are infected or affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, live in situations of poverty, are exposed to violence including gender-based violence, forced enlistment during armed conflicts and in terrorist groups and other forms of discrimination and harmful cultural practices;

The Commission urges States Parties to:

- i. establish institutions to ensure the participation of youth movements;
- ii. take concrete steps to promote effective youth participation in the decision-making and government of their countries;

- iii. adopt plans, policies and programmes to improve the situation of young girls who face structural and cultural obstacles, in particular forced and early marriages, female genital mutilation, discrimination and other harmful cultural practices;
- iv. provide adequate resources towards the establishment of effective institutions for youth education with a view to ensuring the quality of general and vocational education;
- v. provide resources and opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship;
- vi. protect the youth from enlistment in countries in conflict and in terrorist activities.

Done in Banjul, The Islamic Republic of The Gambia, 20 April 2016