

ACHPR/Res.159(XLVI) 09: RESOLUTION ON THE IMPACT OF THE ONGOING GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE ENJOYMENT OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN AFRICA

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission), meeting at its 46th Ordinary Session held from 11 to 25 November 2009, in Banjul, The Gambia;

Reaffirming that States Parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Charter), have an obligation to recognise the rights enshrined therein, including social and economic rights as provided in Articles 14 to 22, and to adopt legislative or other measures to give effect to them;

Reaffirming the Pretoria Declaration on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Africa, adopted at the 36th Ordinary Session of the African Commission in Dakar, Senegal on 7 December 2004;

Considering that the objectives and principles of the Constitutive Act of the African Union include: a commitment to the promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights, respect for democratic principles, human rights, rule of law and good governance and the promotion of social justice, to ensure balanced economic development; the promotion of sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;

Recognising the existence of regional and international human rights instruments which emphasise the indivisibility, interdependence and universality of all human rights;

Conscious that the realisation of economic and social rights *vis a vis* civil and political rights remain elusive to many on the African continent as a result of several factors such as persistent conflicts, lack of human and food security due to poverty and underdevelopment, corruption and lack of good governance;

Concerned by the ongoing global financial crisis which has the potential of decreasing global demand of basic commodities produced in Africa, reduce the volume of private and public capital flow into Africa and diminish the competitiveness of the economies of Member States;

Deeply Concerned that the ongoing global financial crisis has exacerbated the already poor enjoyment of social and economic rights, in particular, food security by vulnerable and marginalised groups in Africa such as the poor, women, children, refugees and displaced persons, indigenous peoples, the disabled and people living with HIV/AIDS;

Further Concerned about the impact of the international financial crisis in slowing down the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (Millennium Development Goals) adopted by the Heads of State and Government on 8 September 2000 in New York; **Recalling** the *Declaration of*

the Abuja Food Security Summit by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held on 7 November 2006, in Abuja, Nigeria, which *inter alia* affirmed the commitment of Member States to: take urgent measures to accelerate the development of strategic commodities and also to construct and maintain critical infrastructure to facilitate the movement of strategic agricultural products across national boundaries at minimal cost;

Noting the establishment of the Extraordinary Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance (CAMEF) on the financial crisis and its impact on African Economies, during the Extraordinary Conference of African Ministers held in Tunis, Tunisia on 12 November 2008;

Noting also the *Addis Ababa Declaration on the International Financial Crisis* of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments (**Assembly/AU/Decl.2(XII)**) of 3 February 2009;

Convinced that through the implementation of holistic policies, African States can alleviate the negative effects of the international financial crisis on individuals and vulnerable groups within its borders with due regard to their obligation to respect, protect, promote and fulfil social and economic rights in the African Charter;

Calls on States Parties to the African Charter to:

1. **Take steps** to ensure implementation of national policies aimed at tackling the peculiar effects of the global financial crisis on their economies within the framework of realising economic and social rights provided for and recognised by the African Charter, and to guarantee transparency and the participation of all relevant stakeholders in the process;
2. **Continuously** monitor the impact of the global financial crises on vulnerable groups like the poor, women, children, refugees and displaced persons, indigenous peoples, the disabled and persons living with HIV/AIDS;
3. **Strengthen** efforts to eradicate corruption, mismanagement of financial resources and all other similar vices in order to afford much needed transparency and accountability necessary for economic growth and external investment and to create a conducive environment for the reduction of poverty and underdevelopment through the adoption of principles of good governance;
4. **Intensify** existing cooperation efforts between Member States through the harmonisation of macro-economic policies, acceleration of economic integration within regional economic communities and strengthening of financial regulatory mechanisms and to ensure that the improvement in the enjoyment of economic and social rights by its

citizens is central to any bilateral or multilateral trade and economic agreements entered into.