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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
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Agenda item 3

### **PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT**

**Information presented by the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions on  
behalf of “A”-status national human rights institutions in Africa**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat of the Human Rights Council hereby transmits the communication submitted by the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions on behalf of “A”-status national human rights institutions in Africa,\* reproduced below in accordance with rule 7(b) of the rules of procedures described in the annex to Council resolution 5/1, according to which participation of national human rights institutions is to be based on arrangements and practices agreed upon by the Commission on Human Rights, including resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005.

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\* Reproduced in the annex as received, in the language of submission only.

## ANNEX

### **Statement of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions on behalf of “A” status NHRIs in Africa<sup>1</sup> on the Report by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict**

1. The Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict is a snapshot of the progress that has been achieved so far in the protection of the rights and guarantees of children in armed conflict as well as those caught up in armed conflict. It also points out some of the challenges and hurdles that still lie ahead.
2. The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions is pleased that considerable progress has been made towards the establishment of a Focal Point for Children and Armed Conflict with the Human Rights Council which will serve as the coordination point for the ongoing concerted efforts to address the plight of children in armed conflict.
3. It is also gratifying to note the tremendous progress that has been made in mainstreaming of child rights issues related to armed conflict into the OHCHR presences across the world and into the work of human rights mechanism, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Council.
4. The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions has membership in Chad, Southern Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Uganda. The Network is also part of efforts to establish a national human rights institution in Burundi. In all these countries, the Special Representative has highlighted considerable progress in terms of legislation aimed at bringing child protection laws into line with international obligations.
5. Even though not all these institutions fall in the “A” Status categorization by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions, the fact that they are members of the Network provides the opportunity and latitude to engage with them on the need to address impunity and bring to justice those responsible for violation of children’s rights in situations of armed conflict.
6. In furtherance of the tasks that have been clearly marked out by the Special Representative of the Secretary General, the Network will liaise with its member institutions in these countries with a view to building their capacities in and understanding of the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups.

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<sup>1</sup> The following are NHRIs with A status : National Human Rights Council of Egypt, Commission on Human Rights and Administration of Justice of Ghana, Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, Malawi Human Rights Commission, National Human Rights Commission of Mauritius, Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l’Homme du Maroc, Office of Ombudsman of Namibia, Commission Nationale des Droits de l’Homme et des Libertés Fondamentales du Niger, Commission Nationale des Droits de la Personne du Rwanda, Comité Sénégalais des Droits de l’Homme, South African Human Rights Commission, Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance of Tanzania, Commission Nationale des Droits de l’Homme du Togo, Uganda Human Rights Commission, Zambia Human Rights Commission.

7. Capacity building on these Principles and Guidelines will enable the National Human Rights Institutions advise their respective governments on any legislative reforms that are necessary to comply with international standards and in turn be able to train the military, the police and other law enforcement agencies like the judiciary on child rights and child protection procedures and mechanisms
8. In accordance with the responsibilities of NHRIs as articulated in the Paris Principles, The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions will impress upon member NHRIs in the affected countries to closely monitor the human rights situation in the camps for internally displaced children and help enforce the action plan to halt recruitment and use of children into armed conflict.
9. The Network is pleased to report that in some countries where it has membership like in Kenya, some of the rights of children who have been displaced by armed conflict are being accorded. In Kenya, for instance, the Daadab Refugee camp in Kenya is being expanded to hold more populations running away from the conflict in Somalia.
10. The Free Primary Education being offered in Kenya has also been extended and opened to refugee children displaced into the country from Somalia.
11. The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions is also pleased to inform this 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council that the Network is planning to closely collaborating with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), the African Court on Human and People's Rights (ACtHPR) and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and welfare of the Child with a view to building the capacities of African NHRIs to use the African human rights mechanisms in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.
12. In partnership with the Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa (IHRDA), a pan African Non-Governmental Organization based in the Gambia, the Network plans to convene the first interactive dialogue between the ACHPR, the ACtHPR, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and NHRIs aimed at exploring opportunities of working together in the promotion and protection of human rights of the child.
13. It is the hope of the Network that this intervention with African National Human Rights Institutions, and the support of the African Human Rights Commission and its Court, will provide the impetus and framework for reinforcing the rights and guarantees of children in situations of armed conflict as the Report of the Special Representative has recommended.
14. The Network looks forward to strategic partnership with the Human Rights Council and the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and armed Conflict aimed at implementing the Action Plan to Halt Recruitment and Use of Children in Armed Conflict.

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