

African Union



ACERWC
African Committee of Experts on
the Rights and Welfare of the Child



Keeping our Commitment to the African Child



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the Rights & Welfare of the Child



Status of implementation of
the Charter & **Agenda 2040:**

**in the Central
Africa Region**

23 November, 2020



Keeping our Commitment
to the African Child!

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**Workshop on Status of Children's Rights in
Central Africa Region Outcome Statement**

**The African Committee of Experts on the
Rights and Welfare of the Child**

23 November 2020, Addis Ababa

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The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC/the Committee) meeting at its 36th Ordinary Session and the Workshop on the Status of Children's Rights in Central African Region in Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (the Charter) on 25 November 2020;

Recalling its mandate to protect and promote children's rights in Africa as well as monitor the implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;

In line with the Decision of the Executive Council (EX.CL/DEC.1084(XXXVI)), where the Council 'Welcomes the initiative of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) to lead on the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the adoption of the African Children's Charter in the year 2020; and Urges Member States of the African Union to take concrete steps to commemorate the Anniversary in 2020 and intensify their efforts to ensure the full implementation of the African Children's Charter;

Recognizing the efforts that Members States have taken in implementing the African Children's Charter and Africa's Agenda for Children' (Agenda 2040); **further recognizing** that the year 2020 sets a milestone in providing an opportunity to assess the implementation of the Charter as well as Agenda 2040;

On the basis of the findings of the ACERWC's studies on the Status of Implementation of Agenda 2040 and Harmonization of Laws, and noting the presentations from:

- **The Republic of Burundi**
- **The Republic Chad**
- **The Republic Gabon**
- **The Democratic Republic of Congo**
- **National Human Rights Commission in the Republic of Cameroon**
- **Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)**
- **Réseau pour les Droits de l'Enfant en Afrique Centrale (REDEAC)**

Commends the measures undertaken by States in Central African, particularly:

- All Member States, except the Democratic Republic of Congo, for ratifying the African Children's Charter without any reservations;
- The Republics Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, and Gabon for submitting their Initial Reports on the implementation of the Charter; while the Republic of Cameroon submits its Periodic Report on the implementation of the Charter;
- The DRC, Congo Republic, CAR and the Republic of Gabon for enacting comprehensive and consolidated statutes on children's rights;
- The DRC for outlawing corporal punishment in all settings;
- For the improvement in the health service for children through the enactment of the National Health Strategy, the provision of free health service for children under five years of age, and decrease in maternal and child mortality; and
- For introducing a free and compulsory policy on primary education.

At the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Charter, the Committee calls on Member States in Central African Region:

- To continue the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Charter in the year 2021 along with the theme and activities of the Day of the African Child for the Year 2021- '30 years after the adoption of the Charter: accelerate implementation of Agenda 2040 for an Africa fit for children';
- Central African Republic and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to urgently submit their Initial report on the implementation of the Charter;
- The Republics of Cameroon, Chad, and Congo to submit their Periodic reports on the implementation of the Charter;
- The Republics of Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Sao Tome et Principe to adopt comprehensive and consolidated child rights legislation aligned with the Charter;
- Republic of Cameroon to amend its legislations to increase the minimum age criminal responsibility in accordance with internationally acceptable standards;
- To ensure universal, free and accessible birth registration for all children born in their territory;
- Improve universal health coverage for children through, among others, providing accessible and free of charge primary healthcare services, including for children in rural and remote areas; providing sexual reproductive health education and services for all children in their territories, and removing legal and administrative barriers to adolescents' right to access contraceptives;
- All States to invest in a sustainable manner in quality public services, in particular by allocating 15 % of their national budget to health as provided for by the Abuja Declaration;
- Building on the improvements on achieving gender parity in enrolments at the primary school level, take measures to avert the challenges that are disrupting girls' right to education including child marriage, teenage pregnancy and sexual abuse;
- All States, except the DRC, to outlaw corporal punishment in all settings;
- All Member States in the Region should take measures against acts of violence against children- widespread in homes, schools, communities, workplaces, and even care and justice systems- with particular focus on the girl child;
- States in conflict and post conflict situation to ensure the protection of children affected by conflict, take measures to ensure that children are not recruited in to armed groups and provide rehabilitation and reintegration for children who have been associated with armed groups;
- All States should put mechanisms in place for the protection of the rights of children on the move, including internally displaced children and refugees;
- All States should work towards encouraging children to take part in matters concerning them, hence ensure their right to participation;
- All States to undertake measures to mitigate the negative impact of Covid-19 on the overall wellbeing of children including their mental, physical, social, and psychological wellbeing.

**Done at the 36th Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child virtually held on
23 November – 04 December 2020.**