



## **Conference on implementation and domestic impact of the decisions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights**

The Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria, in collaboration with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Commission), will host a 3 day conference on the implementation and domestic impact of the decisions of the African Commission. The Conference will be held from 13-15 September 2023 at the Southern Sun Hotel, in Pretoria, South Africa. ('Decisions' refer to findings and recommendations in individual communications; recommendations in Concluding Observations on state reports; as well as thematic and country specific recommendations in various reports, resolutions and other soft law instruments adopted by the African Commission.)

### **Background to the Conference**

While African states have widely accepted the core African human rights treaties in theory, they have not consistently demonstrated the same level of commitment to implement and comply with the decisions of African human rights bodies (the African Commission, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights). The lack of implementation and compliance with decisions of African human rights bodies undermines the effectiveness of African human rights bodies in delivering justice to victims of human rights violations.

Because of the importance of ensuring redress for victims, African human rights bodies and other relevant stakeholders have made concerted efforts to understand the factors affecting



implementation of decisions of African human rights bodies.

As part of efforts to improve compliance with its decisions, the African Commission has adopted measures to follow-up and engage relevant stakeholders in the implementation of its decisions. Some of the efforts of the African Commission include implementation hearings, state reporting processes, promotional missions, and referral to competent policy organs of the African Union (AU). Additionally, Rule 125(2) of the 2020 Rules of Procedure of the African Commission requires states to inform the African Commission of actions taken on implementation.

Nevertheless, scholars have continue to argue that in order to address the paucity of implementation of the decisions of the African Commission, there is the need for all relevant stakeholders, including states, litigants, human rights bodies, and African Union organs, to actively play their required roles as a collective unit within the African human rights system. The consistent application of the African Commission's mechanisms and engagement with relevant stakeholders is essential to enhance the likelihood of implementation of the decisions of the African Commission in order to ultimately deliver justice to the victims of human rights violations and hold states accountable to the standards prescribed by African human rights treaties.

Over time, the African Commission started to devote more attention to implementation and follow up. To assess and explore ways of improving implementation of the African Commission's decisions, it held two Regional Seminars on the Implementation of Decisions, in 2017, in Dakar, Senegal; and in 2018 in Zanzibar, Tanzania. The reports adopted at the end of these Seminars contain a number of recommendations to relevant stakeholders. However, more still needs to be done to give effect to the recommendations.

## **Objective of the Conference**

The objective of this Conference is to provide a platform for an intellectual engagement between stakeholders and the African Commission on improving the compliance and implementation of the African Commission's decisions. The implementation Conference will also look at the broader influence (impact) of the decisions of the African Commission. Among other things, the Conference will analyse the role of the African Commission in the implementation of its decisions as well as the Commission's practise, including the recommendations in the Dakar and Zanzibar reports. The Conference will also address the obstacles faced by the African Commission in implementing its decisions and potential ways to overcome these obstacles.

The conference will feature members of the African Commission and its Secretariat, allowing the African Commission to provide feedback and comments on presentations, thereby facilitating an open and constructive dialogue between the representatives of the African





cases but also propose strategies and steps to overcome them. This session will also explore the broader impact (influence) of the specific case-study beyond the lens of compliance and implementation.

## **Call for submission of abstracts and presentations**

Interested participants in the conference should submit an abstract of not more than 500 words by 21 June 2023. The abstract should fall under one of the specific thematic focus areas of the Conference. Successful applicants will be informed by 30 June 2023, and will be required to submit a paper for presentation of not more than 8 000 words by 30 August 2023. The conference organisers will cover the cost of an economy class-flight, accommodation and other incidental costs of participation in the Conference.

### **Submit Abstracts to:**

*[zainab.olaitan@up.ac.za](mailto:zainab.olaitan@up.ac.za), copying [foluso.adegalu@up.ac.za](mailto:foluso.adegalu@up.ac.za).*

## **Publication**

The papers presented in the conference will be developed further by the presenters and published under as a special journal volume or edited book with the Pretoria University Law Press.

## **For more information, please contact:**

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