



ACERWC

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

COMMUNIQUÉ

ACERWC Secretariat
E-mail: acerwc-secretariat@africanunion.org
Tel: +266 52 01 00 18 | P.O.Box: 13460,
Address: Nala House, Balfour Road Maseru
Kingdom of Lesotho

Communiqué on the 46th Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Maseru, Lesotho

26 November -06 December 2025

1. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child successfully concluded its 46th Ordinary Session which was held in Maseru, Lesotho, from 26 November to 06 December 2025.
2. The Session was attended by Members of the Committee, Representatives of children, Representatives of Member States, Representatives of the African Union Commission, and AU Organs, Representatives of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), Representatives of UN Organs and Agencies, and Representatives of Civil Society Organizations.
3. The Opening Ceremony of the Session featured remarks from:
 - Kamohelo Sesinyi, Children’s Representatives from the Kingdom of Lesotho
 - Ms Felistus M Motimedi, Representative of the CSO Forum
 - Mr. Gilbert Sebihogo: Executive Director of NANHRIs
 - Mr Marcel Clement Akpovo, Regional Director and Representative of OHCHR to the AU
 - Dr Laila Gad, UNICEF Representative to the AU
 - Dr Eyole Monolo, Chairperson for Political Affairs Cluster, ECOSOCC on behalf of Hon. Louis Cheick Sissoko, The presiding officer, African Union Economic Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC)
 - Hon Idrissa Sow, Chairperson of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights
 - Hon. Lady Justice Chafika Bensaoulaa, Vice President African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights on behalf of the President of the Court
 - Ms Lindwe Kumalo, Clerk of the Pan African Parliament on behalf of the Hon Chief Fortune Charumbira President of the Pan African Parliament
 - H.E. Dr Maryam Ismaila Keshinro, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Women Affairs on behalf of the H.E. the Minister of Women Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
 - Mr. Paulo Kalesi, General Director of the National Children’s Institute on behalf of H.E Minister of Social Action, Family and Promotion of Women of the Republic of Angola
 - Hon Aver Gaver, Vice Chairperson of the ACERWC, on behalf of the Chairperson of the ACERWC
 - Hon. Pitso Lesaoana: Minister of Gender, Youth, and Social Development, Kingdom of Lesotho

The Session was officially opened by **Hon. Justice Nthomeng Majara**, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

4. During the 46th Ordinary Session, the Committee carried out the following major activities and made the decisions:
 - 4.1. The Committee elected a new Bureau to serve for a two-year term, composed of:
 - Hon Sabrina Gahar, Chairperson of the ACERWC
 - Hon. Ghislain Roch Etsan, Vice Chairperson of the ACERWC
 - Hon Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang, Rapporteur of the ACERWC
 - 4.2. Recognized outgoing Members whose terms will end in March 2026, presenting them with a trophy and certificate, alongside acknowledging the contributions of Madame Mariama Mohamed Cisse, the Committee's First Secretary, and external experts from the Committee's working groups.
 - 4.3. Commemorated the 35th anniversary of the Charter on 28 and 29 November with various activities, including keynote addresses and discussions centered on children's rights and challenges. Notable speakers included:
 - EllyJoy Wanjiru Githambo, Child Representative from Kenya
 - Ms Angela Martins, Director for Social Development, Culture, and Sport of the African Union Commission on behalf of H.E. Amb. Amma A. Twum-Amoah, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development
 - Honourable Ms Siza Magangoe, Deputy Director-General for Welfare Services, on behalf of the Minister of Social Development of the Republic of South Africa
 - H.E. Amb. Ntsiuoa SEKETE, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Lesotho to Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the AU
 - H.E. Amb. Willy Nyamitwe, Ambassador of the Republic of Burundi to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia & Permanent Representative to the AU, Ag Chairperson of the PRC Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Democracy, and Governance of the PRC
 - H.E. Miguel Bembe, Ambassador of the Republic of Angola to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia & Permanent Representative to the AU, Chairperson of the Permanent Representatives Committee of the AU
 - Hon Sabrina Gahar, Chairperson of the ACERWC
 - Hon. Mputi Steven Mputi, Minister of Public Service, Kingdom of Lesotho

The Committee initiated discussions on several critical topics, including the AU theme of the year through a child rights lense, harmful practices against children, the role of parliamentarians, and child-friendly cities. The commemorative publication of the Charter at 35 was also launched.

- 4.4. Launched two of its General Comment:
 - General Comment No 9 on Article 11 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child on the Right to Education
 - General Comment No 10 on Article 25 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child on Children without Parental Care
- 4.5. Launched its Monitoring Tool on Children Without Parental Care.

- 4.6. Updated participants about the annual activities of its Working Groups namely on Children with Disabilities, Climate Change and Children's Rights, Business and Children's Rights, and Implementation of Decisions. The Committee also called for increased partnership with its Working Groups.
- 4.7. Held a Forum on State Party Reporting, encouraging timely submission of reports and stronger collaboration to facilitate the reporting process.
- 4.8. Held a Technical Workshop on Implementation of Decisions with NHRIs and CSOs identifying the role of stakeholders on implementation, avenues for collaboration, and sources of decisions of the Committee.
- 4.9. Held open deliberations on the several key documents including:
 - Draft new Strategic Plan of the ACERWC (2026–2028);
 - Draft Report on Children on the Move;
 - Draft report on the Status of Implementation of the 2nd Implementation Phase of Agenda 2040;
 - Draft General Comment on Article 28 of the Charter on Drug Abuse
 - Draft Guidance Note on the Digitalization of Birth Registration in Africa
- 4.10. Held a panel discussion with the Republic of Cameroon and the Republic of Mali on the status of implementation of its decisions on Communication No 013/Com/001/2020 against Republic of Mali and Communication No 006/Com/002/2015 against the Republic of Cameroon.
- 4.11. The Committee considered the complementary reports on:
 - The first periodic report of the Republic of Burundi, and
 - The third periodic report of the Republic of Kenya
- 4.12. Heard presentations on the 2nd Follow-up to the First Ministerial Conference on Violence Against Children organized by ACPF; *Research Proposal on Responding to Orphanage Trafficking in Africa by Africhild*; the Operational Protocol for the Implementation of Child Participation by MAEJT; Reports on Africa's Adolescents: Against All Odds and on Toiling for Survival: Children in Urban Informal Sector in Africa: A synthesis report both by ACPF.
- 4.13. Heard from the Applicants on Communication No. 0019/Com/001/2022 submitted by the Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa and Mr. Solomon Joojo Cobbinah on behalf of schoolgirls living along the River Offin in the Ashanti Region against the Republic of Ghana regarding the Request of the Respondent State for extension to finalize the amicable settlement.
- 4.14. The Committee considered and deliberated on elements of its decisions on:
 - Admissibility: Communication No:0026/Com/001/2025 submitted by Mr.Emhemed Elremalli On behalf of Mohamed Elremalli (a minor) against the State of Libya
 - Merits: Communication No 0017/Com/001/2021 submitted by Child Rights and Rehabilitation Network, Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa and Centre for Human Rights (On Behalf of Children Affected by Witchcraft Accusations in Nigeria) against the Federal Republic of Nigeria

- Merits: Communication No: 0020/Com/002/2022 submitted by Lawyers Associated for Human Rights in Africa (on behalf of Children of Jehovah's Witnesses) against the State of Eritrea; and
- Merit: of Communication No: 0021/Com/003/2022 submitted by People Serving Girls at Risk and Equality Now (on behalf of Esnart Kenesi) against the Republic of Malawi.

4.15. The Committee deliberated and decided on the way forward of the below Communications:

- Communication No. 0019/Com/001/2022-The Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa and Mr. Solomon Joojo Cobbinah on behalf of schoolgirls living along the River Offin in the Ashanti Region against the Republic of Ghana
- Communication No:0023/Com/005/2022 IHRDA and Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria (On Behalf of Children in Nigeria) against the Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Communication No 024/Com/001/2024 submitted by Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa (IHRDA) (on behalf of ACM) against the Republic of Botswana

4.16. The Committee considered and adopted the planned activities of its Working Groups, and their respective documents as follows:

a. For the Working Group on Children's Rights and Climate Change the Committee:

- Adopted as amended the advocacy brief on floods and draughts which is primarily extracted from the continental study
- Adopted as amended the advocacy brief on conflict and climate change which is also extracted from the continental study and
- The proposal to submit observations of the Committee to the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Advisory Opinion proceedings on climate change

b. For the Working group on children's rights and business the Committee adopted as amended:

- Policy brief on access to remedies for victims of corporate induced child rights violations

c. For the Working group on children's rights with disabilities the Committee adopted as amended:

- Resolution on Children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities
- Position Paper on education for children with disabilities

d. For the Working group on implementation of decisions the Committee

- Adopted as amended the Guidelines/Indicators on State Compliance with the Decisions and Recommendations of the ACERWC
- Adopted the proposal to Submit a report on the status of implementation of decisions to the PRC subcommittee on democracy, governance, and human rights

- Adopted the proposal to develop a Policy brief on the designation of specific national focal points within governments relating to the implementation of the ACERWC's decisions
 - Adopted the proposal to develop a reporting template on the implementation of decisions
- 4.17. After a careful consideration of the applications submitted for the call for external experts for its Working Groups, the Committee selected external experts to server for a term of two years.
- 4.18. The Committee adopted as amended the following documents:
- The Resolution on Targeted State Party Reporting.
 - The Guidelines on Inter-session Reports of Committee Members
 - The Evaluation report of its Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
 - Thematic report on Harmful Practices Affecting Children's Rights developed under the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Child Marriage and Other Harmful Practices.
 - The Guidance Note on Digitalization of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics: With a Focus on Birth Registration developed under the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Birth Registration and Nationality.
 - The Analytical Tripartite Study on Challenges of Litigating Women and Girls' Rights considering that its comments are taken into account in the final version and upon the adoption of the same by the other two organs namely, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- 4.19. The Committee decided to develop the following documents, subject to availability of funds:
- A study on the recruitment of children by armed groups in conflict zones with the guidance of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Children in Conflict Situations considering that the request was made by the Executive Council of the African Union with Decision No EX.CL/Dec.1248 (XLIV-2024).
 - A continental benchmark on investment and budgeting for children with the guidance of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Investment and Budgeting for Children on a condition that resource is available from the requesting partner.
 - A Guiding Note on the Establishment and Strengthening of Children's Parliaments and a Child friendly version of the Child Participation Guidelines with the guidance of its Special Rapporteur on Child Participation provided that funding is available.
 - A Thematic report on the Cost of Hunger and Malnutrition: Implications for the Right to Health of Children- needs a decision; Guidelines for Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for Children in Africa; and Policy Brief on Access to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) for Children in Africa under the guidance of its Special Rapporteur on Health provided that funding is available.

- 4.20. The Committee assigned Hon Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang to work on the Draft Report on the ACERWC mandate and activities in advancing girls rights in Africa and table the same for adoption during the next session.
- 4.21. The Committee adopted the theme of the Day of the African Child for 2026 to be 'Ensuring universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene for every child in Africa'.
- 4.22. The Committee considered applications for observer status from the following Organizations:
- Biomedical Research and Training Institute based in Zimbabwe
 - DisMoi based in Mauritius
 - African Center for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) based in Uganda
 - Ismail Mahomed Center for Human and Peoples' Rights based in South Africa
 - Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa based in Uganda
 - Child Rights Network for Southern Africa (CRNSA) based in South Africa
 - Volunteers Welfare for Community Based Care of Zambia (VOWAZA)
 - African Children Development based in Lesotho
 - Network for Community Development based in Uganda
 - Women and Rural Development Networks based in Uganda
 - Niger Child Rights CSOs Coalition based in Niger
 - Zamara Foundation based in Kenya
 - Zireenza Support Foundation based in Nigeria
 - Eastern African Child Rights Network (EACRN) based Kenya
 - MAAT for Peace Development and Human Rights based in Egypt
 - Farm Orphan Support Trust FOST based in Zimbabwe
 - Youth Volunteers based in Chad
 - Nyale Institute based in Malawi
 - EPAD based in Niger
 - RIPIER from Congo
- 4.23. The Committee adopted as amended the report of its 46th Session pending the incorporation of its inputs within two weeks.
- 4.24. The Committee decided to hold its 47th Ordinary Session on 15–25 April 2026.

Done in Maseru, Lesotho at the 46th Ordinary Session on 06 December 2025.