



ACERWC

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

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COMMUNIQUÉ of the 47th Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)

**Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho
17–25 April 2026**

1. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) successfully convened its 47th Ordinary Session in Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho, from 17th to 25th April 2026.
2. The Session was attended by Members of the Committee, representatives of children, Member States, the African Union Commission, other African Union Organs, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), United Nations Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, and other stakeholders.
3. The Opening Ceremony featured statements delivered by representatives of children, civil society, the United Nations system, African Union Organs, and partners; namely:
 - Liekolo Montsi, Representative of children from the Kingdom of Lesotho
 - Mr. Kgomontso Montso, Representative of the CSO Forum
 - Mr. Marcel Clement Akpovo, Regional Director, Regional Hub for East and Southern Africa, and Representative to the African Union
 - Dr Laila Gad, UNICEF Representative to the AU
 - Prof James Mouangue Kobila, Chairperson of NANHRIs
 - 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 Tujilane Chizumila, Representative of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, on behalf of the President of the Court
 - H.E. Ambassador Marie-Antoinette Rose-Quatre, CEO of APRM
 - H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, AU Special Envoy for Children Affected by Armed Conflict
 - Hon. Sabrina Gahar, Chairperson of the ACERWC
 - Hon. Pitso Lesaoana, Minister of Gender, Youth and Social Development- the Kingdom of Lesotho
4. The Session was officially opened by Her Majesty Queen Masenate Mohato Seiso of the Kingdom of Lesotho.
5. During the Session, the Committee undertook the following key activities and decisions:

- i. Conducted the swearing-in of re-elected and newly elected Members of the Committee for a five-year term, the re-elected members are: Hon. Anne Musiwa, Hon. Robert Nanima, Hon. Joseph Sunday Sinnah, Hon. Wilson de Almeida Adão, whereas the newly elected members are Hon. Wael Abdel-Razek, Hon. Satang Nabaneh and Hon. Albab Tesfaye.
- ii. Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI).
- iii. Received updates and briefings from Member States, NHRIs with affiliate status, civil society organizations with observer status, UN agencies, and international partners.
- iv. Reviewed inter-session activities and developed work plans for the activities of its Working Groups, namely: Children with Disabilities; Climate Change and Children's Rights; Business and Children's Rights; and Implementation of Decisions.
- v. Considered the following State Party reports:
 - The First Periodic Report of Burundi
 - The Second Periodic Report of the State of Eritrea
 - The Third Periodic Report of the Republic of Kenya
- vi. Considered Complementary reports on the first periodic report of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania; and on the initial report of the Republic of The Gambia.
- vii. Launched key normative and policy documents, including a Guiding Note on Reporting on the Rights and Welfare of Children with Albinism and a Thematic Report on Harmful Practices Affecting Children in Africa.
- viii. Held a panel discussion on the theme of the Day of the African Child 2026, focusing on ensuring universal access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) for every child in Africa, and called for strengthened commitments and implementation across the continent.
- ix. Considered the inception report for the development of a General Comment on Article 13 of the Charter, focusing on the rights of children with disabilities.
- x. Reviewed the draft report of the second phase assessment on the implementation of Agenda 2040, noting key achievements, persistent challenges, and proposed priority actions.
- xi. Engaged in a high-level dialogue with the African Union Special Envoy for Children Affected by Armed Conflict, H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, through the ACERWC' Special Rapporteur on Children in Conflict Situation, Hon Robert Nanima, underscoring the need for enhanced political commitment to children's rights, including consideration of a dedicated AU theme.
- xii. Convened panel discussions in collaboration with partners on Violence Against Children in Preparation for the 2nd Ministerial Conference on VAC hosted by the African Child Policy Forum; and on closing the accountability gap: Financing,

enforcement, legal protections, and state accountability to end child marriage in Africa hosted by Equality Now and Girls Not Brides.

- xiii. Considered presentations on child-care systems, the impact of terrorism on children, and the integration of environmental and climate change issues into reporting processes.
- xiv. Considered communications brought before the Committee and deliberated on decisions relating to their merits and admissibility; namely:
 - Communication No 023/Com/005/2022 submitted by Incorporated Trustees of ISH-61 Human Rights & Social Justice Initiative, Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa, and the Centre for Human Right, University of Pretoria, against the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the merits;
 - Communication No 019/Com/001/2022 submitted by Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa and Mr. Solomon Joojo Cobbinah (on behalf of schoolgirls living in villages along the River Offin in the Ashanti Region of Ghana) against the Republic of Ghana on the merits;
 - Communication No 027/Com/002/2025 submitted by Committee for Justice, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, and the Sinai Foundation for Human Rights (on behalf of Bahaa El-Din Fathy Mohamed Maher Ismail Khalil) against Arab Republic of Egypt on admissibility.
- xv. Adopted, as amended the following key institutional documents: ACERWC Strategic Plan (2026–2028), Guidelines on Advisory Opinions, and a Resolution establishing a Working Group on Communications.
- xvi. Decided to revise and further develop the following internal governance instruments: standard operating procedures for the ACERWC Working Groups and the Code of Conduct.
- xvii. Resolved to develop new normative guidance and studies, including:
 - General Comment on Article (4) of the Charter;
 - Study on Children’s Rights in the Digital Space subject to the outcome of the Day of the General Discussion on the same;
 - Guidelines for Member States on how to integrate environment and climate change issues and children’s rights into their NDCs and NAPs through its Working Group on Climate Change and Children’s Rights;
 - The Second Edition of the Study on the Implementation of the ACERWC’s decisions subject to the availability of budget through the Working Group on Implementation of Decisions.
- xviii. Decided to hold Days of General Discussions in its future Sessions on:
 - Violence against children and harmful practices: Navigating the Digital Frontier.
 - Children’s rights in the digital space
- xix. Decided to consider the reports of the State of Libya and the Arab Republic of Egypt without complementary reports at the 48th Ordinary Session.

- xx. Examined applications for observer status and affiliate status from Civil Society Organizations and a National Human Rights Institution, namely: Inclusion Africa from Kenya, Youth Volunteers Chad, Zambia National Traditional Counselors, and the National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Cabo Verde.
- xxi. Decided to pilot the Targeted State Party Reporting Procedure with five State Parties, namely: the Republic of Angola, Kingdom of Eswatini, Republic of Gabon, Republic of Ghana and United Republic of Tanzania.
- xxii. Considered and issued decision on the requests received from its Partners. Particularly, the Committee decided to get additional clarification and justification on the request to develop targeted guidance to help Member States interpret and apply early childhood rights indicators from the requesting partner.
- xxiii. Assigned members as Country Rapporteurs, Special Rapporteurs, Members and Chairpersons of Working Groups as follows:

Name	Country Rapporteur	Thematic Rapporteur
Hon. Sabrina Gahar	Djibouti, Libya, Tunisia, Chad, Madagascar	Special Rapporteur on Children on the Move
Hon. Ghislain Roch Etsan	Guinea, Burundi, Mauritania, Togo, Gabon	Special Rapporteur on Child Participation
Hon. Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang	South Africa, Lesotho, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia	Special Rapporteur on Education
Hon. Hermine Kembo Takam Gatsing	Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic	Special Rapporteur on Child marriage and Other Harmful Practices
Hon. Wilson de Almeida Adão	Mozambique, Sao-Tome and Principe, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea	Special Rapporteur on Investment and Budgeting for Children
Hon. Anne Musiwa	Somalia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Uganda and Seychelles	Special Rapporteur on Children without Parental Care
Hon. Robert Nanima	Nigeria, Malawi, Eswatini, Namibia, Sudan	Special Rapporteur on Children in Conflict Situations
Hon. Joseph Sunday Sinnah	Cameroon, Liberia, Mauritius, Rwanda, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic	Special Rapporteur on Child Justice
Hon. Wael Abel-Razek	Morocco, Algeria, Comoros, Senegal, Benin	Special Rapporteur on Health
Hon. Satang Nabaneh	Angola, Botswana, Kenya, Zambia, Egypt	Special Rapporteur on Violence against Children
Hon. Albab Tesfaye	Zimbabwe, Gambia, Ghana, Republic of Congo, Niger	Special Rapporteur on Birth Registration and Nationality

Working Group	Members
Working Group on Children with Disabilities	Hon Anne Musiwa- <i>Chairperson</i> Hon. Sabrina Gahar Hon. Wael Abdel-Razek
Working Group on Business and Children's Rights	Hon. Hermine Kembo Takam Gatsing- <i>Chairperson</i> Hon Joseph Sunday Sinnah Hon. Wilson de Almeida Adão
Working Group on Climate Change and Children's Rights	Hon. Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang- <i>Chairperson</i> Hon. Ghislain Roch Etsan Hon. Satang Nabaneh
Working Group on Implementation of Decisions	Hon. Robert Nanima- <i>Chairperson</i> Hon. Albab Tesfaye Hon. Ghislain Roch Etsan
Working Group on Communications	Hon. Wilson de Almeida Adão- <i>Chairperson</i> Hon. Hermine Kembo Takam Gatsing Hon. Satang Nabaneh Hon. Robert Nanima

xxiv. Decided to hold its 48th Ordinary Session from 14 to 24 October 2026.

xxv. The Committee adopted as amended the report of its 47th Session.

The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Lesotho for the successful hosting of the Session and the hospitality extended to all participants.

Done in Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho, on 25 April 2026.