

**AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD**

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**COMITE AFRICAIN D'EXPERTS SUR LES DROITS ET LE BIEN-ETRE DE L'ENFANT****PRESS RELEASE****N° 001/JAN/2014****THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD: 25****YEARS IN 2015****A CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNIVERSAL RATIFICATION OF AND REPORTING ON THE****AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD (ACRWC)**

**Addis Ababa, 23 January, 2014.** - Alongside the 22nd AU Summit (21 - 31 January, 2014), on 29 January, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) is launching the Campaign for the Universal Ratification of and Reporting on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). The campaign marks the 25th Anniversary of the adoption of the ACRWC on 11 July 1990. The campaign aims at securing a universal ratification of and reporting on the implementation of the ACRWC.

Presently the number of ratification stands at 47 out of 54 AU Member States. The remaining 7 countries which are yet to ratify the ACRWC are: Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Federal Republic of Somalia, Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, Republic of South Sudan, and Tunisia. Similarly, only 20 out of 47 state parties have complied duly to their obligations to submit initial reports to the committee as stipulated in Article 43 of the ACRWC, among which only two, Burkina Faso and Kenya, have submitted their periodical reports.

For the committee to effectively undertake its mandate, all African countries are expected to ratify the charter and report on its implementation accordingly. Upon ratification the state parties have the obligation to protect, promote and fulfill the rights enshrined under the ACRWC. State parties to the charter are also obliged to recognize the rights, freedoms and duties enshrined in the ACRWC and shall undertake to the necessary steps to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the provisions of this charter. States parties to the ACRWC are required to report on the implementation of the provisions so the reporting mechanism is a means of monitoring compliance of the state with its child rights obligations.

The campaign is planned to be conducted within a 2 year period culminating on 29 November, 2015, with a series of activities and outreach events across the continent. The campaign, inter alia, aims at achieving universal ratification and respect for states parties' fulfillment of their reporting obligations by 2015 and increasing the visibility of the ACRWC and its monitoring body. It also promotes the effective implementation of the ACRWC and advocates for the withdrawal of reservations.

**A press conference will be held on 29 January, 2014 at 10:30 in the Briefing Room 1 of the African Union headquarters.**

**Media are invited to attend this event.**

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