



OUTCOME STATEMENT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD 2016

Guided by the theme of the 2016 Day of the African Child, which is, ***“Conflict and Crisis in Africa: Protecting All Children’s Rights”***;

Commending the efforts of the United Nations, the African Union and African States to prevent and resolve crisis and conflicts on our continent; especially for the peace keeping missions and the laws and policies aiming at preventing or stopping conflicts in Africa;

Recognizing and thanking civil society organizations and humanitarian agencies for providing humanitarian aid to conflict affected communities and standing with children even in the toughest crisis and conflict situations;

Recalling that all children in Africa including refugee and displaced children and others affected by crisis and conflicts have the right to survive, learn and be protected from violence, abuse and neglect, and that these rights are protected by the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international and regional human rights instruments;

Deeply concerned that despite the existence of global, continental, and sub- regional commitments and investment in conflict prevention and resolution by African States, more than **12.6 million** children in Africa are out of school due to armed conflict and suffer abductions, sexual violation, killed and maimed, among other grave violations

with impunity. These violations are perpetrated by forces of both non-state and state actors, including even peace keepers;

Examples from Gambella

- Since the war in South Sudan, over 200,000 people have been displaced into the Gambella camp. About 67% of this population are children and unaccompanied minors; 70% are women.
- As much as we appreciate the support so far provided for the camps, there are still issues of abduction of children, inadequate water and sanitation services and improved safe spaces for effective learning.

Regretting that schools and hospitals are used for military purposes and therefore become targets of military attacks denying children of their rights to life, education and development;

We, the children attending the commemoration of the Day of the African Child on 16 June 2016 at the Jewi Refugee Camp in Gambella, Ethiopia on behalf of all children in Africa; hereby strongly urge the following actors to take the needed and urgent steps;

African Governments:

- a. To implement and report on the implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international and regional human rights instruments;
- b. To prioritize the best interest of the child and resolve conflicts in peaceful ways and through dialogues;
- c. To provide ultimate protection for children from crisis and armed conflicts and the consequences therein;
- d. To ensure that perpetrators of violation of children's rights including in conflicts situations are punished
- e. To submit a report within three months to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) on the implementation of activities organized during the 2016 Day of the African Child.

The African Union and the United Nations:

- a. To hold peace keepers accountable for violations against children's rights;
- b. To hold African governments accountable for their commitment *to 'silence the guns on the continent by 2020* according to the Agenda 2063 of the AU.
- c. To ensure that children are adequately protected during crisis and conflicts, and that they are not denied access to humanitarian aid;
- d. To advocate for and monitor the accountability of governments in the implementation of standards for the protection of children during crisis and conflicts situations.

Partners (Regional Economic Communities, Parliaments, UN agencies, CSOs, International and Regional Organizations, the Media, etc.):

- a. To advocate for and monitor the accountability of governments in the implementation of standards for the protection of children during crisis and conflicts situations;
- b. To organize advocacy campaigns and youth- led actions to eliminate violations of children's rights especially during conflicts.
- c. To provide financial resources and technical assistance targeting comprehensive and inter-agency programmes and strategies that address the needs and priorities of children affected by crisis and conflicts.

**Adopted on Wednesday 16th June 2016, at the Jewi Refugee Camp,
Gambella, Ethiopia**