

PRESS RELEASE: 2018

The African Union Legal Team on the Chagos Archipelago Advisory Opinion met at the African Union Headquarters



Addis Ababa, 18 February 2018 – The

African Union Legal Team chaired by Ambassador Dr. Namira Negm, the Legal Counsel of the African Union, Dr. Mohammed Gomaa and Professor Makane Mubengue met for the second time from 16-19 February 2018, at the Headquarters of the African Union to

finalize the draft written statement of the AU on the Advisory Opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965.

The Team discussed the relevant AU and OAU Decisions for the Draft Statement with regards to the complete decolonization of Mauritius to demonstrate that it is of African Union's profound interest to see an Africa free of any type of Colonization. It is to be recalled that in the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, the Heads of State of the African Union reaffirmed their commitment to the ideals of Pan-Africanism, continue the effort for the complete decolonization of the African Continent and to ensure the Sovereignty and territorial integrity of each Member State is unconditionally respected.

During this meeting, the Office of the Legal Counsel (OLC) and the team of the AU lawyers finalized the substantive details with regard to the submission and in the coming few days through intense work and communication between the team, the written statement will be ready for submission to the ICJ before the deadline.



In Mauritius during January 2018, the first meeting of the legal team was held after the Legal Counsel of the African Union Ambassador Dr. Namira Negm requested from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that the African Union “(i) be permitted to furnish information, in writing and orally, on the question submitted to the Court for its advisory opinion and (ii) be granted an extension of one month for the filing of its written statement”. Consequently, the Court has extended the time-limit for filing written statements to 1 March 2018.

Ambassador Namira Negm the AU Legal Counsel, Dr. Mohammed Gomaa, Professor Makane Mubengue and the Staff of OLC met with the Ambassador of Mauritius in Radisson Blu Hotel on 17 February 2018 during which the Ambassador expressed his appreciation to the African Union led by H.E. Moussa Faki the Chairperson of the Commission, the Legal Counsel and her Team for the efforts being exerted to ensure the complete decolonization of the Continent by standing by Mauritius. Furthermore, he highlighted the need to strengthen the joint bilateral action strategy and coordination between the African Union Legal Team and the Mauritian Legal Team prior to the following phase on May 2018, in which the Second Statement will be submitted to the Court.

Accordingly, the African Union (AU) Commission would like to reiterate its call as decided by the Assembly under paragraph 10 of the Draft Decision on Chagos Archipelago, Assembly/AU/Dec.684(XXX) for Member States to make submissions before 1 March 2018 in a harmonized manner to capitalize on the already well established stance of the AU for a complete decolonization of the African Continent.

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