

**NINTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE of the NETWORK OF AFRICAN NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS
Accra, 27-29 November, 2013**

“Business and Human Rights Opportunities, Challenges and the Role of African National Human Rights Institutions”

Conclusions and Resolutions

Participants at the 9th Biennial Conference of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), convening in Accra, Ghana from 27-29 November, 2013 under the theme “Business and Human Rights Opportunities, Challenges and the Role of African National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs)”, organised jointly by the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice of Ghana (CHRAJ) and the NANHRI, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)*, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Danish Institute for Human Rights, and Institute for Human Rights and Business and Global Rights;

Acknowledging with appreciation the welcome and hospitality of the CHRAJ and the people of Ghana,

Affirming, the significant role that NHRIs increasingly play in relation to the Business and Human rights (BHR) agenda including monitoring the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (BHR) within its framework of “protect, respect, remedy,”

Recognising the valuable work and on-going activities of the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs Working Group on Business and Human Rights, in which the NHRIs of Ghana and Malawi represent the NANHRI,

Affirming the need for a complementary and collective approach by African NHRIs to promote and protect the human rights of persons in the prevailing regional context of exploitation of natural resources, land, environment and other related disparities,

Welcoming the Report of the NANHRI Mapping Survey on Business and Human rights that assesses the current engagement, capacities and priorities of NANHRI members in the area of human rights,

Recalling the priority and the relevance of the themes in the Plan of Action on Business and Human Rights adopted in Yaoundé Cameroon in October 2011, as well as the outcomes of the 10th Biennial Conference of the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs (ICC) held in Edinburgh 2010,

Recalling the need for all African NHRIs to function independently and in full conformity with the Paris Principles as adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993,

Welcoming the declaration and recommendations, made at the NGO forum, and the need for NHRIs and NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs) to enhance cooperation in the area of business and human rights (BHR),

Appreciating the contribution of the European group of NHRIs, and their willingness to collaborate more closely with the NANHRI,

1. *Resolved:*

At national level:

- a) To strengthen the role and capacities of African NHRIs in close collaboration with government, civil society and other relevant stakeholders in BHR;
- b) To encourage governments to adopt and implement the UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business;
- c) To continue to implement the Yaoundé Plan of Action and report to the NANHRI secretariat;
- d) To consider, with due respect to national specificities and resources of each state and NHRI, the relevance of developing national action plans on BHR, and/or integrating the latter in existing national reports to UN and regional bodies and policies;
- e) To engage with government on the development, review and implementation of an adequate legislative and policy frameworks in relation to land and environmental rights in compliance with international standards; including adequate compensation and safeguards for the protection of affected persons and vulnerable groups in development programmes and projects;
- f) To reinforce efforts to better protect labour rights in line with international and regional instruments, in particular the rights of domestic workers and migrants, by ensuring legal frameworks are implemented where they exist, and immediately formulated where they do not exist;
- g) To further reinforce collaboration with neighboring NHRIs and tackle similar challenges to protect migrants, in particular un-documented migrant workers;

- h) To strengthen the NHRI mandate to investigate and handle complaints, where relevant, regarding the impacts of extractive industries on human rights and the environment;
- i) To enhance collaboration with local and national NGOs and actors to ensure that contracts in the extractive sector benefit the people of Africa;
- j) To work cooperatively with CSOs and NGOs in a systematic manner, in areas such as documentation, research, advocacy and enhancing skills sets in relation to BHR; and improve CSO's understanding of the mandates and activities of NHRIs.
- k) To raise awareness on incorporating a human rights based approach into education programmes and policies that promote relevant international and regional human rights instruments concerning BHR;

At regional and international level:

- l) To strengthen engagement and explore new areas of cooperation between the NANHRI and the European Network of NHRIs and other NHRI regional networks, in order to foster more effective collaboration, and facilitate sharing of good practices and cross regional experiences in relation to BHR,
 - m) To update systematically and periodically the NANHRI mapping survey on human rights and businesses, using the existing NANHRI website as a resource to share information within the network, with contributions of all African NHRIs involved in BHR activities;
 - n) To engage and interact with international and regional human rights mechanisms and organizations, including submitting reports, making statements, participating in meetings; and following up of recommendations in relation to BHR,
 - o) To develop common positions of engagement with international and regional human rights mechanisms in relation to business and human rights working cooperatively with the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs (ICC); and any other relevant bodies,
2. *Resolve* to engage consistently with the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights advocating for the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights by states parties.

3. *Agree* to hold the next biennial conference in Yaoundé, Cameroon in 2015.

Adopted in Accra, 29 November 2013.