



**Statement by the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions
(NANHRI) on Behalf of all African National Human Rights Institutions
(NHRIs) on the recent events in Malawi and Togo**

The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) wishes to bring to the attention of the regional and global human rights fraternity the unfortunate events that have occurred in Malawi and Togo.

In the case of Malawi, the Chairperson of the Commission Mr. John Kapito has been incarcerated by the State on alleged charges resulting from his attempt to fulfil his Commission's mandate.

In the case of Togo, the Chairperson Mr. Koffi Kounte has been forced to seek refuge in France after he released a report that the Togolese government considered unfavorable.

We believe that the actions of these Chairpersons to promote and protect human rights in their respective countries were perfectly within the law that established their Commissions and set out their mandates.

We therefore regret to note that these governments do not respect the institutions that they themselves established.

As NANHRI, we take this opportunity to remind the two governments of their obligations under the Paris Principles. These Principles require state parties not to

interfere with the work of NHRIs or to take actions that undermine their effective functioning and independence.

The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) is a membership based organization bringing together forty (40) national human rights institutions (NHRIs) including the Human Rights Commission of Malawi and the *Commission National des Droits de l'Homme du Togo*.

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are bodies constituted by law to promote and protect human rights pursuant to the provisions of the United Nations (UN) Resolution 48/134 of 20/12/1993 and the Paris Principles.

NANHRI provides practical assistance and support to its members to enable them to better undertake their human rights mandates in accordance with the Paris Principles.

Done in Geneva,
21st March 2012

Members