

AFRICAN UNION

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UNION AFRICAINE

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AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS  
COUR AFRICAINE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET DES PEUPLES  
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## PRESS RELEASE

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO RATIFIES THE PROTOCOL ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

**Arusha, 11 December 2020.** The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has deposited its instrument of ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

The instrument was deposited at the African Union (AU) Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 8 December 2020.

This brings the number of AU Member States that have ratified the Protocol to 31.

"The DRC has taken another grand step to safeguard human and peoples' rights. I strongly encourage the central African country to take one more bold step by making the Declaration (under Article 34(6)) to allow NGOs and individuals to access the Court directly," said Hon Justice Sylvain Oré, President of the African Court.

He reiterated to other AU Member States that have not yet done so, to ratify the Protocol and deposit the declaration.

The other States which have ratified the Protocol are: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Congo, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Lesotho, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Mauritania, Mauritius, Nigeria, Niger, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, South Africa, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia and Uganda.

As of to date, only six of 31 State Parties to the Protocol have deposited the declaration recognizing the competence of the Court to receive cases directly from NGOs and individuals. The six States are: Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Malawi and Tunisia.

**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

1. The African Court was established by virtue of Article 1 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, to complement the protective mandate of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, with a view to enhancing the protection of human rights on the continent.

2. In addition to the ratification of the Protocol, States have to make a Declaration required under Article 34(6) of the Protocol to allow individuals and NGOs to bring cases directly before the Court. Without such Declaration, the Court would have no jurisdiction over cases brought by individuals and NGOs.

3. The Protocol was adopted on 9 June 1998 in Burkina Faso and came into force on 25 January 2004. The Court officially started its operations in November 2006 initially in Addis Ababa and a year later moved to its permanent seat in Arusha, Tanzania.

***Further information on the Court can be obtained from the Court's website at [www.african-court.org](http://www.african-court.org).***

For more comments:

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