

**SOLIDARITY FOR
AFRICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

A force for freedom



**MOUVEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ
POUR LES DROITS
DES FEMMES AFRICAINES**

Une force pour la liberté

Press Release

For Immediate Release

March 23rd, 2012

Cote D'Ivoire Ratifies the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa

Nairobi, Kenya. The Solidarity for African Women's Rights coalition (SOAWR) – www.soawr.org - congratulates the Republic of Cote D'Ivoire on its ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Protocol) http://au.int/en/sites/default/files/PROTOCOL_AFRICAN_CHARTER_HUMAN_PEOPLES_RIGHTS_RIGHTS_WOMEN_AFRICA.pdf. The instrument of ratification was deposited to the African Union (AU) Commission on March 9th 2012.

The Protocol was adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the 2nd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Maputo on July 11, 2003 and came into force in November 2005 after ratification by 15 member states. Cote D'Ivoire's ratification of the Protocol brings the total number of ratifications to 32 (thirty two).

"We welcome Cote D'Ivoire to the group of countries that have ratified the Protocol, and we are especially encouraged considering that Cote D'Ivoire is a post-conflict state," said Naisola Likimani, Head of Advocacy at FEMNET. SOAWR calls upon the government of Cote D'Ivoire to popularize the Protocol and to establish a process to ensure that the provisions of the Protocol are realized through laws, policies, practices and services promoting and protecting women's rights in Cote D'Ivoire.

SOAWR urges other African states to follow suit and ensure that African women make gains through the provisions outlined in the Protocol. Faiza Mohamed, Director of Equality Now emphasized, "This ratification is a step in the right direction. The goal is for the Protocol to be universally ratified, domesticated and implemented in Africa."

For more information on the Protocol and the work being done to make it a reality, please contact:

Alexandria Muhangi, *Program Officer, Equality Now (SOAWR Secretariat)*

amuhangi@equalitynow.org

Tel. +254-20-2719832/2719913, Fax: +254-20-2719868,

www.equalitynow.org, www.soawr.org

P.O. Box 2018-00202, Nairobi Kenya

Coalition Members

Action for Development (ACFODE), African Centre for Democracy And Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS), Alliance for Africa, Akina Mama wa Afrika, African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Association des Juristes Maliennes, Baobab for Women's Human Rights, Cellule de Coordination sur les Pratiques Traditionnelle Affectant la Sante des Femmes et des Enfants, Centre for Justice Studies and Innovations (CJSI), Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW), Collectif des Associations et ONGS Féminines de Burundi (CAFOB), Equality Now, East Africa Sub-regional Support Initiative (EASSI), Fahamu for Social Justice, Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA-Kenya), Forum Mulher, Human Rights Law Service (HURILAWS), Inter-African Network For Women, Media, Gender and Development (FAMEDEV), Girl Child Network (GCN), Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices (IAC), Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), NGO Gender Coordination Network (NGOGCN), Oxfam GB, People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA), Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance (RHRA), Strategic Initiative for the Horn of Africa Women (SIHA), Sister Namibia, Tomorrow's Child Initiative (TCI), Ugandan Women Network (UWONET), Union Nationale des Femmes de Djibouti (UNFD), University of Pretoria Center for Human Rights, Voix de Femmes, Women Direct, Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternatives (WRAPA), Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), Women of Liberia Peace Network (WOLPNET), Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL)