



## **COMMUNIQUE FROM THE EAST AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS' FORUM (EACSO)**

**Snow Crest Hotel, Arusha, Tanzania,**

**October 16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

COGNIZANT of the common vision toward a united and strong Africa through regional integration bodies such as the East African Community (EAC) as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU);

RECOGNIZING that all EAC Partner States are party to the Constitutive Act of the AU and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the significant steps taken by a majority of Partner States in ratifying the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women;

APPRECIATE all the steps taken by the AU in adopting norms, principles and policies aimed at promoting democracy, rule of law good governance, respect for human rights and social political development in Africa with the full participation of Civil Society in Africa;

TAKING NOTE of the recommendations of the 16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the AU<sup>1</sup> to make Shared Values the theme of the Ordinary Session of the Assembly in January 2011, put in place a Pan-African Architecture on Governance and identify obstacles and measures to be adopted to facilitate continental integration based on such shared values.

NOTING that these Values can play a critical role in transforming Africa, regional integration and sustainable development;

RECOGNIZING that whilst these shared principles and values have been consistently articulated in many Treaties, Declarations and Resolutions adopted by the EAC, their consolidation, implementation and other obstacles remain a major challenge among the Partner States;

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<sup>1</sup> (EX.CL/Dec.525 [XVI])

ACKNOWLEDGING that the EAC as a building block of integration in Africa is willing to play a strong role in ensuring that they are practiced across the region;  
NOTING the need for both the AU and EAC to work in close partnership with all segments of civil society;

WE THE MEMBERS of East Africa Civil Society convened under the leadership of the East African Civil Society Organizations Forum (EACSO) in collaboration with the Centre for Citizens Participation in the African Union (CCP - AU), representing the five (5) Partner States of the EAC identified our shared values inherent in the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community within the areas of human rights, democracy, elections, governance and gender as;

1. **In with the area of Human Rights**, the sanctity of life, tolerance of diversity and the basic need and conditions necessary for human survival;
2. **Regarding Democracy, Elections and Governance**, we believe in equitable and effective participation; accountability, transparency and integrity; holding free, fair and participatory elections as core values in democracy, good governance and elections;
3. **Concerning Gender**, we share values of protection against Gender Based Violence (GBV) and discrimination and promoting health as a basic human right; gender equality and gender equity.

WE the participants to the Consultative Meeting therefore resolve and RECOMMEND that;

The AU and EAC Partner States speed up the process of domestication and implementation of the various continental and regional protocols and declarations aimed at promoting human rights, democracy, elections and gender equality and to put in place implementation, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms;

Put in place programmes to enhance awareness creation with particular emphasis on employing the use of public media to facilitate this and further hold and support civic education programmes regarding all continental and regional instruments and policies vis-à-vis regional integration and human rights;

*Therefore, resolve and recommend to the AU;*

- i. To operationalize the Human Rights Fund created in 2003 in Kigali, Rwanda by the Ministerial Conference on Human Rights in Africa to deal with effective reparations and capacity building of national, regional and continental human rights institutions.

*Resolve and urge the EAC in the area of Human Rights;*

- i. Amplify the response of Partner States to gross human rights through the operationalization of the EAC Peace and Security Architecture;
- ii. Hasten of the passing of the draft EAC HIV and AIDS Prevention and Management Bill;
- iii. Call for the censure of abductions, kidnappings and illegal transfer of people accused of serious crimes such as terrorism;
- iv. To enhance the administration of justice through increased budgetary allocation and capacity building, including facilitating legal aid and awareness, and engendering the role of CSOs in facilitating the aforementioned.

*Resolve and urge the EAC Partner States in relation to democracy, elections and governance;*

- i. To ratify and domesticate the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and;
- ii. Establish a regional mechanism to monitor the Partner States compliance to Democracy, Elections and Governance principles and values;
- iii. Increase the space for opposition parties to participate of in political processes and governance including the recognition of shadow governments, and further provide safeguards for the freedom of association and speech for all political actors;
- iv. Work toward the full, active and effective representation of women and the youth in political processes and leadership at all levels.

*With regard to Gender Equality determine and encourage EAC Partner States;*

- i. To promote health as a basic human right and protect individuals against Gender Based Violence (GBV) and discrimination through reform of gender insensitive laws and policies and abolishment of harmful cultural practises;
- ii. To enhance the technical and human capacity at the EAC on gender issues;
- iii. Work toward the meaningful participation of women in key missions such as peacekeeping and conflict resolution;
- iv. To allocate 15% of their respective national budgets toward health in accordance with the Maputo Protocol;

*We Members of the East African Civil Society Organisations' Forum Commit to;*

- i. Constructive engagement in national, regional and continental development initiatives with the AU and the EAC and offer effective collaboration and support in the development of the Shared Values, their implementation and monitoring of related processes.

**Signed at the Snow Crest Hotel, Arusha, Tanzania this twenty third day of October 2010.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Prof. Chris Maina Peter  
**President – East African Civil Society Organizations’ Forum**