

**STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SERVICE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE  
RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA**

**47th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights**

**AGENDA Item 7**

Madam Chairperson,

The International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) welcomes the work of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of women in Africa.

Madam Special Rapporteur, the remarkable and commendable commitment of women in the promotion and protection of human rights needs to be encouraged and protected. This requires taking into account the specific risks incurred by them. Constituting a major breakthrough since the 1998 Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the Resolution 13/13 adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2010 asks Member States to take into account the particular risks faced by them, including acts of violence they face in carrying out their activities.

In 2008, the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders reported on the number of communications relating to the defenders, noting that 22% of these submissions concerned women human rights defenders. In Africa, the rate was much lower with only 10% of communications relating to women human rights defenders, despite the repeated violations of their rights recorded on the continent. The ISHR invites the Special Rapporteur on the rights of women in Africa and the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders in Africa to raise awareness about the reality of these defenders and their precarious situation by establishing a mechanism to document violations against women human rights defenders. The ISHR, in its activities to protect and promote women defenders' rights, is currently developing a manual tackling the violations of women defenders' rights. This work is done in partnership with other organizations working in the field. This manual will be presented for the first time and for tests purposes during a training workshop in November 2010. We would be glad to involve the two Special Rapporteurs closely in this initiative.

I thank you for your attention.

16 May 2010, Banjul