

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press Release No:

Date: 10th Nov 2022

Venue: Rabat, Morocco.

African Union concludes mission to Morocco on the ratification of the Maputo Protocol on Women's Rights.

The African Union Commission's Women, Gender and Youth Directorate has concluded an advocacy and ratification mission in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, aimed at promoting the adoption and ratification of the [Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa](#) (the Maputo Protocol) by the Kingdom of Morocco. Morocco rejoined the African Union in 2016, is one of 12 African countries that are yet to ratify the Maputo Protocol. The mission took place from 1 to 4 November 2022.

The African Union Commission delegation was joined by the 1st Vice Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (STC on GEWE)'s Bureau and Minister of State for Gender and Culture in Republic of Uganda, Honorable Peace Regis Mutuuzo and a team from the Solidarity for African Women Rights Coalition (SOAWR), and paid courtesy calls to Honorable Aawatif Hayar, Minister of Solidarity, Social Integration and Family, members of Parliament, and the President of the National Human Rights Council, and representatives of Civil Society Organizations.

Hon. Hayar in her brief to the delegation, lauded the advocacy visit, stating the Maputo Protocol is timely as the country is in the process of revising the Family Code and that ratifying it will present a lot of opportunities for women in Morocco. She mentioned that the Kingdom of Morocco has experienced considerable momentum in consolidating women's rights and establishing equality between men and women. "Human rights are a priority that places the issue of equality between men and women at the centre of national concerns." She added that the Constitution of Morocco provides for gender equality and recognizes women's rights and that the family code of 2003 which is in process of revision is a landmark reform of the status of Moroccan women as it places the family under the joint responsibility of the husband and the wife instead of the husband only and that women of Morocco are increasingly taking up national and local political posts, girls' access to education has improved as well as the economic empowerment of women among others.

Hon. Peace Regis Mutuuzo, observed that the Maputo Protocol set remarkable standards on women's rights on the continent. She noted that the full implementation of the Protocol would contribute to the continent's development agenda immensely. "This treaty holistically addresses women's emancipation and ensures a unified approach to the realization of their rights. We have been blessed to meet many state and non-state actors in the Kingdom of Morocco and believe we will go far if we work

together. If women are left behind, the continent will be left behind. Ratifying the Maputo Protocol will, therefore, solidify the women’s rights movement in Africa,” she said.

Dr. Jeanne Flora Kayitesi, representing the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate noted that the mission is within the framework of the Roadmap of the "All for the Maputo Protocol Programme" adopted in December 2018, which is one of the key flagship projects aimed at mobilizing support for universal ratification of the Maputo Protocol. She added that the Maputo Protocol has given rise to the adoption and promulgation of equally innovative and progressive legislation, policies and other institutional mechanisms to advance women’s human rights at a national level. “This mission is part of the advocacy efforts for the universal ratification of the Protocol in line with the commitment by AU and we hope to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Maputo Protocol next year 2023 in Maputo, Mozambique with Kingdom of Morocco on board. Morocco has made significant advancements for women’s rights, and several legal provisions and government initiatives to increase women’s political and economic participation are in place”, she said.

While speaking on behalf of SOAWR, Equality Now Africa Office Director, Faiza Mohamed, said that 11 July 2023 will mark 20 years since the Maputo Protocol was adopted. She explained that the milestone would be marked in Mozambique and hoped the Kingdom of Morocco would be among the countries celebrated for ratifying the treaty. She urged that the country could ratify the Protocol alongside the African Charter and applauded the African Union for launching the “All for the Maputo Protocol” campaign.

Led by JOSSOUR Forum des Femmes Marocaines, Moroccan Civil Society Organizations committed to playing their part by working with the government in addition to popularizing the Maputo Protocol to ensure that it was ratified.

43 African countries have ratified the Maputo Protocol. Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, Egypt, Madagascar, Morocco, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan are yet to ratify.

For further inquiries, please contact:

Doreen Apollos | Information and Communication Directorate | African Union Commission | Email: ApollosD@africa-union.org

Dr Jeanne Flora Kayitesi | Women, Gender and Development Directorate | African Union Commission | Email: kayitesijf@africa-union.org

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission, **E-mail:** DIC@african-union.org | **Website:** www.au.africa | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia Follow Us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)