

REPORT ON THE PANEL ON SOCIAL PROTECTION AS A HUMAN RIGHTS IMPERATIVE, HELD ON 30 APRIL, 2018 DURING THE 62ND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS (ACHPR), NOUAKCHOTT, MAURITANIA

The organisers (the Dullah Omar Institute, University of the Western Cape, South Africa, Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) and the Global Coalition on Social Protection Floors in conjunction with the Chairperson of the Working Group on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) proposed the panel to - create awareness among states and other stakeholders on the human rights importance of social protection measures; educate states and other stakeholders on the relevance of ILO Recommendation 202 on Social protection Floors in addressing poverty and inequality and; elicit debate on the provisions of the Draft Protocol to the African Charter on the Right to Social Security/Protection. The panel was the first of its kind on social security in the history of the African Commission and thus garnered a lot of interest, first for its relevance in the African context and secondly to garner support for the Commission's draft protocol on social security.

The panel was moderated by Commissioner Jasmine King, the Chairperson Working Group on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. She also gave opening remarks on the relevance of Social Security and its Protection as a Human Rights Imperative in Africa. The first presentation was anchored by Ms Allana Kembabazi, representative of Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER), and focused on the Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Social Security and Protection: Lessons for Uganda. The second presentation was anchored by Ms Oluwafunmilola Adeniyi, joint representative of Dullah Omar Institute, University of the Western Cape and Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors. The presentation focused on the ILO Recommendation 202 on Social Protection Floors.

In summary, the presentations emphasised the parameters of a rights based approach to social security and how the draft protocol entrenches this. The presentations also highlighted the need for African states to move from a piece-meal, welfare approach to a human rights based, coordinated approach for social protection.

Many State representatives in response to the presentations, attempted to highlight their efforts towards social protection for vulnerable groups in their States, what seemed a common thread was the missing sense of coordination among these efforts and in some instances a human rights based approach. Participants questioned whether the draft protocol contained funding mechanisms, including minimum budgetary allocations, which states could employ to ensure the sustenance of whatever social protection measures they employed. Participants also questioned whether the draft protocol included provisions to combat corruption and diversion of resources allocated for social protection.

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