

**83rd Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
Banjul, The Gambia, 2-22 May 2025**

Item 5: Activity Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities

Honourable Commissioners and Chairperson,

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa (the Protocol) entered into force on 3 May 2024. Among the purposes of the Protocol is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities in Africa. The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) appreciates the efforts of the Commission and the Working Group to help advance the widest level of ratification and effective domestic implementation of the Protocol, including through adopting a resolution during the 81st session.

On the first anniversary of the coming into force of the Protocol, the ICJ calls upon the Commission to, in consultation with its Member States, persons with disabilities, engaged Civil Society organizations and other stakeholders, develop effective guidelines for periodic reporting under the Protocol. The proposed guidelines will ensure that a clear framework is in place to facilitate reports by States Parties on the steps they have taken towards implementing their obligations as mandated under Article 34 of the Protocol, including the adoption of national laws, policies, programs and practices that are compliant with the Protocol's provisions. The proposed guidelines should further provide a framework to enable persons with disabilities, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to work collectively with government focal points and other agencies of Member States to set up accountability mechanisms to support the implementation of the Protocol.

This initiative would be consistent with Commission's established practices. Presently, the Commission has developed guidelines for periodic reporting under the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights of Welfare of the Child, the monitoring Mechanism under the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, has adopted procedure and guidelines in this respect.

In developing the Guidelines, we urge the Commission to fully take into account the Guidelines on Periodic Reporting to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which create a framework for reporting under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These Guidelines were developed by the Committee in full consultation with persons with disabilities.

The ICJ further calls on all African Union Member States to co-sponsor and support the adoption of the proposed guidelines.

Thank you.